

# CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

DECEMBER 24, 2024  
10:00PM



## WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### INTRODUCTION

Pastor: Tonight we gather to look into the events happening over 2,000 years ago. A special event is happening in the small town of Bethlehem, a place that was the home of King David. Listen as we sing the words of our first hymn.

**OPENING HYMN** “Once in Royal David’s City” *LSB 376, sts. 1-5*

**Please stand**

### INVOCATION

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

People: **Amen.**

**OPENING SENTENCES** *Isaiah 9:2; 2 Samuel 22:29*

Pastor: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;

People: **those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.**

Pastor: You are my lamp, O LORD,

People: **and my God lightens my darkness.**

**CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION** *Romans 13:11–12*

Pastor: The apostle Paul reminds us, “You know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.” In order to hear again the beautiful Good News of how the Savior of the world came to save us all, let us confess our need to hear, to repent of our sin and to believe.

People: **Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, I confess to You once again this night that I have walked in the darkness of sin, that I have sinned in the shadows of my conscience and in words and actions toward others; all of it in disobedience to Your commands. I pray You to send forth the light and truth of Your Son, my Savior. Have mercy on me, forgive me my sins, and bring me to everlasting life.**

**Pastor:** The Lord sends out His light and His truth to find you and to save you. Upon this, your confession, I, by virtue of my office as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God to all of you. 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.

**People:** **Amen.**

### **INTROIT**

**Pastor:** When all was still, and it was midnight, Your almighty Word, O Lord, descended from the royal throne.  
“As for Me, I have set My King on Zion, My holy hill.”

**People:** **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.  
When all was still, and it was midnight,  
Your almighty Word, O Lord, descended from the royal throne.**

**Please sit**

**HYMN** “It Came upon a Midnight Clear” *LSB* 366, sts. 1,4

**Please stand**

### **KYRIE**

**Pastor:** Lord, have mercy upon us.

**People:** **Christ, have mercy upon us.**

**Pastor:** Lord, have mercy upon us.

### **SALUTATION**

**Pastor:** The Lord be with you.

**People:** **And also with you.**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**Pastor:** Let us pray.

O God of light, on the night of the birth of the Savior of the world, Your holy angels sang of Your glory. Grant that Your Word as a lamp unfailingly pierces the darkness of our earthbound way, showing us Your grace and enlightening our path with Your holiness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People:** **Amen.**

**Please sit****OLD TESTAMENT READING**     *Isaiah 9:2-7*     (From darkness to light)

<sup>2</sup> The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. <sup>3</sup>You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. <sup>4</sup>For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. <sup>5</sup>For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. <sup>6</sup>For to us a child is born, to us a son is

given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup>Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Lector:     This is the Word of the Lord.

**People:     Thanks be to God.**

**HYMN**     “The People That in Darkness Sat”     *LSB 412*, sts. 1-6**EPISTLE**     *Titus 2:11-14*     (Changed lives by the grace of God)

<sup>11</sup>For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, <sup>12</sup>training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, <sup>13</sup>waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

<sup>14</sup>who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

Lector:     This is the Word of the Lord.

**People:     Thanks be to God.**

**Please stand****VERSE**     *Luke 2:11*

Pastor:     Alleluia. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior,

**People:     who is Christ the Lord. Alleluia.**

**HOLY GOSPEL**     *Luke 2:1-20*     (The time came)

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

**People:     Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration when Quirinius was

governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>And all went to be registered, each to his own town.

*(continued...)*

<sup>4</sup>And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, <sup>5</sup>to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. <sup>6</sup>And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

<sup>8</sup>And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear.

<sup>10</sup>And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people.

<sup>11</sup>For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup>And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."

**CREED**     *Nicene Creed*

**People:**    **I believe in one God,  
                   the Father Almighty,  
                   maker of heaven and earth  
                   and of all things visible and invisible.  
 And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
                   the only-begotten Son of God,  
                   begotten of His Father before all worlds,  
                   God of God, Light of Light,  
                   very God of very God,  
                   begotten, not made,  
                   being of one substance with the Father,  
                   by whom all things were made;**

<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, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

<sup>15</sup>When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup>And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. <sup>17</sup>And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. <sup>18</sup>And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Pastor:    This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People:    Praise to You, O Christ.**

*(continued...)*

**who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven  
 and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary  
 and was made man;  
 and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.  
 He suffered and was buried.  
 And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures  
 and ascended into heaven  
 and sits at the right hand of the Father.  
 And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the  
 dead, whose kingdom will have no end.  
 And I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
 the Lord and giver of life,  
 who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
 who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,  
 who spoke by the prophets.  
 And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,  
 I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
 and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
 and the life  $\times$  of the world to come. Amen.**

**Please sit**

Pastor: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)

**HYMN OF THE DAY** “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” *LSB* 380, sts. 1-3

**SERMON** “The Awaited Announcement” *The Rev. Peter Gueldner*

**OFFERING**

**Please stand**

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH** *LSB* 351:1–2, 5–6

Pastor: Let us pray.

