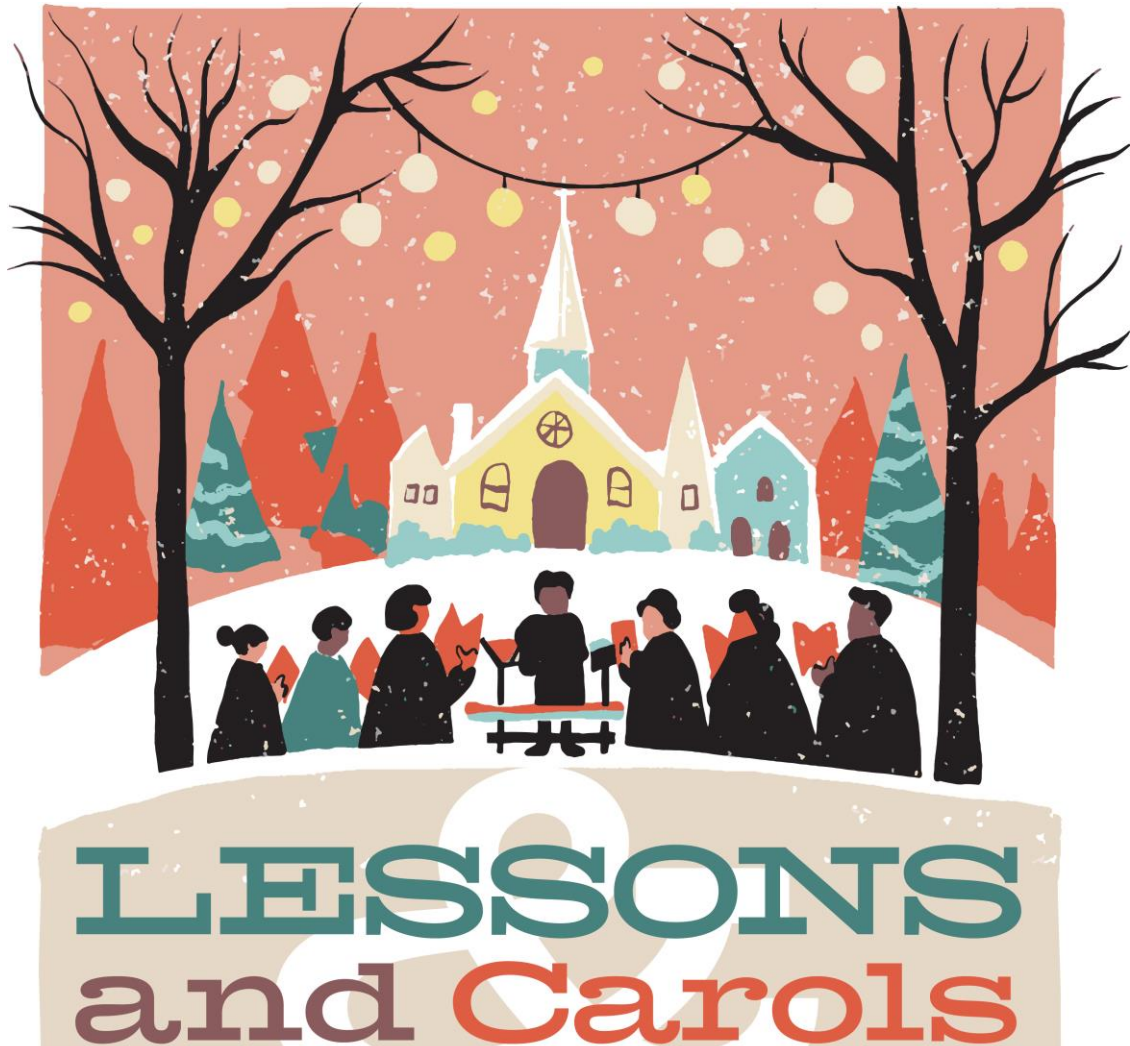


**Christmas Lessons and Carols  
with Reflections from  
Martin Luther  
December 29, 2024**



**Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church**

Love Has Come to Us

# Christmas Lessons and Carols with Reflections from Martin Luther

*Please be sure that all electronic devices are silenced.*

\*Indicates to stand, as able.

