

## **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**

**December 24, 2020-- 6PM**

### **The Gathering of Hearts**

**Welcome** to Memorial Lutheran Church's Christmas Eve Candlelight service

**Opening Song:**        ***"In the Bleak Midwinter"*** (ELW #294 v. 1&2)

*In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,  
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;  
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
in the bleak midwinter, long ago*

*Heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain.  
Heav'n and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign;  
in the bleak midwinter a stable place suffice  
the Lord...God almighty, Jesus Christ.*

**Call to Worship p1 (Holden Evening Prayer) Assistant – Greg Silliman**

P:     *Jesus Christ you are the light of the world,*

A:     *the light no darkness can overcome.*

P:     *Stay with us now, for it is evening.*

A:     *and the day is almost over.*

P:     *Let your light scatter the darkness,*

A:     *and shine within your people here...*

**Song:**                ***"Joyous Light"*** (Holden Evening Prayer, p. 2-3)

*Joyous light of heav'nly glory, loving glow of God's own face,  
you who sing creation's story, shine on eve'ry land and race.  
Now as evening falls around us, we shall raise our songs to you,  
God of daybreak, God of shadows, come and light our hearts anew.*

*In the stars that grace the darkness, in the blazing sun of dawn,  
of the light of peace and wisdom, we can hear your quiet song.  
Love that fills the night with wonder, love that warms the weary soul,  
Love that bursts all chains asunder, set us free and make us whole.*

*You who made the heaven's splendor, ev'ry dancing star of night,  
make us shine with gentle justice, let us each reflect your light.  
Mighty God of all creation, gentle Christ who lights our way,  
Loving Spirit of salvation, lead us on to endless day.*

**Song: "Joy to the World" (ELW #267, v.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 heav'n and nature sing.*

**Litany (Holden Evening Prayer, p. 4&5)**

P: *May God Be with you all*

A: *And also with you*

P: *Let us sing our thanks to God.*

A: *It is right to give God thanks and praise.*

**Song: "Blessed Are You" (Holden Evening Prayer, p.4-5)**

P: *Blessed are you, Creator of the universe  
from old you have led your people by night and day.  
May the light of your Christ make our darkness bright,  
for your Word and your presence are the light of our pathways,  
and you are the light and life of all creation. Amen.*

**Song: "Let My Prayer Rise Up" (Holden Evening Prayer, p. 6-11)**

P/A. *Let my prayer rise up like incense before you,  
the lifting up of my hands as an offering to you.*

*O God, I call to you come to me now;  
O hear my voice when I cry to you.  
Let my prayer rise up like incense before you,  
the lifting up of my hands as an offering to you.*

*Keep watch with in me, God' deep in my heart  
may the light of your love be burning bright.*

*Let my prayer rise up like incense before you,  
the lifting up of my hands as an offering to you.*

*All praise to the God of all—Creator of life;  
all praise be to Christ and the Spirit of love.*

*Let my prayer rise up like incense before you  
the lifting up of my hands as an offering to you.*

P. May our prayers come before you, O God, as incense, and may your presence surround and fill us, so that in union with all creation, we might sing your praise and your love in our lives.

### **Resting in the Word of Peace**

#### **Scripture Readings**

**Sara Hermiller**

#### **1<sup>st</sup> reading: Isaiah 9:2-7 MSG**

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. For those who lived in a land of deep shadows—light! sunbursts of light! You repopulated the nation, you expanded its joy. Oh, they're so glad in your presence! Festival joy! The joy of a great celebration, sharing rich gifts and warm greetings. The abuse of oppressors and cruelty of tyrants—all their whips and cudgels and curses—Is gone, done away with, a deliverance as surprising and sudden as Gideon's old victory over Midian. The boots of all those invading troops, along with their shirts soaked with innocent blood, Will be piled in a heap and burned, a fire that will burn for days! For a child has been born—for us! the gift of a son—for us! He'll take over the running of the world. His names will be: Amazing Counselor, Strong God, Eternal Father, Prince of Wholeness. His ruling authority will grow, and there'll be no limits to the wholeness he brings. He'll rule from the historic David throne over that promised kingdom. He'll put that kingdom on a firm footing and keep it going With fair dealing and right living, beginning now and lasting always.

The zeal of GOD-of-the-Angel-Armies will do all this.

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> reading: 2 Titus 2:11-14 MSG**

God's readiness to give and forgive is now public. Salvation's available for everyone! We're being shown how to turn our backs on a godless, indulgent life, and how to take on a God-filled, God-honoring life. This new life is starting right now, and is whetting our appetites for the glorious day when our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, appears. He offered himself as a sacrifice to free us from a dark, rebellious life into this good, pure life, making us a people he can be proud of, energetic in goodness.

**Song:**

***"Cradle Carol"***

**Quintet**

**Gospel:** Luke 2:1-20

#### **The Birth of Jesus**

About that time Caesar Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Empire. This was the first census when Quirinius was governor of Syria. Everyone had to travel to his own ancestral hometown to be accounted for. So Joseph went from the Galilean town of Nazareth up to Bethlehem in Judah, David's town, for the census. As a descendant of David, he had to go there. He went with Mary, his fiancée, who was pregnant.

While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. She gave birth to a son, her firstborn. She wrapped him in a blanket and laid him in a manger, because there was no room in the hostel.

