

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
LITTLETON, COLORADO

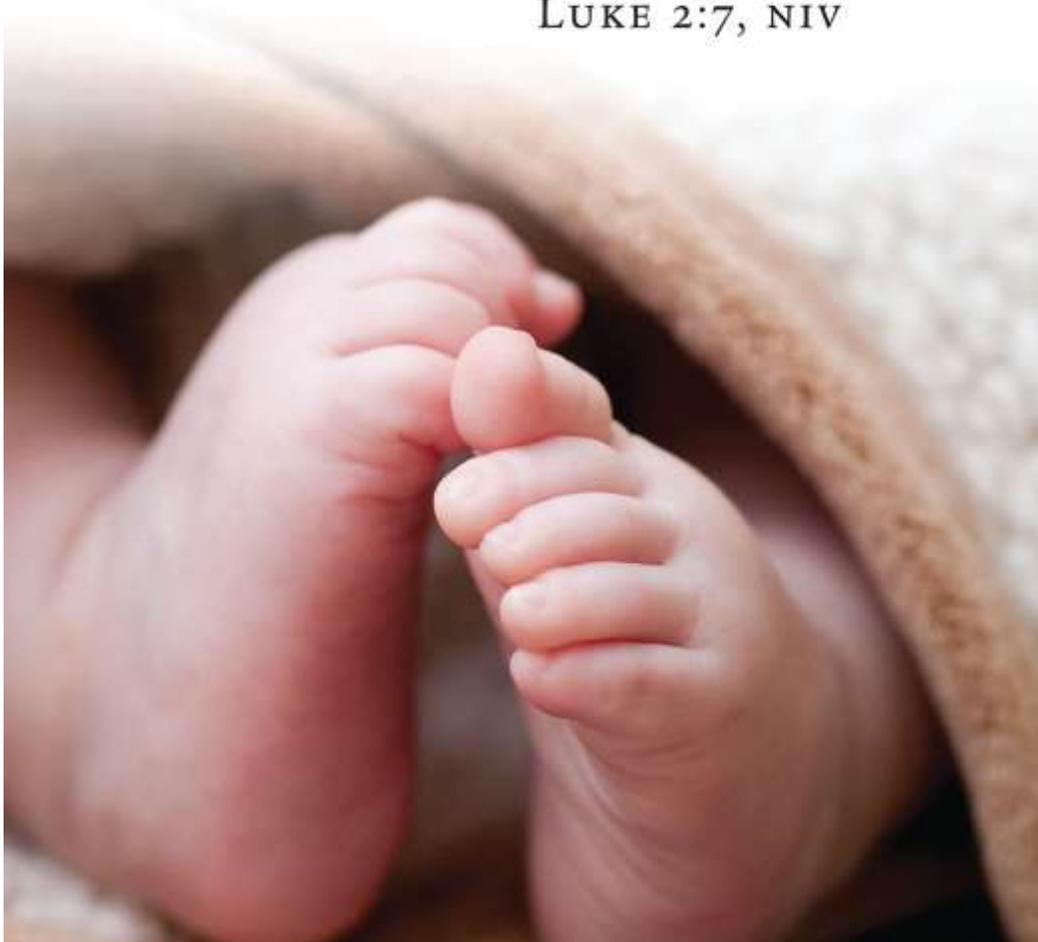
December 25, 2020

9:30 a.m.

CHRISTMAS DAY

*She wrapped him
in cloths and placed
him in a manger...*

LUKE 2:7, NIV

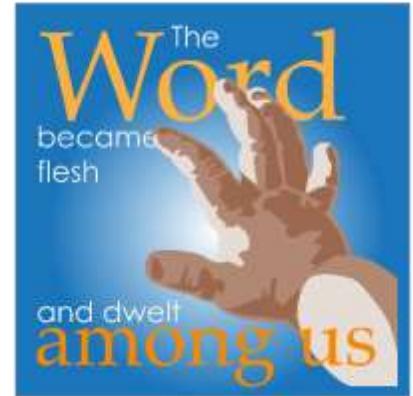


THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD—CHRISTMAS DAY

Great Joy for All People

AS WE GATHER

Jesus Christ is born this day! The Word has become flesh and dwelt among us. We come to hear the Word of God, to have our Lord's birth placed in context with all the glorious details, and to meet Christ, our everlasting gift. We recall the good news of great joy that the angels delivered to the shepherds, and we consider how we can spread the joy of Jesus to our communities.