Hearing Assistance Devices are available to better hear our worship service.  
Please ask an usher if interested.

## **GATHERING**

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

### **Welcome**

### **Prelude**

**\*Gathering Song:**                    ***“Once in Royal David's City”***                    ELW 269

- 1 Once in royal David's city  
stood a lowly cattle shed,  
where a mother laid her baby  
in a manger for his bed:  
Mary was that mother mild,  
Jesus Christ, her little child.
  
- 2 He came down to earth from heaven  
who is God and Lord of all,  
and his shelter was a stable,  
and his cradle was a stall;  
with the poor and meek and lowly,  
lived on earth our Savior holy.
  
- 3 And our eyes at last shall see him,  
through his own redeeming love;  
for that child so dear and gentle  
is our Lord in heav'n above;  
and he leads his children on  
to the place where he is gone.

4 Not in that poor lowly stable,  
 with the oxen standing by,  
 we shall see him; but in heaven,  
 set at God's right hand on high;  
 there his children gather round,  
 bright like stars, with glory crowned.

### Once in Royal David's City



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,  
 2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and Lord of all,  
 3 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re - deem - ing love;  
 4 Not in that poor low - ly sta - ble, with the ox - en stand - ing by,



where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a man - ger for his bed:  
 and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall;  
 for that child so dear and gen - tle is our Lord in heav'n a - bove;  
 we shall see him; but in heav - en, set at God's right hand on high;



Mar - y was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.  
 with the poor and meek and low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.  
 and he leads his chil - dren on to the place where he is gone.  
 there his chil - dren gath - er round, bright like stars, with glo - ry crowned.

Text: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818–1895  
 Music: IRBY, Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805–1876

### Opening Dialogue

L: Come! Look upon the baby Jesus,  
 cradled in the arms of his mother.

**A: Seeing this wondrous sight,  
 may our hearts be comforted  
 and our spirits filled with peace.**

L: Come! Listen to choirs of angels  
 announcing good news to all people.

**A: Hearing this marvelous song, may we too sing:  
 Glory to God in the highest!**

L: Come! Receive this ancient story in your heart,  
not as history but as a gift.

**A: Opening our hearts to this great mystery,  
may Christ be born in us today.**

**\*Greeting**

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the  
communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**A: And also with you.**

**\*Prayer of the Day**

L: Let us pray... Shine into our hearts the light of your wisdom, O God,  
and open our minds to the knowledge of your word, that in all things  
we may think and act according to your good will and may live  
continually in the light of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns  
with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**A: Amen.**

**WORD**

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

**First Reading: Luke 2:1-7**

Jean Lyren

<sup>1</sup> In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the  
world should be registered. <sup>2</sup> This was the first registration and was taken  
while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup> All went to their own towns to be  
registered. <sup>4</sup> Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to  
Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended  
from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup> He went to be registered with Mary,  
to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup> While they  
were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup> And she gave birth  
to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a  
manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

R: The word of the Lord.

**A: Thanks be to God.**

Behold Christ lying in the lap of his young mother. . . . What can be sweeter than the Babe, what more lovely than the mother! . . . Look at the Child, knowing nothing. Yet all that is belongs to him, that your conscience should not fear but take comfort in him. Doubt nothing. Watch him springing in the lap of the maiden. Laugh with him. Look upon this Lord of Peace and your spirit will be at peace. . . . You will see how great is the divine goodness, which seeks above all else that you should not despair. Trust him! Trust him! Here is the Child in whom is salvation. To me there is no greater consolation given to mankind than this, that Christ became man, a child, a babe, playing in the lap and at the breasts of his most gracious mother. Who is there whom this sight would not comfort? Now is overcome the power of sin, death, hell, conscience, and guilt, if you come to judge this gurgling Babe and believe that he is come, not to judge you, but to save. *(Martin Luther's Christmas Book, p. 33)*

**Carol: "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"**

ELW 276

- 1 Infant holy, infant lowly,  
for his bed a cattle stall;  
oxen lowing, little knowing  
Christ the child is Lord of all.  
Swiftly winging, angels singing,  
bells are ringing, tidings bringing:  
Christ the child is Lord of all!  
Christ the child is Lord of all!
  