### **An Event for Everyone**

There were shepherders camping in the neighborhood. They had set night watches over their sheep. Suddenly, God's angel stood among them and God's glory blazed around them. They were terrified. The angel said, "Don't be afraid. I'm here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide: A Savior has just been born in David's town, a Savior who is Messiah and Master. This is what you're to look for: a baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger."

At once the angel was joined by a huge angelic choir singing God's praises: "Glory to God in the heavenly heights, Peace to all men and women on earth who please him."

As the angel choir withdrew into heaven, the shepherders talked it over. "Let's get over to Bethlehem as fast as we can and see for ourselves what God has revealed to us." They left, running, and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. Seeing was believing. They told everyone they met what the angels had said about this child. All who heard the shepherders were impressed.

Mary kept all these things to herself, holding them dear, deep within herself. The shepherders returned and let loose, glorifying and praising God for everything they had heard and seen. It turned out exactly the way they'd been told!

**The Christmas Message**

**Rev. A.N. Mary Adelsberger**

**Solo:           “Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming” (ELW #272)**

**Solo Greg Silliman**

*Lo, how a rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!  
Of Jesse's lineage coming as seers of old have sung,  
it came, a flow'r so bright amid the cold of winter, when half-spent was the night*

**The Meal of Life is Shared**

P: The light shines in the darkness   A. and the darkness has not overcome it.

**The Great Thanksgiving**

P. The Lord be with you.   **C. And also with you.**

P. Lift up your hearts.   **C. We lift them to the Lord.**

P. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C. It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

**The Proper Preface “The Annunciation” (Holden Evening Prayer, p. 12)**

P.    *An angel went from God to a town called Nazareth  
to a woman whose name was Mary.*

*The angel said to her “Rejoice, O highly favored—for God is with you.  
You shall bear a child, and his name shall be Jesus,  
the Chosen One of God Most High.”*

*And Mary said, “I am the servant of my God, I live to do your will.”*

*My soul proclaims your greatness o God,  
and my spirit rejoices in you.*

*You have looked with love on your servant here  
and blessed me all my life through.*

*Great and mighty are you, O holy One,  
strong is your kindness evermore.*

*How you favor the weak and lowly one,  
humbling the proud of heart.*

*You have cast the mighty down from their thrones  
and uplifted the humble of heart.*

*You have filled the hungry with wondrous things  
and left the wealthy no part.*

*Great and mighty are you, O Faithful One,  
strong is your justice, strong your love,*

*As you promised to Sarah and Abraham,  
kindness forevermore.*

*My soul proclaims your greatness O God,  
and my spirit rejoices in you.*

*You have looked with love on your servant here  
and blessed me all my life through.*

### **The Words of Institution**

On the night in which He was betrayed, Jesus gathered in the upper room to celebrate the Passover with His disciples. He took bread, blessed it, and gave it to them to eat, saying, "This is my body broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Again, after the same matter, He took the cup, and after giving thanks, He gave it to them saying, "This is my blood shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me."

### **The Lord's Prayer**

P. God, remember us in your love, and teach us to pray...

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by your name. Your Kingdom come; your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

**Communion Music**—Carol Topolski

### **The Post communion Prayer:**

P. Great and merciful God, Source and Ground of all goodness and life. Give to your people the peace that passes all understanding and the will to live your Gospel of mercy and justice, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **The Response to hearing of God's love**

**The Prayers of the People** (Holden Evening Prayer, p. 16 &17)

**C. God of mercy, hold us in love.**

P. *In peace, in peace, we pray to you:*

**C. God of mercy, hold us in love.**

A. *For peace and salvation, we pray to you:*

**C. God of mercy, hold us in love.**

P. *For peace between nations, for peace between peoples;*

**C. God of mercy, hold us in love.**

A. *For we who are gathered to worship and praise you:*

**C. God of mercy, hold us in love.**

P. *For all of your servants who live our your gospel:*

**C. God of mercy, hold us in love.**

A. *For all those who govern, that justice might guide them.*

**C. God of mercy, hold us in love.**

P. *For all those who labor in service to others.*

**C. God of mercy, hold us in love.**

A. *Grant weather that nourishes all of creation:*

**C. God of mercy, hold us in love.**

P. *Keep watch on our loved ones and keep us from danger:*

**C. God of mercy, hold us in love.**

A. *For all the beloved who rest in your mercy:*

**C. God of mercy, hold us in love.**

P. *Help us, comfort us, all of our days.*

**C. Keep us, hold us, gracious God.**

**Song:**                    **“It Came Upon a Midnight Clear” (ELW #282, v. 1)**

*It came upon a midnight clear, that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold.  
“Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav’n’s all gracious king.”  
The world in solemn still ness lay to hear the angels sing.*

### **Sent to Tell the Good News**

**The Blessing** (Holden Evening Prayer, p. 18-19)

A. *Let us bless our God*   **C. praise and thanks to you.**

P. *May God, creator bless us and keep us, may Christ be ever light for our lives,  
may the Spirit of love be our guide and path, for all of our days.*   **C. Amen.**

**Song:**                    **“Silent Night” (ELW # 281 v. 1)**

*Silent Night, Holy night, all is calm all is bright.  
Round yon virgin mother child, Holy Infant, so tender and mild.  
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.*

**Song:**                    **“Ding Dong Merrily on High”**

**Sister Act**

**Dismissal**

A: Go in Peace serve the Lord.   **C. Thanks be to God**