

Christmas Eve
Tuesday, December 24, 2020



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**In the name of Jesus, the newborn Babe of Bethlehem, welcome to
Christmas Eve worship.**



GATHERING

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

P: Lord God, may your Word become flesh through our lives so that we may see him in the fullness of his glory

C: Amen.

PASTORAL GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C; And also with you

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: 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 Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7

L: The First Lesson is from Isaiah the 9th chapter, beginning at the 2nd verse:

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.

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14

L: The Second Lesson is from Titus the 2nd chapter, beginning at the 11th verse:

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.

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 11th chapter, beginning at the 2nd verse:

C: 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.]

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

APOSTLE'S CREED

A: God has made us his people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith:

**C: I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

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

The shepherds sing, "Jesus Christ is born!" Let your church throughout the world proclaim this good news, over the hills and everywhere. Unite the voices of all your faithful people in songs of praise and rejoicing. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Heaven and nature sing, “Joy to the world!” Give respite to flocks, fields, and those who tend them. Come near to us in the beauty of nighttime, the shining of the stars, and the hush of a world at rest. May our wonder at your creation rouse our care for all the earth. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: The angels sing, “Peace on earth!” Come quickly to still the strife of this world. Hush the noise of war and violence in places of unrest. Inspire leaders of nations to seek lasting peace and sustainable provision for all in their care. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: Mary sings melodies of comfort to her newborn child. Bring rest and reassurance to those facing struggles this night. Shelter travelers and those without homes. Console those who lie awake due to pain or anxiety. Heal those who are sick or hurting..... Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: Gracious God, watch over and care for all persons who serve in the military. Today we especially rememberHear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Love sings through the sound of a new baby’s cry. Bless new parents and expectant parents. Comfort those who long for children, especially those running out of hope or options. Surround families of every shape and size with your love and care. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: The heavenly chorus sings, “Glory to God in the highest!” We give you thanks for all the saints who have proclaimed your glory in word and deed. Let us join them this night in joyful praise around your eternal throne. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to you, in the name of Jesus.

C: Amen.

PEACE

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

C: **And also with you.**

P: Let us greet one another with a sign of God's peace.

*The congregation is invited to greet one another with a gesture of peace
(hand shake or hug) using these or similar words – God's peace be with you.*

OFFERING

SOLO

OFFERTORY RESPONSE

OFFERTORY PRAYER

A: Gracious God, you came to us as one unknown, bringing joy and salvation to the earth. Nourish us at your banquet table, that with all who welcome your birth we may proclaim your peace, revealed in Jesus Christ, our Savior

C: **Amen**

LORD'S PRAYER

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

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.**

DISTRIBUTION

We welcome you to the Lord's Table to share the Sacrament of Holy Communion with us. Holy Communion is served with both red wine and white grape juice. It is your choice to receive either one.

Empty cups may be placed in the bowl to the left or right as you return to your seat.

COMMUNION

COMMUNION BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: **Amen**

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

A: We give thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us from your very self with the body and blood of Christ. Through this mystery, send us forth to proclaim your promise to a world in need, through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior.

C: **Amen**

BLESSING

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

C: **Amen**

LIGHTING OF CANDLES

SENDING HYMN

POSTLUDE

DISMISSAL

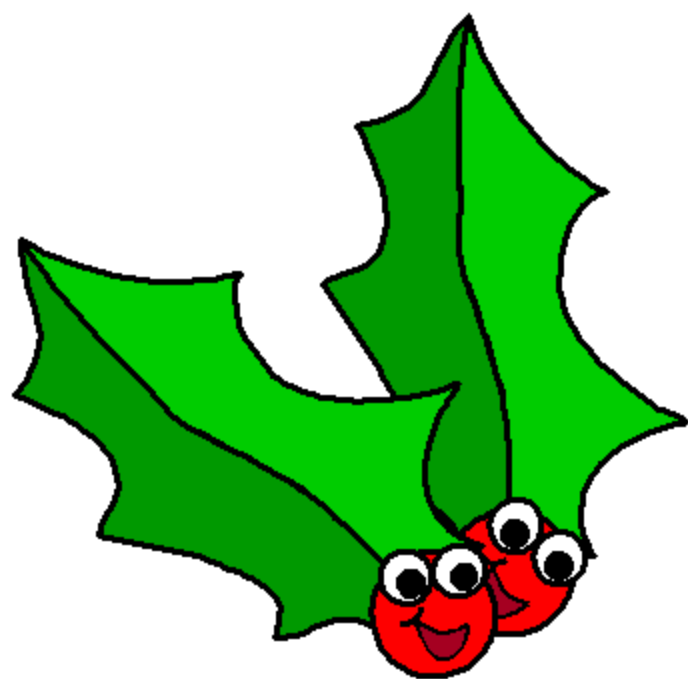
A: Go in peace. Share the good news.

C: **Thanks be to God.**



Christmas Word Search

O B E A Y H A R E E S P G L R T
F R Q N G L E T O B A R N R V I
C W N I A I I T N Y M E I U S N
M O E A N C E M E A T S F D T S
Y L O D M L Y N A U S E F O H E
S L E K T E M D R F I N U L G L
O E L S I I N K N U R T T P I C
R U I O H E E T T A H S S H L A
F M H C H Y S S T O C K I N G S
S E I R R E B N A R C S E V L E



candycane
chimney
Christmas
cookies
cranberries
elves
family
holly
lights
mistletoe

ornament
presents
reindeer
Rudolph
Santa
sleigh
stockings
stuffing
tinsel
turkey

To You This Day

Luke sets the stage for Jesus' birth by placing it within the royal history of the Roman Empire: "In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus" (Luke 2:1). Prior to this chapter, Luke tells us the story is also set in the days of King Herod. World history is often told as a story of powerful rulers and wealthy people. We frequently have the impression that these people are the ones who truly matter. Most of us do not see ourselves in the pages of history, common folks living ordinary lives.

Luke, however, is writing a very different kind of history in the gospel story. While the story is set in the times of particular kings and emperors, these powerful men aren't the focus of the story. Instead of sending out the royal birth announcement for the King of kings in a gold-embossed birth letter to Herod, Augustus, and other so-called important people, God first shares the news of the newborn Messiah and Savior with shepherds camped out for the night in lonely fields. Lowly Mary and humble Joseph hunker down in the back of a crowded house where the animals eat. Jesus, the royalty of God, is born into a world barely aware—except for a few nobodies who are invited to notice.

Along with the shepherds, you also are invited to notice. "You" is the operative word in the shepherds' story. "To you is born this day . . . a Savior" (Luke 2:11). In the story, "you" refers to shepherds, the last people one would expect to be the first to receive news of Jesus' birth. But today, in this divine night, in this sacred story, in this liturgy of the nativity, "you" is *you*. To *you* is born a Savior, the Messiah, the Lord. You are receiving the royal announcement because God brings good news to common folks living ordinary lives. This lovely, lonely night is for you because Christ is God's love for *you*.