- 2 Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping  
vigil till the morning new  
saw the glory, heard the story,  
tidings of a gospel true.  
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,  
praises voicing, greet the morrow:  
Christ the child was born for you!  
Christ the child was born for you!

## Infant Holy, Infant Lowly



1 In - fant ho - ly, in - fant low - ly, for his bed a cat - tle stall;  
 2 Flocks were sleep - ing, shep - herds keep - ing vig - il till the morn - ing new



ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know - ing Christ the child is Lord of all.  
 saw the glo - ry, heard the sto - ry, tid - ings of a gos - pel true.



Swift - ly wing - ing, an - gels sing - ing, bells are ring - ing, tid - ings bring - ing:  
 Thus re - joic - ing, free from sor - row, prais - es voic - ing, greet the mor - row:



Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!  
 Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

Text: Polish carol; tr. Edith M. G. Reed, 1885–1933, alt.  
 Music: W ŻŁOBIE LEŻY, Polish carol

### Second Reading: Luke 2:8-16

Paula Hoffman

<sup>8</sup> In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup> to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,  
<sup>14</sup> “Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
 and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

<sup>15</sup> When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup> So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

R: The word of the Lord.

**A: Thanks be to God.**

### **Reflection: Luther's reflections on the shepherds and angels**

Mike Amstutz

Look at the shepherds. They were watching their flocks by night, and an angel came and made them apostles, prophets, and children of God. . . . This is a great miracle that the shepherds should have believed this message. They might easily have thought to themselves, "Are we two shepherds worthy that the whole host of heaven should be marshaled for us and all the kings on the earth and the dwellers in Jerusalem be passed by?" I know I would have appealed to common sense and I would have said: "Who am I compared to God and angels and kings? It is an apparition." But the Holy Spirit, who preached through the angels, caused the shepherds to believe. They were so strong in the faith that they were worthy to be spoken to by angels and to hear every angel in heaven singing a cantata just for them. This is a pure wonder that enters not into the heart of man. Our God begins with angels and ends with shepherds. Why does he do such preposterous things? He puts a Babe in a crib. Our common sense revolts and says, "Could not God have saved the world some other way?" (Martin Luther's Christmas Book, pp. 36, 40)

**Carol: "It Came upon the Midnight Clear"**

ELW 282

1 It came upon the midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth  
to touch their harps of gold:  
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,  
from heav'n's all-gracious king."  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
to hear the angels sing.

- 2 Still through the cloven skies they come  
with peaceful wings unfurled,  
and still their heav'nly music floats  
o'er all the weary world.  
Above its sad and lowly plains  
they bend on hov'ring wing,  
and ever o'er its babel sounds  
the blessed angels sing.
- 3 And you, beneath life's crushing load,  
whose forms are bending low,  
who toil along the climbing way  
with painful steps and slow:  
look now, for glad and golden hours  
come swiftly on the wing;  
oh, rest beside the weary road  
and hear the angels sing!
- 4 For lo! The days are hast'ning on,  
by prophets seen of old,  
when with the ever-circling years  
shall come the time foretold,  
when peace shall over all the earth  
its ancient splendors fling,  
and all the world give back the song  
which now the angels sing.



## It Came upon the Midnight Clear



1 It came up - on the mid - night clear, that glo - rious song of old,  
2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come with peace - ful wings un - furled,  
3 And you, be - neath life's crush - ing load, whose forms are bend - ing low,  
4 For lo! The days are has - t'ning on, by proph - ets seen of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold:  
and still their heav'n - ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world.  
who toil a - long the climb - ing way with pain - ful steps and slow:  
when with the ev - er - cir - cling years shall come the time fore - told,



"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all - gra - cious king."  
A - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov - 'ring wing,  
look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing;  
when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen - dors fling,



The world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.  
and ev - er o'er its ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.  
oh, rest be - side the wea - ry road and hear the an - gels sing!  
and all the world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810–1876  
Music: CAROL, Richard S. Willis, 1819–1900

### Third Reading: Matthew 2:1-12

Walt Baughman

<sup>1</sup> In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." <sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup> and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup> They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup> 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for from you shall come a ruler  
who is to shepherd my people Israel."

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." <sup>9</sup> When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup> On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

R: The word of the Lord.