Creator of the stars of night, Thy people’s everlasting Light:

**People: O Christ, Redeemer, save us all and hear Thy servants when they call.**

Pastor: O God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, the wonder and beauty of Your creation is surpassed only by the awe and miracle that You became one with us in the incarnation of the Son of God, the Son of Mary. Thou, grieving that the ancient curse should doom to death a universe,

**People: hast found the healing, full of grace, to cure and save our ruined race.**

Pastor: O Jesus Christ, true Son of God, You came into the world to save sinners. Come now to us in Word and Sacrament to give us life by living in us.

**People: preserve us from the ancient foe while still we dwell on earth below.**

Pastor: O Holy Spirit, Lord and giver of life, move us to truly repent of our sins and more truly to be filled with faith in Christ, our life.

As the angels revealed to Mary and Joseph the miracle of Your visitation and to the shepherds the majesty of the incarnation of Your Son and to the Wise Men the holiness of the gift of Your salvation, so continue to send forth preachers of Your Word and witnesses of Your truth, that many may come to believe in Your love and receive eternal life. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Inspire those whom you send to preach and proclaim Your salvation, that they may remain steadfast in the clarity and purpose of Your Word. Fill the entire earth with the beautiful news of Your grace and mercy. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: For all who are in any need—all who suffer illness, injury, or any adversity—send Your healing and help, forgiveness and strength. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Bring us all at last to the great joy of our resurrection and the life of the world to come. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: To God the Father and the Son and Holy Spirit, Three in One,

**People: praise, honor, might, and glory be from age to age eternally. Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER** *Matthew 6:9-13*

Pastor: Together, let us pray as our Lord taught us.

**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.**

**PREFACE** *2 Timothy 4:22*

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

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

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

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

Pastor: Together we celebrate the Lord's Supper, confident that we receive Jesus' body and blood in, with, and under the bread and the wine. With it, we also receive the forgiveness of sins and a stronger bond to God and each other. Through this supper we confess and share in our faith with one another, trusting in Jesus' words for the forgiveness of our sins. As Holy Communion is a confession of our faith, we require that those who receive the Lord's Supper share in the beliefs that we hold. So, hear now the words of our Lord Jesus spoken at the time of the Last Supper:

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

Pastor: 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."

**PAX DOMINI**

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**People: Amen.**

**AGNUS DEI “Lamb of God”**

**1** O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,  
**2** O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,  
 You take the sin of the world a - way;  
 You take the sin of the world a - way;  
 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,  
 Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus Christ,  
 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, we pray.  
 And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.

**Please sit**

**DISTRIBUTION HYMNS****“On Christmas Night All Christians Sing”**

LSB 377, sts. 1-4

**“The First Noel”**

sts. 1,2,4,6

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.

**Chorus:**

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. **Chorus:**

*(continued...)*



4. This star drew nigh 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. *Chorus:*

6. Then let us all with one accord  
 Sing praises to our heav'nly Lord.  
 That hath made heav'n and earth of naught,  
 And with His blood mankind hath bought. *Chorus:*

*Text: Traditional English carol, Public domain*

**Please stand**

### **POST-COMMUNION COLLECT**

Pastor: Let us pray.

LSB 384:5 (Sung)

**People: Christ, to Thee, with God the Father,  
 And, O Holy Ghost, to Thee  
 Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving  
 And unending praises be,  
 Honor, glory, and dominion,  
 And eternal victory  
 Evermore and evermore. Amen**

**Please sit**

### **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.*

Pastor: 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, sts. 1-3**

**BENEDICTION** *Numbers 6:24–26*

**Pastor:** 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.

**People:** Amen.

\* \* \* **TO GOD BE THE GLORY** \* \* \*



Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series C, Quarter 1.  
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***Rev. Gueldner will be out of the office from December 26, 2024, through January 3, 2025. Please contact the church office or your Elder for concerns and emergencies.***

**HOLIDAY SERVICES**

**Christmas Day:** December 25, 9:00 a.m.

**No New Year's Eve or New Year's Day Services**