✠ PREPARATION ✠

PRELUDE "Good Christian Friends Rejoice"

Gordon Young

PASTORAL GREETING

OPENING HYMN "Joy to the World"

LSB 387



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive her
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their songs em -
3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow Nor thorns in - fest the
4 He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the na - tions



King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare Him
ploy, While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
ground; He comes to make His bless - ings
prove The glo - ries of His righ - teous -



room And heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture
plains Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing
flow Far as the curse is found, Far as the curse is
ness And won - ders of His love, And won - ders of His



sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, Far as, far as the curse is found.
love, And won - ders, won - ders of His love.

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

OPENING SENTENCES

Pastor: The people who walked in darkness

People: **have seen a great light!**

Pastor: For behold, I bring you good news of great joy!

People: **Unto us is born this day a Savior!**

Pastor: He is Christ, the Lord!

People: **Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace!**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Today we celebrate Christmas, the incarnation of Jesus, the Word of God becoming flesh. Jesus came to bring peace and joy through all the earth, yet centuries later, our world is still filled with war and violence, hopelessness and despair. Too often, we have spread the evils of the world, rather than the joy and peace of Jesus. But our heavenly Father invites us to come before Him to ask for His forgiveness.

Silence for reflection.

Pastor: Heavenly Father,

People: **we confess that we have failed to live in the joy and peace of Jesus. We have taken Your salvation for granted. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we know the joy of the Lord.**

Pastor: Our heavenly Father sent Jesus to embrace all people. Jesus comes to heal the sick, to preach good news to the poor, and to forgive sinners like you and me. Therefore, as a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen. We are joyful in Jesus. We are forgiven in Christ.**

☩ **WORD** ☩

Kyrie (spoken)

Pastor: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,

People: **Have mercy on us sinners.**

Pastor: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,

People: **Have mercy on us sinners.**

Pastor: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,

People: **Have mercy on us sinners, and grant us Your peace. Amen.**

HYMN OF PRAISE “Angels We Have Heard on High”
(Verses 1, 3)

LSB 368



1 An - gels we have heard on high, Sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;



And the moun - tains in re - ply, Ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.

Refrain



Glo - - - - - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - - -



- ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, You sent Your beloved Son, the Word Incarnate, to embrace all people. Help us to spread the good news of His coming to all people, that they know the joy of the Lord; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT READING: Isaiah 62:10–12

(Behold, your salvation comes.)

Pass through, pass through the gates! Prepare the way for the people. Build up, build up the highway! Remove the stones. Raise a banner for the nations. The

LORD has made proclamation to the ends of the earth: "Say to the Daughter of Zion, 'See, your Savior comes! See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him.' " They will be called the Holy People, the Redeemed of the LORD; and you will be called Sought After, the City No Longer Deserted.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

GRADUAL *Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 98:1a*

Pastor: To us a child is born, to us a son is given;

People: **and the government shall be upon His shoulder.**

Pastor: And His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

People: **Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

Pastor: Sing to the Lord a new song,

People: **for He has done marvelous things!**

PIANO CHRISTMAS CAROL

"Carol of the Bells"

Mark Hayes

EPISTLE: Titus 3:4–7

(God saved us according to His own mercy in Jesus.)

But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Congregation, please rise for the Alleluia verse and the Holy Gospel.