**A: Thanks be to God.**

### **Reflection: Luther's reflections on Herod and the wise men**

Lisa Fryer

When the Wise Men received the divine revelation that the king of the Jews was born, they made straight for Jerusalem, for, of course, they expected to find him at the capital in a lordly castle and a golden chamber. Where else would common sense expect to find a king? But because they were so sure of themselves, the star left them. Then they were sorely tried, and had they relied solely on human wisdom, would surely have said: "Confound it! We have come all this way for nothing. The star has deceived us. The devil has led us by an apparition. If a king had been born, would he not be in the capital and in a palace? But when we come, the star disappears and we find no one who knows anything about him. Can it be that we foreigners should be the first to have news of him in the royal city? Everyone is so cold and unfriendly that no one offers to go with us and show us the child. They do not believe themselves that to them a king is born, and shall we come and find him? How desolate for the birth of a king! If a puppy were born there would be some little stir, and here a king is supposed to be born and everything is

so still. . . . Should not the people be singing, capering, lighting lamps and torches, bedecking the streets with roses and mayflowers? What a miserable king we are seeking! What fools we have been to let ourselves start on this quest!" Nature wants to feel and be certain before believing, but grace will believe before she feels. Faith steps gaily into the darkness, trusting simply in the Word. But having come, they decided to inquire of the king before returning. At their report, Herod the king "was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." Why was Herod terrified and all Jerusalem with him? *He* had good reason to be afraid because he had tyrannized over the Jews for thirty years. . . . Now Herod had a crafty plan. "The Jews," thought he, "will hide the truth from me, but I will find out the town where this king is to be born and also the time, and then if they hide him, I will catch him anyway. I will kill so many babies that he cannot escape." So he called the scribes to him and said, "Where is Christ to be born?" Then perhaps through fear, the scribes answered him that in the Prophet Micah it is written that He should be born in Bethlehem. *(Martin Luther's Christmas Book, pp. 50-52)*

**Carol:**

**"The First Noel"**

ELW 300

1 The first Noel the angel did say  
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,  
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

*Refrain*

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!  
Born is the King of Israel.

2 They looked up and saw a star  
shining in the east beyond them far;  
and to the earth it gave great light,  
and so it continued both day and night. *Refrain*

3 And by the light of that same star  
three wise men came from country far;  
to seek for a king was their intent,  
and to follow the star wherever it went. *Refrain*

- 4 This star drew near to the northwest,  
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest;  
and there it did both stop and stay  
right over the place where Jesus lay. *Refrain*
- 5 Then entered in those wise men three,  
full rev'rently upon their knee,  
and offered there in his presence  
their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense. *Refrain*

## The First Noel



1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to  
 2 They look - ed up and saw . . . a star shin - ing  
 3 And by the light of that . . . same star three . .  
 4 This star drew near to the . . . north - west, o'er . .  
 5 Then en - tered in those wise . . . men three, full . .



cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where  
 in . . . the east . . . be - yond . . . them far; and to the  
 wise . . . men came . . . from coun - try far; to seek for a  
 Beth - le - hem . . . it took . . . its rest; and there it  
 rev - 'rent - ly . . . up - on . . . their knee, and of - fered



they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's  
 earth it gave . . . great light, and . . . so it con -  
 king was their . . . in - tent, and to fol - low the  
 did both stop . . . and stay right . . . o - ver the  
 there in his . . . pres - ence their . . . gold, . . . and

### *Refrain*



night that was so deep.  
 tin-ued both day and night.  
 star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -  
 place where Je - sus lay.  
 myrrh, and frank - in - cense.



el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

Text: English traditional  
 Music: THE FIRST NOWELL, English traditional

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup> in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. <sup>15</sup> (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") <sup>16</sup> From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup> The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup> No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

R: The word of the Lord.

**A: Thanks be to God.**

**Reflection: Luther's reflections on the Word made flesh**      Bev Moyer

Let us, then, meditate upon the Nativity just as we see it happening in our own babies. I would not have you contemplate the deity of Christ, the majesty of Christ, but rather his flesh. Look upon the baby Jesus. Divinity may terrify man. Inexpressible majesty will crush him. That is why Christ took on our humanity, save for sin, that he should not terrify us but rather that with love and favor he should console and confirm.

