

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

DECEMBER 24, 2025
10:00PM



GOD APPEARS – LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

CANDLES ARE LIT, WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS,

OPENING HYMN “O Little Town of Bethlehem” LSB 361, sts. 1-4

Please stand

INVOCATION

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

People: **Amen.**

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: There were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

People: **And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear.**

Isaiah 9:2; Luke 2:8–9

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION *Luke 2:10, 14*

Pastor: Let us confess our sins to the Lord. Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace,

People: **we gather on this night to celebrate the birth of the One who brings us peace. Yet, we are not at peace with You, with one another, or with ourselves. Our sinfulness can cause us to be filled with fear. For the sake of Jesus, the Child who was born and Your Son, who was born to redeem us from all lawlessness, purify us as Your people and make us holy in Your sight.**

Pastor: The angel said to the shepherds, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people.” So, as God’s servant, I say to you, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy.”

Pastor: As a called and ordained servant in Christ's church and with His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: Let us join our voices with the multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

People: **"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased.**

HYMN OF PRAISE "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" LSB 380, sts. 1-3

SALUTATION AND PRAYER

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Let us pray together...

People **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 now we are adopted as Your children and may live in the light of our sure salvation. 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 sit

OLD TESTAMENT *Isaiah 9:2-7* ("To us a child is born, to us a son is given.")

² 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.

³ 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.

⁴ 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.

⁵ For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult
and every garment rolled in blood
will be burned as fuel for the fire.

(continued...)

⁶For 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.
⁷Of 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.

EPISTLE *Titus 2:11–14* (God's grace has appeared, bringing salvation.)

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

¹⁴who 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.

PSALM *Psalms 96*

Lector: Oh sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth!
Sing to the LORD, bless His name; tell of His salvation from day to day.
Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous works among all the
peoples! For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared
above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the
LORD made the heavens.

HYMN **"Joy to the World"** *LSB 387, st. 1*

Lector: Splendor and majesty are before Him; strength and beauty are in His
sanctuary. Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the
LORD glory and strength! Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name; bring
an offering, and come into His courts! Worship the LORD in the splendor of
holiness; tremble before Him, all the earth!

HYMN “Joy to the World” LSB 387, st. 2

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

HYMN “Joy to the World” LSB 387, st. 3

Lector: Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the LORD, for He comes, for He comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness, and the peoples in His faithfulness.

HYMN “Joy to the World” LSB 387, st. 4

Please stand

HOLY GOSPEL *Luke 2:1-20*

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

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And 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, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And 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.

⁸And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and

the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear.

¹⁰And 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.

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

¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

¹⁵When 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.”

(continued...)

¹⁶And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary

treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And 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 our Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Lord.

Please sit

SERMON HYMN “O Jesus So Sweet, O Jesus So Mild” LSB 546, sts. 1-3

SERMON *The Rev. Dr. Brent Klein*

Please stand

CATECHISM *The Second Article*

Pastor: We confess together, the second article of the Apostles’ Creed.

People: 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.

Pastor: What does this mean?

Pastor: 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

Pastor: To us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder.

People: Praise God from whom all blessings flow! The glory of the Lord has come down to us in Christ. Alleluia!

Pastor: O Wonderful Counselor,

People: hear our prayers and grant us Your peace and favor.

Pastor: O Mighty God,

People: give us eyes to see Your glory, ears to hear Your grace, and mouths to voice Your praise.

(Further petitions will be offered by the Pastor at this time)

Pastor: Into Your hands, O gracious Lord, we place our prayers and praise. We place ourselves and our loved ones into Your care, trusting in Your mercy and coming to You with confidence, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God forever. Hear us now as we pray as you have taught us:

LORD'S PRAYER *Matthew 6:9–13*

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.

Please sit

OFFERING

COMMUNION PREPARATION HYMN

“Gentle Mary Laid Her Child” LSB 374, sts. 1-3

Please stand

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.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: All glory, honor, and favor to You, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, for You have had mercy on this dark, sinful world and have appeared in it, bringing redemption for all people. Gathered this night, we remember Your birth and celebrate the gifts of Your life, death, and resurrection. Forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat at Your banquet Table and receive Your body and blood to redeem and purify us. Graciously receive our prayers, deliver us from our fears, and give us peace and favor; for You rule and reign with the Father and the Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

People: **Amen.**

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

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

People: **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

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

People: **Amen.**

Please sit

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

"What Child is This" *LSB 370, sts. 1-3*

"Away in a Manger" *LSB 364, sts. 1-3*

"Of the Father's Love Begotten" *LSB 384, sts. 1-5*

Please stand

COMMUNION DISMISSAL

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

People: **Amen**

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray.

We thank You this night for the glory of the Lord appearing to us in, with, and under the bread and wine to give us forgiveness and peace. Renew our hearts and lives so we may reveal Your grace and favor to the world; for You live and reign as one God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—now and forever.

People: **Amen. Please sit**

THE LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

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.

HYMN “Silent Night, Holy Night” LSB 363, sts. 1-3

Pastor: As the light of these candles illumines 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.

Please extinguish your candles.

CLOSING SENTENCES AND BENEDICTION

Pastor: Like the shepherds who were greeted by the angels, God has revealed the glory of the Lord to us.

People: **And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child.** *Luke 2:17*

BENEDICTION *Romans 15:13*

Pastor: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

People: **Amen.**

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.**

HYMN “From Heaven Above to Earth I Come” LSB 358, sts. 1,2,13,15

TO GOD BE THE GLORY