VERSE *Luke 2:14*

Pastor : Alleluia. Glory to God in the highest,

People: **and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased! Alleluia.**

HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 2:15–20

(The shepherds come and behold baby Jesus.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

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.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

RESPONSE TO THE GOSPEL “Mary Did You Know?”

Lowry/Greene
Michael Zehnder, soloist

SERMON “The Word Dwelt Among Us”

Pastor John Larson
TEXT: John 1:14

A CHRISTMAS STATEMENT OF FAITH

All: I believe in God the Father, Creator of all things, who sent his Son as my Savior.

I believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary, announced by angels,
worshipped by the Wise Men. He lived to suffer, die and rise again to free me from sin, death, and the power of the devil.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, who has brought me to faith in Christ and by whose continuous work in my heart

I am ever led to kneel before the manger and cross of Christ to worship, to pray, to praise and thank Him, and to live under him as my King and Master, now and forever. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray for the Church around the world, ourselves, and all people in their various circumstances.

Lord Jesus, guide and protect clergy and lay leaders of Your Church. Enable them to lift people’s hearts and minds to look beyond global pandemics, natural disasters, and political upheavals to see the eternal Kingdom, which You have graciously opened to all people who trust in You for life and health and peace. Bless those who till the soil, manage farms, transport supplies, and distribute food and clothing where they are needed. Son of David,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Almighty Lord, give wisdom and courage to those who lead governments, command armed forces, and maintain order in society. Give them hearts to

seek peace so that warfare with neighbor states and civil strife within them give way to prosperity, health, and cooperation. Increase our faith to depend on Your eternal promises of the better country that awaits us by grace. Son of Abraham,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Jesus, Light of the world, open the hearts of all who are burdened by their scandals and other past sins. Surround them with faithful people to tell them about Your coming in human history to give Yourself for them. Protect and guide all law enforcement personnel, first responders, health care workers, and counselors. Help them balance justice, mercy, and compassionate care so that many may have their lives repaired and hope restored. Son of scandal,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Gracious Lord, cared for by Your adopted human father, Joseph, remember people like him, those who have been forgotten, whether dispossessed, incarcerated, or isolated for any reason. Remember not their sins and iniquities but give them a sense of Your abiding presence. Nurture in us all a love for Your will so that we obediently do whatever You ask. Son of Joseph,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Servant Savior, born in a stable to a lowly Virgin, remind us again that You turn the world's ways upside down. Give strength to the weak, lift up the downtrodden, provide hope for the despairing, announce peace to the distraught, and proclaim eternal forgiveness to all burdened by their sin. Son of Mary,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: We also pray for...*(special intercessions)*. Son of our heavenly Father,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Into Your hands, heavenly Father, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Amen.

OFFERING ***Offerings will be collected at the back, in the Narthex.***

HOLY COMMUNION AT ASCENSION

The Lord, our Host, invites to his Supper those who are baptized into the Christian faith, confess him as Savior, have been instructed and have examined themselves, truly repent of sins, believe the Risen Lord is present in the sacrament with his true body and blood, and resolve to live faithfully and obediently. For those with an intolerance to alcohol, the center ring of the tray contains grape juice. Gluten free wafers are available to those with wheat allergies. Children who have not been instructed, yet desire a blessing, are invited to come forward with arms crossed. When receiving the bread and wine, the communicant may respond with "Amen!", a word of affirmation and belief.



CHRISTMAS COMMUNION

✘ SACRAMENT ✘

PREFACE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

2 Timothy 4:22

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

[Colossians 3:1]

People: We lift them to the Lord.

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

[Psalm 136]

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, for by His incarnation He has embraced all of humanity and filled the world with good news and great joy. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS

Joy to the World

Sanctus

ANTIOCH

Andrew R. Jones

George Frideric Handel, 1685–1759, adapt.



Joy to the world, the Lord is born, The Lord of hosts is
He! He comes to bring, great joy this
morn, For all the world to see, For all the world to
see, For all, for all the world to see.

(Text: Andrew R. Jones. Copyright © 2019 Concordia Publishing House. All rights reserved. Used by permission.)

