

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

December 24, 2024



Zion Lutheran Church

201 First Ave.
Hiawatha, IA 52233

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Prayer Before Worship: Almighty God, heavenly Father, I thank You for Your greatest gift to humankind, the gift of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, the Savior promised of old, whose birth we celebrate tonight. Send Your Holy Spirit to fill my soul with the joy of Your salvation. Amen.

Welcome and Announcements

Opening Hymn: 379 “O Come, All Ye Faithful”

1. O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him
Born the king of angels;

Refrain:
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!
2. Highest, most holy,
Light of Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
Son of the Father
Now in flesh appearing! [*Refrain*]
3. Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God
In the highest: [*Refrain*]
4. Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father
Now in flesh appearing! [*Refrain*]

Text: tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–80, alt.; John F. Wade, c. 1711–1786
Text: Public domain

Invocation and Versicles

- P** In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.
- P** I will tell of the decree: the Lord said to me,
“You are my Son; today I have begotten you.”
- C** **The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof,
the world and those who dwell therein.**
- P** Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord?
And who shall stand in his holy place?
- C** **He who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.**
- P** He will receive blessing from the Lord
and righteousness from the God of his salvation.
- C** **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**
- P** I will tell of the decree: the Lord said to me,
“You are my Son; today I have begotten you.”

Collect:

- P** Let us pray,
O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant us joy and peace this evening as we receive Your only-begotten Son, the Light of the World, as our Redeemer and Savior; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

The Christmas Story

The Messiah Promised of Old:

Gen. 3:14-15:

The LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

Isaiah 7:14:

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Isaiah 9:6:

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 11:1-2:

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

Hymn: 357 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (vv. 1-4)

1. O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.

Refrain:

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel

Shall come to thee, O Israel!

2. O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,
Who ord'rest all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And teach us in her ways to go. *[Refrain]*

3. O come, O come, Thou Lord of might,
Who to Thy tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times didst give the Law
In cloud and majesty and awe. *[Refrain]*

4. O come, Thou Branch of Jesse's tree,
Free them from Satan's tyranny
That trust Thy mighty pow'r to save,
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave.
[Refrain]

Text: Latin, c. 12th cent.; Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum, 1710, Köln; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-66, alt.
Text: Public domain

The Annunciation:

Luke 1:26-35:

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, “Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?” And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.

Hymn: 387 “Joy to the World”

1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King:
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing.
2. Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy.
3. No more let sins and sorrows grow
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found.
4. He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748
Text: Public domain

The Birth of the Promised Savior:

Luke 2:1-7:

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

Hymn: 361 “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

1. O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.
2. For Christ is born of Mary,
And gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the king
And peace to all the earth!
3. How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heav'n.
No ear may hear His coming;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still
The dear Christ enters in.
4. O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Immanuel!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-93
Text: Public domain

The Angels Proclaim the Good News to the Shepherds:

Luke 2:8-14:

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

Hymn: 380 "Hark the Herald Angels Sing"

1. Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain:
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!"
2. Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come,
Offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel! [*Refrain*]
3. Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Ris'n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth. [*Refrain*]

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-88, alt.
Text: Public domain

The Shepherds Visit the Christ Child:

Luke 2:15-20:

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." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Hymn: 368 “Angels We Have Heard on High”

1. Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And the mountains in reply,
Echoing their joyous strains. Refrain
- ref Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
2. Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav’nly song? Refrain
3. Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. Refrain

Text: tr. The Crown of Jesus, 1862, Part 2, London, alt.; French
Text: Public domain

Sermon

Apostles’ Creed

- ☩ I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.
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.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life ☩ everlasting. Amen.**

Offering

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.

Benediction

P 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.

Candlelight Closing:

(Pastor lights his candle from the Christ Candle and lights the ushers' candles. The ushers then go out into the congregation lighting the candle of the first person in each pew.)

Hymn: 363 "Silent Night"

1. Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon' virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.
2. Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven a far,
Heav'nly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
3. Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Text: Franz Joseph Mohr, 1792-1848; tr. John F. Young, 1820-85
Text: Public domain

Closing:

P Merry Christmas! Christ, the Savior, is born!
C Christ, the Savior, is born! Alleluia!