

“Joy to the World The Lord is Come”

Christmas Eve Worship 2014

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Prayer Before Worship

Dearest Jesus, Holy Child, draw near to us this evening as we gather in your name to give you thanks for your humble birth in Bethlehem. We marvel at the great lengths you were willing to go to to secure our salvation: the humiliating way you were born, lived and died so that we might be saved. Fill us with peace in your presence among us. Fill us with joy in your grace which shines so brightly this sacred night. Fill us with love which abounds for you and for others. Fill us with hope which leads us to always look forward to your second coming in glory. We pray this in your name because of your love and forgiveness for us. Amen

Pastor’s Greeting and Focus for Worship

Opening Verses from Isaiah 9

P: For to us a child is born,

C: to us a son is given,

P: and the government will be on his shoulders.

C: And he will be called Wonderful Counselor,

P: Mighty God, Everlasting Father,

C: Prince of Peace.

P: Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end.

C: He will reign on David’s throne

P: and over his kingdom,

C: establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness

P: from that time on and forever.

C: The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

Candlelighting Ceremony

Response: “Silent Night” (Please note: Soloist will sing vs. 1 in German and then in English; The congregation is invited to join in vs. 2-3)

*Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht, Alles schläft; einsam wacht
Nur das traute hoch heilige Paar. Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh! Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!*

Silent night! Holy night! All is calm, all is bright,
Round yon virgin mother and child. Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night! Holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar; Heav’nly hosts sing Alleluia;
Christ the Savior is born! Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night! Holy night! Son of God, love’s pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face With a dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

The Blessing

P: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C: Amen.



Christmas Prayer

P: Lord Jesus, eternal Son of God, who with the Father and the Spirit set the earth into its place in the heavens and created light to shine in the darkness:

C: Shed the warmth of your eternal light into this world's dark night of desperation.

P: Lord Jesus, your righteous life is the light of all nations;

C: Shine in our hearts and illuminate the dark corner of our sinful lives with the healing rays of your forgiveness.

P: Lord Jesus, you came declaring your truth as the light of the world;

C: move us to reflect your love in our lives so that through us the world may come to know you as Savior and King.

P: Hear us now, Lord Jesus, as we come before your throne with our private prayers.

We pray privately to our Lord and Savior

P: Accept our expressions of joy, our prayers of gratitude and trust, and the humble songs of our hearts as we join all the host of heaven and earth in an everlasting refrain to your glory...in whose name we join in praying...

The Lord's prayer (sung to the tune "Away in a Manger" CW 68)

**Our Father in heaven, all praise to your name!
Your kingdom among us, Your will done the same
By mortals and angels. Come Lord reign alone:
Oh, hear us and bless us from heaven's high throne.**

**The bread that we yearn for provide us each day;
As we forgive others, our sins take away;
In times of temptation, to lead us be near;
From evil deliver your children most dear.**

**For yours is the kingdom; o'er all things you reign.
And Yours is the power; all things you maintain.
To You be the glory, resounding again
From all of creation, forever! Amen.**

Our Confession and God's Declaration:

Pastor: Dear friends in Christ, we stand in the presence of the almighty God, Who knows and sees all that has been done both good and bad. We can't hide things before Him and we see a great example of this with our Lord's own disciple, Judas, who had "secretly" betrayed him in the quiet of the night for thirty pieces of silver. While the other disciples had no idea what Judas had done, our Lord himself certainly knew and made every effort to bring his wayward follower to turn away from the path he had chosen by turning back to his Lord and Savior in repentance and faith.

Judas' example reminds us that it's never too late, until death itself has appeared, to put aside the "deeds of darkness" and to put on "the armor of light." (cf. Ephesians 5:11)

Sadly, we must admit that we have at times joined Judas in trying to get away with "sneaky sins." Let us go to our God now and confess our sins in His presence and ask Him, for the sake of the Christ-Child, to forgive us.

People: Heavenly Father, I deserve Your just anger and eternal punishment. I deserve to be cast from your presence into the everlasting fire of hell! I have said things out loud and under my breath that you have heard and have hated. I have done things publicly and in private which you have seen and which have brought dishonor to your holy name. I have had secret thoughts which have been offensive to your holy being. Have mercy on me...a miserable sinner!

Pastor: The Christmas message carried by the angel to those fellow sinners-the shepherds was, "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you... He is Christ the Lord." Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. In Him we find forgiveness and peace with God. We rejoice in hearing once again the wonderful message of reconciliation brought by the Herald angels....

Hymn Response: "Hark The Herald Angels Sing" (CW 61)

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all you nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With the'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the God-head see, Hail th'incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus our Immanuel!
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Hail, the heavenly Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, Ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, Born that we no more may die,
Born to raise us from the earth, Born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the King!"

Prayer of the Day: Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true light. Grant that as we have known on earth the wonder of that great light, we may also behold him in all his glory in the life to come; through your only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen (spoken)

First Lesson: Micah 5:2

But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.

Hymn Response: "Oh Little Town of Bethlehem" (CW 65)

O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King and peace to all the earth.

How silently, how silently The wondrous gift is giv'n
So God imparts to human hearts The blessings of his heav'n
No ear may hear his coming, But in this world of sin
Where meek souls will receive him still, The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin And enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell;
Oh, come to us, Abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!

Sermon: Luke 2:1-7

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth on Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her first born, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.



The Thank Offering Is Gathered

Hymn: Gentle Mary Laid Her Child (CW 56)

Gentle Mary laid her child Lowly in a manger;
There he lay, the undefiled, To the world a stranger.
Such a babe in such a place, Can he be the Savior?
Ask the saved of all the race Who have found his favor.

Angels sang about his birth; Wise men sought and found him.
Heaven's star shone brightly forth, Glory all around them.
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight, Heard the angels singing.
All the plains were lit that night; All the hills were ringing.

Gentle Mary laid her child Lowly in a manger;
He is still the undefiled, But no more a stranger.
Son of God, of humble birth, Beautiful the story;
Praise his name in all the earth, Hail the King of glory!

Second Lesson: Titus 2:11-14

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. 12 It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

Psalm 96 (Found on p. 102 in the front of the hymnal)

Refrain: Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD a new song

Sing to the Lord, praise his name;
proclaim his salvation day after day

Declare his glory among the nations
his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness;
tremble before him all the earth.

Refrain: Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD a new song

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth,
burst into jubilant music with singing;

make music to the Lord with the harp,
with the harp and the sound of singing.

Shout before the Lord the King.
He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples with equity.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen

Refrain: Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD a new song

Third Lesson: Luke 2:8-20

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them “Do not be afraid.” I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. “Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests:” When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.” So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Hymn of the Day: What Child Is This (CW 67)

What child is this who, laid to rest, On Mary’s lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing.
Haste, haste to bring him laud, The babe, the Son of Mary!

Why lies he in such mean estate where oxen now are feeding?
Good Christians, fear; For Sinners here The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through; The cross he’ll bear for me, for you.
Hail, hail the word made flesh, the babe, the Son of Mary!

So bring him incense, gold and myrrh; Come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings Salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high; The virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy, for Christ was born, The babe, the Son of Mary!

CLOSING HYMN: “Joy to the World” (CW 62)

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her 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 sins and sorrows 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.

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Visitors and Guests: Thank you for joining us for worship this evening as we celebrated the birth of our Savior, Jesus. We wish you God’s blessing for a wonderful Christmas and a joy-filled New Year. We invite you to join us for Christmas day Song and Scripture worship tomorrow - starting at 9A.M.



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