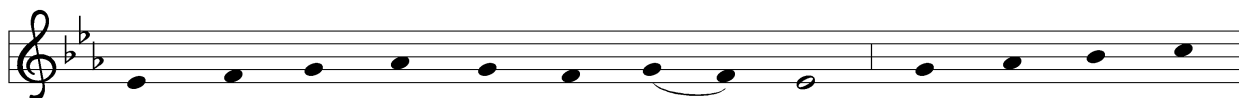
This is the word of the prophet: "*Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given*" (Isaiah 9:6). This is for us the hardest point, not so much to believe that He is the son of the Virgin and God himself, as to believe that this Son of God is ours. That is where we wilt. . . . Truly it is marvelous in our eyes that God should place a little child in the lap of a virgin and that all our blessedness should lie in him. And this Child belongs to all mankind. God feeds the whole world through a Babe nursing at Mary's breast. This must be our daily exercise: to be transformed into Christ, being nourished by this food. Then will the heart be suffused with all joy and will be strong and confident against every assault.

(*Martin Luther's Christmas Book*, pp. 33, 16)

- 1 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.
  
- 2 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.
  
- 3 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.
  
- 4 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.
  
- 5 Christ, to thee, with God the Father,  
and, O Holy Ghost, to thee,  
hymn and chant and high thanksgiving  
and unwearied praises be:

honor, glory, and dominion,  
and eternal victory  
evermore and evermore! Amen.

## Of the Father's Love Begotten



1 Of the Fa - ther's love be - got - ten ere the worlds be -  
2 Oh, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed, when the vir - gin,  
3 This is he whom seers in old time chant - ed of with  
4 Let the heights of heav'n a - dore him; an - gel hosts, his  
5 Christ, to thee, with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho - ly



gan to be, he is Al - pha and O - me - ga,  
full of grace, by the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing,  
one ac - cord, whom the voic - es of the proph - ets  
prais - es sing; pow'rs, do - min - ions, bow be - fore him  
Ghost, to thee, hymn and chant and high thanks - giv - ing



he the source, the end - ing he, of the things that are, that  
bore the Sav - ior of our race, and the babe, the world's re -  
prom - ised in their faith - ful word; now he shines, the long - ex -  
and ex - tol our God and King; let no tongue on earth be  
and un - wea - ried prais - es be: hon - or, glo - ry, and do -



have deem - been, and that fu - ture years shall see,  
pect - er, first re - vealed his sa - cred face,  
si - ed; let cre - a - tion praise its Lord  
min - lent, ev - 'ry voice in con - cert ring  
ion, and e - ter - nal vic - to - ry



ev - er - more and ev - er - more.  
ev - er - more and ev - er - more.  
ev - er - more and ev - er - more.  
ev - er - more and ev - er - more.  
ev - er - more and ev - er - more! A - men.



## **\*Nicene Creed**

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the  
dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## **\*Prayers of Intercession**

The response to: O God of Love, is **“draw us together in peace.”**

## **Sharing of Christ's Peace**

## ***Passing of Attendance Books***

*During this time please sign the Fellowship Folder in the pew near the center aisle, then pass toward the side aisle for others to sign.*

### **Offering**

**\*Offering Music**                      ***“A Tiny Little Baby”***                      Combined Choir

### **\*Offertory Prayer**

L: Let us pray... God of heaven and earth, from the beginning, you have called forth life, in which you take delight. The trees, the fields, and the seas sing for joy. Bless now these gifts, received from your bounty, that we may join the chorus of creation to tell of your salvation from day to day.

**A: Amen.**

## **MEAL**

### **\*Great Thanksgiving**

L: The Lord be with you.

**A: And also with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts.

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

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

**A: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

### **\*Proper Preface**

L: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**\*Hymn:**                                      ***“Joy to the World”***                                      ELW 267  
vs. 1, 4

# Joy to the World

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their  
 3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the

ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him  
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings  
 na - tions 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

and heav'n and na - ture sing, and

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.

heav'n and na - ture sing,

## \* Words of Institution

L: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

## \*Lord's Prayer

L: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, we pray as Jesus taught us.

**A: 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.**

## Invitation to Communion

L: A child has been born for us, a Son given to us.  
Come, receive the gift of Jesus.

