

Christmas Eve
December 24, 2020

Faith Lutheran Church

Online

Georgetown, TX 78628

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flcms.org

(The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod)

OPENING HYMN: “Angels from the Realms of Glory” (Lutheran Service Book, #367)

Angels from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o’er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation’s story,
Now proclaim Messiah’s birth. **Refrain**

REFRAIN:

Come and worship, come and worship;
Worship Christ, the newborn King.

Shepherds in the field abiding,
Watching o’er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing,
Yonder shines the Infant Light. **Refrain**

Sages, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations,
Ye have seen His natal star. **Refrain**

Saints before the altar bending,
Watching long in hope and fear,
Suddenly the Lord, descending,
In His temple shall appear. **Refrain**

All creation, join in praising
God the Father, Spirit, Son,
Evermore your voices raising
To the_ eternal Three in One. **Refrain**

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INVOCATION:

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

People: Amen.

INVITATORY:

Pastor: Unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is given!

People: Oh, come, let us worship Him.

Pastor: The wages of sin is death;

People: but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Pastor: For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son

People: that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Pastor: The Son of Man did not come to be served,

People: but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.

Pastor: Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance:

People: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

Pastor: Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people;

People: and He will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for Him.

Pastor: Unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is given!

People: Oh, come, let us worship Him!

(Isaiah 9:6; Romans 6:23; John 3:16; Mark 10:45; 1 Timothy 1:15; Hebrews 9:28)

GREETING, BIDDING PRAYER, AND LORD'S PRAYER:

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

THE BIDDING PRAYER:

Pastor: Beloved in Christ, at this Christmas-tide let it be our care and delight to hear again the message of the angels, and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger. Therefore let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the account of the loving purpose of God in sending His Son to save humankind from sin and death.

But first, let us pray for the needs of the whole world; for peace on earth and goodwill among all people; for unity within the Church Christ came to build, and this year, especially, for an end to pandemic and partisanship. And because this would rejoice God's heart, let us remember in His name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry,

and the oppressed; the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and the unloved, the aged and the little children; all those who do not know the Lord Jesus, or who do not love Him, or who by sin have grieved His heart of love.

Lastly, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore, and in a greater light, that multitude which no person can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom in the Lord Jesus we are one forevermore. These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the Throne of Heaven in the words which Christ Himself has taught us:

All: 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.

THE CHRISTMAS GOSPEL: Luke 1:26-38

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. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

HYMN: "Angels We Have Heard on High" (LSB, #368)

Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,

And the mountains in reply,
Echoing their joyous strains. **Refrain**

REFRAIN

Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav'nly song? **Refrain**

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. **Refrain**

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THE CHRISTMAS GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with Child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son,
and they shall call His name Immanuel"

(which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a Son. And he called His name Jesus.

HYMN: "Away in a Manger" (LSB, #365)

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And take us to heaven to live with Thee there.

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THE CHRISTMAS GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-20

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.

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 fear. 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. 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!"

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: “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (LSB, #361)

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.

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!

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.

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!

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SERMON: “The Sky’s the Limit” (*Isaiah 7:10-14*)

OFFERTORY:

While the Coronavirus may have changed the way we come through the front doors of church, thanks be to God it has not prevented us from coming to Church! Please consider, as you are able, returning thanks and giving today at www.flcms.org/index.php/give.

OFFERTORY HYMN: “Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising” (LSB, #375, verses 1 and 6)

Come, your hearts and voices raising,
Christ the Lord with gladness praising;
Loudly sing His love amazing,
Worthy folk of Christendom.

Gracious Child, we pray, O hear us,
From Your lowly manger cheer us,
Gently lead us and be near us
Till we join Your choir above.

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PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Lord Jesus, Son of God, the gospel of Your birth fills us with wonder. Wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger, You are God’s Christmas gift to us. Preserve in our hearts the joy of this night, and move us to share it gladly and eagerly with others.

Loving Father, the mystery and miracle of Christmas astonish us anew each year. We tremble with a mixture of fear and delight as we ponder the angel’s announcement, “Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, Who is Christ the Lord.” Who are we to be given such a gift? Who are we to be so highly favored? With sweet relief we hear the word, “Fear not!” and we hasten to Bethlehem to find the Child whose birth inspires angels to sing and turns shepherds into evangelists. Keep fresh within us the marvel of Jesus’ coming, and prompt us by faith to hold before the world the Holy One Whom Mary once held in her arms.

Incarnate Word, You have secured our salvation. You have forgiven our sin. You have opened our graves and promised us places with You in Paradise. By Your death and resurrection You have restored to us all that Satan robbed from us. Eternity and all its blessings are ours because You entered history and died and rose in our place. How can we praise You for such goodness?

Into Your cradle to rest with You, Lord Jesus, we place dear ones, families and friends whose needs this evening press on our hearts. Around the world, within our congregation, and in our own families are those for whom this day's joys are dimmed by griefs and pains. According to Your perfect will heal the sick, comfort the bereaved, befriend the lonely, shelter the homeless, encourage the despairing, protect the endangered, and embrace the dying. Grant Your protection to all who serve our nation, and Your wisdom to those who govern all nations.

To You alone, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all glory, honor, worship, and thanksgiving, for You have revealed to us the measure of Your love in Bethlehem's lowly manger, Calvary's bloodied cross, and Easter's emptied tomb. Make it all our delight to lead others where You have led us.

In the shadows of a stable we glimpse the outlines of heaven. There Jesus reigns at Your right hand, holy Father, and from there He will come again. In His name, we dare to approach You in prayer, and by His commission are bold to say to the world, "Peace, goodwill to all."

Lord Jesus, Son of God, in solemnity and serenity of this moment the angels' song becomes our song. With Christians around the world, with believers of every age and place, with cherubim and seraphim and the whole company of heaven we repeat the glad refrain, "Glory to God in the Highest" and we sing to You this peaceful lullaby of praise:

HYMN: "Silent Night, Holy Night" (LSB, #363)

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.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!

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.

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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 on you with favor and give you peace.*

People: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: "Joy to the World" (LSB, #387)

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 heav'n and nature sing.

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, repeat the sounding joy.

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, far as the curse is found.

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, wonders of His love.

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DISMISSAL:

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Go in peace and serve the Lord!

In Christian Service:

All disciples of the Lord Jesus

with

Proclaimer – Rev. Bill Crowe

Liturgist – Rev. Walt Pohland

Lay Readers: Children of Faith Lutheran Church

Musicians: Adam Perez and Austin Angerman

Children's Chapel: DCE Jonathan Loesch, DCE Austin Angerman