



Glory to God

IN THE HIGHEST,
AND ON EARTH

peace,

GOOD WILL
TOWARD MEN.

LUKE 2:14, KJV

Christmas Eve Worship
Bethany Lutheran Church (ELCA)

RINGING OF THE BELL
PRELUDE AND LIGHTING OF CANDLES
WELCOME

Those gathered are invited to respond with the bold printed words.

CHRISTMAS DIALOG

Jesus Christ is the Light of the world!

He is the Light no darkness can overcome.

At darkest night we gather to celebrate the great light of our salvation.

With the heavenly host we sing, "Glory to God in the highest heaven."

In Christ, God's Word is made flesh and lives among us.

With the shepherds, we will tell of the wonders we have seen and heard.

GREETING AND PRAYER

May the grace and truth of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your only son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

HYMN O Come, All Ye Faithful (Luther College Nordic Choir)

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7

This poem promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth of a royal child with a name full of promise. While Judah's king will practice justice and righteousness, the real basis for faith lies in God's passion for the people: The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this!

A reading from Isaiah.

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them light has shined. ³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.

⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HYMN *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king;
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

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 we no more may die,
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us second birth. *Refrain*

PSALM 96

Psalm 96 is a hymn of praise.

¹Sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the earth.

²**Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD;
proclaim God's salvation from day to day.**

³Declare God's glory among the nations
and God's wonders among all peoples.

⁴**For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised,
more to be feared than all gods.**

⁵As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols;
but you, O LORD, have made the heavens.

⁶**Majesty and magnificence are in your presence;
power and splendor are in your sanctuary.**

⁷Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples,
ascribe to the LORD honor and power.

⁸**Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name;
bring offerings and enter the courts of the LORD.**

⁹Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness;
tremble before the LORD, all the earth.

¹⁰**Tell it out among the nations: "The LORD is king!
The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved
will judge the peoples with equity."**

¹¹Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

¹²**Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O LORD,
for you come to judge the earth.**

¹³You will judge the world with righteousness
and the peoples with your truth.

HYMN *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above the deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
yet in the dark streets shineth the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

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;
oh, come to us, abide with us, our Lord Immanuel!

SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14

The appearance of God's grace in Jesus Christ brings salvation for all humanity. Consequently, in the present we live wisely and justly while also anticipating the hope of our Savior's final appearance.

A reading from Titus.

¹¹The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HYMN *Away in a Manger* (Luther College Nordic Choir)

GOSPEL READING: Luke 2:1-20

God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth 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 heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us."

¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN *Angels We Have Heard on High* (Association of Lutheran Church Musicians)

THE PRAYERS

Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

Wonderful Counselor, increase our joy as the church gathers on this holy night to sing of our dear Savior's birth. May the story of salvation live in the hearts of all who sing of its wonders. God of grace,
Hear our prayer.

Mighty God, you have broken the yoke of sin's burden through the birth of your Son. Comfort those whose burdens distract them from the deeper peace of this holy night and grant them a restful mind. God of peace,
Hear our prayer.

Everlasting Father, uphold all who are in sorrow or need of your divine goodness and mercy. We remember with thanksgiving all who have died and who now rest in your peaceful light. God of love,
Hear our prayer.

Gracious God, bathe us always in the light of your Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING

During this time, an offering would normally be taken for the mission of Christ's church. We are grateful for your gifts and they are needed to continue the work of the church. We understand in this time some have lost jobs, had hours reduced and may be incurring a financial hardship and therefore unable to financially give; while others may be able to give more. Options on ways to give are found on our website (www.wbbethany.org). Thank you!

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with the gifts of ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

We invite you to light a candle at home during the Hymn of Light.

HYMN OF LIGHT *Silent Night, Holy Night!* (Performed by Jill Barnhart and Cliff Hinkhouse)

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 your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord at your birth.

BLESSING

May God, who has called you out of darkness to be servants of light, grant you the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, and the peace of the Christ Child. Almighty God, the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING

Glory to God in the Highest!

Peace to God's people on earth!

Live in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

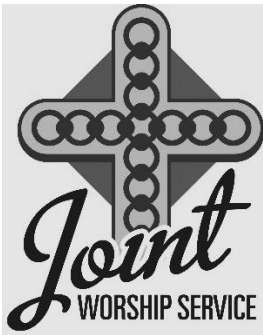


**Thanks for
Worshipping With Us**

Thank you for worshipping with us! We invite you to join us Sundays at 9:30 AM on Facebook. Merry Christmas! Thanks, and praise to God for everything you do in the name of Jesus Christ!

Have you often wondered what "Gloria in excelsis Deo" means in the hymn *Angels We Have Heard on High*? It is Latin and the English translation is "Glory to God in the highest."

*Glory
to
God
in the
highest
heaven!*
LUKE 2:14 NRSV



The Office of the Bishop will be providing a pre-recorded Service of the Word worship service this Sunday. We will stream it on our Facebook page at 9:30 AM. A bulletin will be located on our website (www.wbbethany.org).

The Luther College Nordic Choir prepared an additional hymn, *Night of Silence*, not used in tonight's worship. If you would like to view that hymn, please visit:

<https://tinyurl.com/y7v39fnw>



Thanks to our Christmas Eve ministry assistants: Lisa Zimmerman (lector), Jill Barnhart (pianist and vocalist), Cliff Hinkhouse (vocalist), David Fischer (video editor) and Linda Black (sacristan). Thanks also to the Luther College Nordic Choir and the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians for their musical gifts.



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Scripture passage from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).



The poinsettias around the altar were donated by the following individuals or families.

Betty Slach

In memory of Kenny Slach

Julianne Jenson and Kaleb Sexton

In memory of Harvey and Sara Jensen

Tami Urmie

In memory of Allen Livingston
Dave and Gloria Urmie

John and Linda Black

In memory of our grandparents

Paul and Deanna Weismann

In memory of our parents
Esther Weismann,
Donald and Fern Thompson

Chad and Amanda Whaley

In memory of Brian Whaley,
Jon Nelson
and our grandparents

Curt and Paula Casper

In memory of our loved ones who have passed

The Kaufman family

In memory of Vernon Kaufman,
Duayne Benson
and Don Solms