

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD – Christmas Day

December 25, 2020 – 10:00 a.m.

St. Matthew Lutheran Church

4101 Washington Street NE

Columbia Heights, MN 55421

+ CONNECT +

(Please rise and face the processional cross)

INVOCATION:

P: Our worship begins the way our lives in Christ begin in baptism: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

CONFESSION OF OUR SINS:

P: Let us pray: It has been quite a year since we gathered here last Christmas, Lord. In many ways, it is a not a year we would like to repeat. And we would like to get it behind us as quickly as possible.

C: **But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ, the Lord.”**

P: We have experienced quarantine and shelter in place orders. We’ve stayed home from work and school. We have lost time with family and friends. Restaurants, movies, malls—we’ve given all that up. And the times we feel like smiling, our smiles are hidden behind masks.

C: **But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ, the Lord.”**

P: Our city has experienced the fear, turmoil and violence that accompanies injustice. Lives have been lost. Businesses have been lost. Trust has been lost.

C: But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ, the Lord.”

P: We have allowed politics to separate us from our neighbors, our friends and our families. We have lost even more of our unity, and worse yet, we have failed to do anything about it. Our nation seems so wounded and broken.

C: But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ, the Lord.”

P: Many who celebrated Christmas with us last year are no longer here, so we grieve.

C: But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ, the Lord.”

P: Our world has changed, Lord. Our church has changed. We’ve changed. But you haven’t changed! O changeless God—the same yesterday, today and forever—your love is just as strong, your power is just as steady, your will is still in place.

C: So Lord, forgive us for the times we doubt, the times we get lazy, the times we fail to love you and love our neighbor. We need that forgiveness from our Savior today. Amen.

FORGIVENESS IS ANNOUNCED

P: Alleluia! A holy day has dawned upon us. Come, all you nations, and worship the Lord. Alleluia!

C: The LORD is God and He has made His light to shine upon us.

P: This is the LORD’S doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

C: Alleluia! Oh, come, let us sing to the LORD. Let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our maker! Alleluia!

P: Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth; burst into jubilant song with music;

C: **Make music to the LORD with the harp, with the harp and the sound of singing,**

P: With trumpets and the blast of the ram's horn –

C: **Shout for joy before the LORD, the King!**

PROCESSIONAL HYMN: “Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful”

Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant!

Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;

Come and behold him Born the king of angels:

**REFRAIN: Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

Highest, most holy, Light of light eternal,

Born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;

Son of the Father Now in flesh appearing! REFRAIN:

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,

Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God In the highest: REFRAIN:

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born this happy morning;

Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n!

Word of the Father, Now in flesh appearing! REFRAIN:

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

L: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

L: Let us pray.

C: **Lord God, allow us today to look past the circumstances of our lives and find our reason for celebration in the birth of Jesus, our Savior. Give us a heart like Mary's that in the middle of challenges, chooses to ponder and reflect, not on the circumstances or the challenges, but on the Savior of the world. In the name of Jesus, Amen.**

GREETING TIME

+ NURTURE +

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Isaiah 52:7-10

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!" Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy. When the LORD returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes. Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.

L: The Word of the Lord. Glory to the newborn King!

C: **Thanks be to God!**

CHORAL OFFERING: "Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella" – arr. Joel Raney Cantata Choir

*Bring a torch Jeanette, Isabella! Bring a torch, come swiftly and run.
Christ is born, tell the folk of the village; Jesus is sleeping in the cradle
Ah, ah, beautiful is the mother. Ah, ah, beautiful is her Son.*

*Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth.
You, who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth.
Come and worship Christ, the King. O Come, and worship the newborn King.*

*O worship the King, all-glorious above,
O gratefully sing his power and his love.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

*Hasten now good folk of the village, hasten now, the Christ child to see.
You will find him asleep in the manger, quietly come and whisper softly,
Hush, hush, peacefully now he slumbers, hush, hush, peacefully know he sleeps.
Sleep in heavenly peace.*

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EPISTLE LESSON: Hebrews 1:1-12

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"? And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." In speaking of the angels he says, "He makes his angels spirits, and his servants flames of fire." But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy." He also says, "In the beginning, Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed. But you remain the same, and your years will never end."

L: The Word of the Lord. Glory to the newborn King!

C: **Thanks be to God!**

HOLY GOSPEL:

L: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, chapter one.

C: **Glory to You, O Lord!**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

L: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

C: **Praise to You, O Christ! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

MESSAGE: “Christmas is a Choice” – Pastor Bill Hugo

HYMN OF THE DAY: “Joy to the World”

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive its King;
Let ev’ry heart prepare him room
And heav’n and nature sing, And heav’n and nature sing,
And heav’n, and heav’n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sin and sorrow grow Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make his blessings flow
Far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness
And wonders of his love, And wonders of his love,
And wonders, wonders of his love.

CONFESSION OF FAITH: Apostles’ Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

+ EMPOWER +

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH:

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C: *(Sing)*

Our Father, Lord on heav'n's high throne

Most holy be Your name.

Your kingdom come. Your will be done

On earth – in heav'n the same.

Give us this day the food we need;

Forgiven may we be;

Into temptation do not lead; From evil set us free.

Yours is the kingdom; unto You In grateful love we bow;

And yours the power; Lord, let us view

Your mighty presence now.

The glory yours; Your praise be sung

By angels hosts and men

In ev'ry land, by ev'ry tongue Forevermore! Amen.

PREFACE TO HOLY COMMUNION:

L: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

PROPER PREFACE:

L: With great joy and thanksgiving, we greet the Word made flesh, in whom the Father has manifested the fullness of his saving glory, for us and for all people, that beholding the glory of his incarnate Son, we may believe in him whom the Father has sent and, believing, have life in his name. Therefore with all the hosts of heaven and with the faithful throughout the earth, with angels and archangels to lead our praises, let us join their endless song of praise:

SANCTUS:



Sing ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, The
God of Sab - a - oth a-dored. Ho-san - na sing to
Him who came With God's own pow'r and
with His name; Ho - san - na
sing in high-est strain Now and for -
ev - er - more. A - men.

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WORDS OF INSTITUTION

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND BENEDICTION

CLOSING HYMN: "Of the Father's Love Begotten"

Of the Father's love begotten, ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending he,
Of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see
Evermore and evermore.

Oh, that birth forever blessed, when the virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving, bore the Savior of our race,

**And the babe, the world's redeemer, first revealed his sacred face
Evermore and evermore.**

**This is he whom seers in old time chanted of with one accord,
Whom the voices of the prophets promised in their faithful word;
Now he shines, the long expected; let creation praise its Lord
Evermore and evermore.**

**Let the heights of heav'n adore him; angel hosts, his praises sing;
Pow'rs, dominions, bow before him and extol our God and King;
Let no tongue on earth be silent, ev'ry voice in concert ring
Evermore and evermore.**

**Christ, to you, with God the Father and the Spirit, there shall be
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving and the shout of jubilee:
Honor, glory, and dominion and eternal victory
Evermore and evermore.**

*("Of the Father's Love Begotten", setting copyright 1982 Concordia Publishing House, used by permission,
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WORSHIP ASSISTANTS:

Lay Minister: Lisa Neaderhiser

Instrumental Trio: Will Hugo, trumpet; Karyn Naber, tenor sax; Ted Landwehr,
trombone

Altar Guild: Pat & Duane Rosenberg

Ushers: Alman Team

Power Point: Aidan Neaderhiser

Acolyte: Josh Neaderhiser

Lector: Cheryl Fristad