

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

DECEMBER 24, 2023
10:00PM



THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD
SON OF MAN AND SON OF GOD

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN “Infant Holy, Infant Lowly” (LSB 393)

Please stand

INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

Psalm 146:3–5

P Put not your trust in princes,

C in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation.

P When his breath departs

C he returns to the earth;

P on that very day

C his plans perish.

P Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob,

C whose hope is in the LORD his God.

SERVICE OF LIGHT

P The Spirit and the Church cry out:

C Come, Lord Jesus.

P All those who await His appearance pray:

C Come, Lord Jesus.

P The whole creation pleads:

C Come, Lord Jesus.

P Celebrating the arrival of the Son of Man and the Son of God, we implore:

C Come, Lord Jesus.

HYMN OF LIGHT “Of the Father’s Love Begotten” (LSB 384 v. 1)

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P “We also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world” (Galatians 4:3). Let us confess our sins to God our Father.

C Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

P “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons” (Galatians 4:4–5). Because of the Savior who is the Word made flesh and who dwelt among us, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God to all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

+ WORD +

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P Let us pray together:

All: Father in heaven, You sent Your Son to be born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem us who were under the law. Grant that through faith we might rejoice in our baptism, for we are adopted as Your children and connected to Christ. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

Please be seated

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Daniel 7:13–14*

P The Old Testament Reading is from Daniel, the seventh chapter

¹³I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and He came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him; His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

CHRISTMAS EVE PSALM

Psalm 96

P Sing to the LORD, bless His name; tell of His salvation from day to day.

C Oh sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth!

P Sing to the LORD, bless His name; tell of His salvation from day to day.

C Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous works among all the peoples!

P For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods.

C For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the LORD made the heavens.

P Splendor and majesty are before Him; strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.

C Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!

P Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name; bring an offering, and come into His courts!

C Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness; tremble before Him, all the earth!

P Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns! Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved; He will judge the peoples with equity."

C Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it; let the field exult, and everything in it!

P Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the LORD, for He comes, for He comes to judge the earth.

C He will judge the world in righteousness, and the peoples in His faithfulness.

P Sing to the LORD, bless His name; tell of His salvation from day to day.

EPISTLE

Galatians 4:1–7

P The Epistle is from Galatians, the fourth chapter.

¹I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything, ²but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. ³In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. ⁴But when the fullness of time had

come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God. Alleluia! For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. Alleluia.

Luke 2: 11

Please stand

HYMN FOR THE GOSPEL “Of the Father’s Love Begotten” (LSB 384, v. 2)

HOLY GOSPEL

John 1:1–18

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world did not know Him. ¹¹He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. ¹²But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

(continued...)

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵(John bore witness about Him, and cried out, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because He was before me.' ") ¹⁶And from His fullness we have all received, grace

upon grace. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, He has made Him known.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Please sit

SERMON HYMN "Gentle Mary Laid Her Child" (LSB 374)

SERMON "WHY JESUS WAS BORN" The Rev. Dr. Brent Klein

TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Please stand

CATECHISM LESSON The Second Article

P We confess together, the second article of the Apostles' Creed.

C **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.**

P What does this mean?

C **I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord,**

who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death,

that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness,

just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity.

This is most certainly true.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

LORD'S PRAYER

C 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.

Please be seated

COMMUNION PREPARATION HYMN

"Of the Father's Love Begotten" (LSB 384, v. 3)

PREFACE

P The Lord be with you.
C And also with you.
P Lift up your hearts.
C We lift them to the Lord.
P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

P Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for through the sending of Your Son, Jesus Christ, You have given us the right to become Your children and are now heirs of all that Jesus has won for us in His birth, life, death, and resurrection.

Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✙ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✙ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

P As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

P Welcome to the Lord's table.
The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

"Away in a Manger" (LSB 364)

"O Little Town of Bethlehem" (LSB 361)

COMMUNION DISMISSAL

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart in peace.

C Amen

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

P Let us pray.
We give You thanks, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In Your mercy, strengthen us through this meal, and in faith toward You and in love for one another, help us to serve You in honor and love all of our days. We pray for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

THE LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES (Christmas Eve)

The Pastor will light his candle from the Christ Candle in the center of the Advent wreath. The ushers will receive the light with their candles and light the candle at the end of each row. The light will be passed to each person. Please make sure to dip the unlighted candle to the candle that is lit.

P As the light of these candles illumine our faces, it symbolizes the light of Christ, a Child in the manger at Bethlehem, a Savior suffering our death on the cross and soon to come from His throne on high as Judge of all. He is our light here on earth and the eternal light who enlightens heaven, where there is no need of candle or sun. Rejoice, for the Light of the world has come, the Light who transforms us with the brightness of His glory.

HYMN “Silent Night, Holy Night” (LSB 363)

BENEDICTION

P Receive the blessing of the Lord:
The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

CLOSING HYMN “Of the Father’s Love Begotten” (LSB 384, v. 4)

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Soundboard	Cameron/Nicholas Duskin