## Sharing the Supper

*We practice open communion. All baptized believers are welcome to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Ushers will direct worshippers up the center aisle where you will receive bread and wine/juice. A tray to dispose of your empty communion cup will be located on the windowsill at the side aisle. Juice and gluten-free options are available upon your request, please be sure to inform your server. Please notify an usher if you need communion brought to your pew. Welcome to God's table!*

## Communion Hymn

### **“Love Has Come”**

ELW 292

1 Love has come—a light in the darkness!  
Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.  
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it;  
hear how their song of joy arises:  
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!  
Love! Love! Glory to God on high.

2 Love is born! Come, share in the wonder.  
 Love is God now asleep in the hay.  
 See the glow in the eyes of his mother;  
 what is the name her heart is saying?  
 Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers;  
 Love! Love! Jesus, Immanuel.

3 Love has come and never will leave us!  
 Love is life everlasting and free.  
 Love is Jesus within and among us.  
 Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.  
 Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas;  
 Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

## Love Has Come



1 Love has come— a light in the dark - ness! Love shines forth in the  
 2 Love is born! Come, share in the won - der. Love is God now a -  
 3 Love has come and nev - er will leave us! Love is life ev - er -



Beth - le - hem skies. See, all heav - en has come to pro - claim it;  
 sleep in the hay. See the glow in the eyes of his moth - er;  
 last - ing and free. Love is Je - sus with - in and a - mong us.



hear how their song of joy a - ris - es: Love! Love! Born un - to  
 what is the name her heart is say - ing? Love! Love! Love is the  
 Love is the peace our hearts are seek - ing. Love! Love! Love is the



you, a Sav - ior! Love! Love! Glo - ry to God on high.  
 name she whis - pers; Love! Love! Je - sus, Im - man - u - el.  
 gift of Christ - mas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Text: Ken Bible, b. 1950

Music: UN FLAMBEAU, F. Seguin, *Recueil de noëls composés en langue provençale*, 1856

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### **\*Post-Communion Blessing**

L: May the body and blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**A: Amen.**

### **\*Post-Communion Prayer**

L: Let us pray...Merciful God, we thank you for Jesus, who is our heavenly food. Strengthened by this goodness, send us forth to announce your peace, comfort the afflicted, and share the good news of great joy.

**A: Amen.**

## **SENDING**

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

### **\*Blessing**

L: May the Word that Mary brought to birth carry you into new and abundant life.  
May the Word that Joseph cradled in his arms enfold you with love and strength.  
May the Word that angels proclaimed in song bring harmony to our world.  
And the blessing of almighty God,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be upon you and remain with you always.

**A: Amen.**

**\*Sending Song:           “*Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*”**

ELW 288

1 Good Christian friends, rejoice  
with heart and soul and voice;  
give ye heed to what we say:  
Jesus Christ is born today;  
ox and ass before him bow,  
and he is in the manger now.  
Christ is born today!  
Christ is born today!

- 2 Good Christian friends, rejoice  
with heart and soul and voice;  
now ye hear of endless bliss:  
Jesus Christ was born for this!  
He has opened heaven's door,  
and we are blest forevermore.  
Christ was born for this!  
Christ was born for this!
- 3 Good Christian friends, rejoice  
with heart and soul and voice;  
now ye need not fear the grave;  
Jesus Christ was born to save!  
Calls you one and calls you all  
to gain the everlasting hall.  
Christ was born to save!  
Christ was born to save!

## Good Christian Friends, Rejoice



1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice      with heart and soul and voice;  
 2 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice      with heart and soul and voice;  
 3 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice      with heart and soul and voice;



give ye heed to what we say:      Je - sus Christ is born to - day;  
 now ye hear of end - less bliss:      Je - sus Christ was born for this!  
 now ye need not fear the grave;      Je - sus Christ was born to save!



ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.  
 He has o - pened heav - en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.  
 Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.



Christ is born to - day!      Christ is born to - day!  
 Christ was born for this!      Christ was born for this!  
 Christ was born to save!      Christ was born to save!

Text: Medieval Latin carol; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866  
 Music: IN DULCI JUBILO, German carol, 14th cent.

## Announcements

### \*Dismissal

L: Glory to God in the highest!

**A: And peace to God's people on earth!**

L: Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.

**A: Thanks be to God.**

## Postlude



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