

# Christmas Eve Lessons and Carols

## December 24, 2023



## Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church

*The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*  
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*Tonight's service is based on the service of lessons and carols which started at King's College, Cambridge England in 1918. The prayers and the blessing are largely taken from that service. However, that which drives the service are the readings from Holy Scripture that chronicle the "loving purposes of God" throughout history. These purposes have been revealed to us in the child born of Mary, Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*Along with the children of our congregation, the texts are read by members who represent different organizations that serve our church and community. May we be reminded that God became flesh for us in Jesus, and He is still present in the people of His church at every age. For His church He died and rose, and through His church He continues to bring life and light through the gospel.*



**CHILDREN'S DIRECTOR**

Amanda Zeisler

**CHOIR DIRECTOR**

David Witt

**ORGANIST**

Phil Hesterman

**PASTOR**

Micah Gaunt



## **Bidding Prayer**

P. Beloved in Christ, this Christmas Eve, may it be our care and delight to prepare ourselves 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.

Let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption brought us by this Holy Child; and let us make this church glad with our carols of praise:

But first let us pray for the whole Christian Church, that our Lord God would defend her against all the assaults and temptations of the adversary and keep her perpetually on the true foundation, Jesus Christ:

And because the birth of this same Christ of Mary by the power of God has revealed unto us God's light and life, let us pray our Lord God Almighty that He would deliver the world from all error, take away disease, ward off famine, set free those in bondage, remember in mercy our enemies, grant health to the sick and a safe journey to all who travel:

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 man can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in this Lord Jesus, we forevermore are one.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven, along with all that our Lord would have us ask, saying:

**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**

P. Lo, to us the Christ is born.

**C. O come, let us worship Him.**

*Please be Seated*



*First Lesson (Congregational Vice President)*

**Genesis 3**

*God tells sinful Adam that he has lost the life of Paradise and that  
his seed will bruise the serpent's head.*

**What Child Is This #370**

**Congregation: What child is this, who, laid to rest,  
On Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet  
While shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the king,  
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,  
The babe, the son of Mary!**

Why lies He in such mean estate  
Where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear;  
For sinners here The silent Word is pleading.  
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,  
The cross be borne for me, for you;  
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,  
The babe, the son of Mary!

So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh;  
Come, peasant, king, to own Him.  
The King of kings salvation brings;  
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.  
Raise, raise the song on high,  
The virgin sings her lullaby;  
Joy, joy, for Christ is born,  
The babe, the son of Mary!



*Second Lesson (Human Care Committee)*  
**Genesis 22**

*God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall all the  
nations of the earth be blessed.*

**Joy To the World #387**

**Congregation: 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.**



*Third Lesson (Choir Member)*

**Isaiah 9**

*The prophet foretells the coming of the Savior.*

**O Little Town of Bethlehem #361**

**Congregation: 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!



*Fourth Lesson (Board of Education)*

**Isaiah 11**

*The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.*

**Choir – From Heaven Winging**





*Fifth Lesson (Lutheran Women's Missionary League)*

**St. Luke 1**

*The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

**Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising #375**

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

Christ, from heav'n to us descending  
And in love our race befriending;  
In our need His help extending,  
Saved us from the wily foe.

Jacob's star in all its splendor  
Beams with comfort sweet and tender,  
Forcing satan to surrender,  
Breaking all the pow'rs of hell.

**Cong:            From the bondage that oppressed us,  
From sin's fetters that possessed us,  
From the grief that sore distressed us,  
We, the captives, now are free.**

**Oh, the joy beyond expressing  
When by faith we grasp this blessing,  
And to you we come confessing  
That Your love has set us free.**

**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.**



*Sixth Lesson (Children)*

**St. Luke 2**

*The evangelist tells of the birth of Jesus.*

**Away in a Manger #364**

**Children**



*Seventh Lesson (Children)*

**St. Luke 2**

*The shepherds go to the manger.*

**Go Tell It on the Mountain # 388**

Children:

Refrain: Go tell it on the mountain,  
Over the hills and ev'ry where;  
Go tell it on the mountain  
That Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching  
O'er silent flocks by night,  
Behold, throughout the heavens  
There shown a holy light.

Refrain

The shepherds feared and trembled  
When lo, above the earth  
Rang out the angel chorus  
That hailed our Savior's birth.

Refrain

*Congregation joins in singing the last verse and refrain*

**Cong:                   Down in a lonely manger  
                          The humble Christ was born;  
                          And God sent us salvation  
                          That blessed Christmas morn.**

*Refrain – Congregation and Children*

**Message**

**Offering**



*Eighth Lesson (Elder)*

**St. Matthew 2**

*The wise men are led by the star to Jesus*

**Gentle Mary Laid Her Child #374**

**Congregation:   Gentle Mary laid her child  
                          Lowly in a manger;  
                          There He lay, the Undefined,  
                          To the world a stranger.  
                          Such a babe in such a place,  
                          Can He be the Savior?  
                          Ask the saved of all the race  
                          Who have found His favor.**

**Angels sang about His birth,  
Wise Men sought and found Him;  
Heaven's star shone brightly forth  
Glory all around Him.  
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight,  
Heard the angels singing;  
All the plains were lit that night,  
All the hills were ringing.**

**Gentle Mary laid her child  
Lowly in a manger;  
He is still the undefiled  
But no more a stranger.  
Son of God of humble birth,  
Beautiful the story;  
Praise His name in all the earth;  
Hail the King of glory!**



*The congregation lights their candles.*



*Ninth Lesson (Pastor)*  
**St. John 1**  
*The glory of the Incarnation*

**Silent Night, Holy Night #363**

**Congregation:      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.**

*Please Stand*

**Collect and Blessing**

P. The Lord be with you.

**C. And with thy spirit.**

P. Let us pray. O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Your only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our Judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C. Amen**

P. The Almighty God grant you his grace: Christ give you the joys of everlasting life: and unto the fellowship of the citizens above may the king of Angels bring us all. The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

**C. Amen.**

*The congregation extinguishes their candles.*

**Hark! The Herald Angels Sing #380**

**Congregation: 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!”**

**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*

**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*

# *Christmas Day*

By Christina Rossetti

A baby is a harmless thing  
And wins our hearts with one accord,  
And Flower of Babies was their King,  
Jesus Christ our Lord:  
Lily of lilies He  
Upon His Mother's knee;  
Rose of roses, soon to be  
Crowned with thorns on leafless tree.

A lamb is innocent and mild  
And merry on the soft green sod;  
And Jesus Christ, the Undefined,  
Is the Lamb of God:  
Only spotless He  
Upon His Mother's knee;  
White and ruddy, soon to be  
Sacrificed for you and me.

Nay, lamb is not so sweet a word,  
Nor lily half so pure a name;  
Another name our hearts hath stirred,  
Kindling them to flame:  
"Jesus" certainly  
Is music and melody:  
Heart with heart in harmony  
Carol we and worship we.

Monday, December 25<sup>th</sup>  
9 AM Divine Service (Christmas Day)