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD *Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25*



LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9–13

Text found in the back of the Hymnal.

People: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

AGNUS DEI

Joy to the World

Agnus Dei

ANTIOCH

Andrew R. Jones

George Frideric Handel, 1685–1759, adapt.

Joy to the world, the Lamb of God, Is born for us to -
day! He comes to spread His joy a -
broad, The light, the peace, the way, The light, the peace, the
way, The light, the light, the peace, the way.

(Text: Andrew R. Jones. Copyright © 2019 Concordia Publishing House. All rights reserved. Used by permission.)

FOR TO US
A SON IS GIVEN

DISTRIBUTION MUSIC

“Away in a Manger”

LSB 364



1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed,
2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,
3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask Thee to stay

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down His sweet head.
But lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing He makes.
Close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.

The stars in the sky _____ looked down where He lay,
I love Thee, Lord Je - sus! Look down from the sky,
Bless all the dear chil - dren in Thy ten - der care,

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
And stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.
And take us to heav - en to live with Thee there.

“Away in a Manger” (Organ)

arr. Michael Burkhardt

“Still, Still, Still” (Organ)

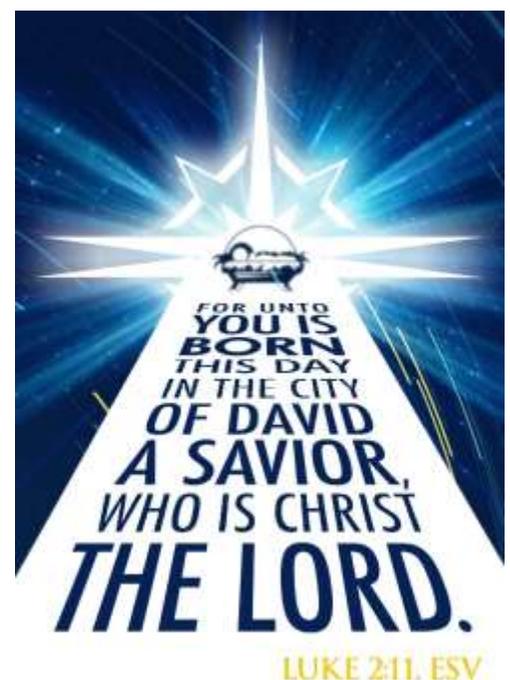
arr. Paul Manz

GENERAL COMMUNION BLESSING

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The blessing of almighty God—the Father, who kept His promise and sent His Son into the world; the ☩ Son, who was born as one of us to die in our place; and the Holy Spirit, who has worked faith in our hearts to rejoice at the news of Jesus’ birth—bless you and keep you in Christmas peace, now and forever.

People: Amen.





1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King;
 2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
 3 Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righ-teous-ness!



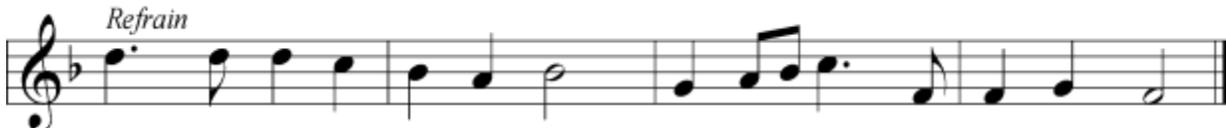
Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
 Late in time be - hold Him come, Off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
 Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with heal - ing in His wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see, Hail the in - car - nate De - i - ty!
 Mild He lays His glo - ry by, Born that man no more may die,



With the an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Je - sus, our Im - man - u - el!
 Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec - ond birth.



Refrain
 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King!"

CONGREGATIONAL CONCERNS

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Go in peace as you serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

"For Unto Us a Child is Born"

G.F. Handel

Serving in Worship

OFFICIANT and CELEBRANT
 DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES

Pastor John Larson
 Michael Zehnder