

Wednesday, December 24, 2008

Nativity of Our Lord

Holy Communion

On a long winter evening we gather to proclaim the coming of the light. Isaiah announces that the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Paul reminds us that the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all. In the familiar account of Christ's birth, the evening sky is bright with the heavenly host singing, "Glory to God in the highest." Amid our broken world we proclaim that the prince of peace is born among us. God comes to us in human flesh—in Christ's body and blood—so that we may be bearers of divine light to all the world.

Gathering

The Holy Spirit gathers us to worship.

PRELUDE *"Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring"* **J.S. Bach**

GATHERING SONG *"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"* **ELW 270**

GREETING

The grace and peace of Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, be with you all.

And also with you.

HYMN OF PRAISE *"Angels We Have Heard on High"* **ELW 289**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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. **Amen.**

MEDLEY OF CHRISTMAS SONGS (4:00 PM) **St. John's Children**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE (4:00 PM)

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.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

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.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL

Luke 2:1–14 [15–20]

The holy gospel according to Luke, the second chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Meal

Christ is present to give forgiveness, life, and salvation.

OFFERING

“Domine Fili Unigenite” from Gloria

Vivaldi

Translation: Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father

OFFERING HYMN

“Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”

ELW 276

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...and join their unending hymn:



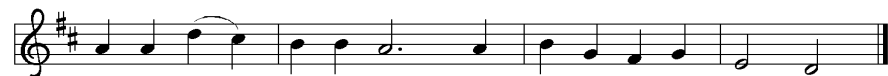
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,



heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.



Ho - san-na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes



in the name of the Lord. Ho - san-na in the high - est.

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life: Blessed are you for the birth of creation. Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light. Blessed are you for your promise to your people. Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams. Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will. Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

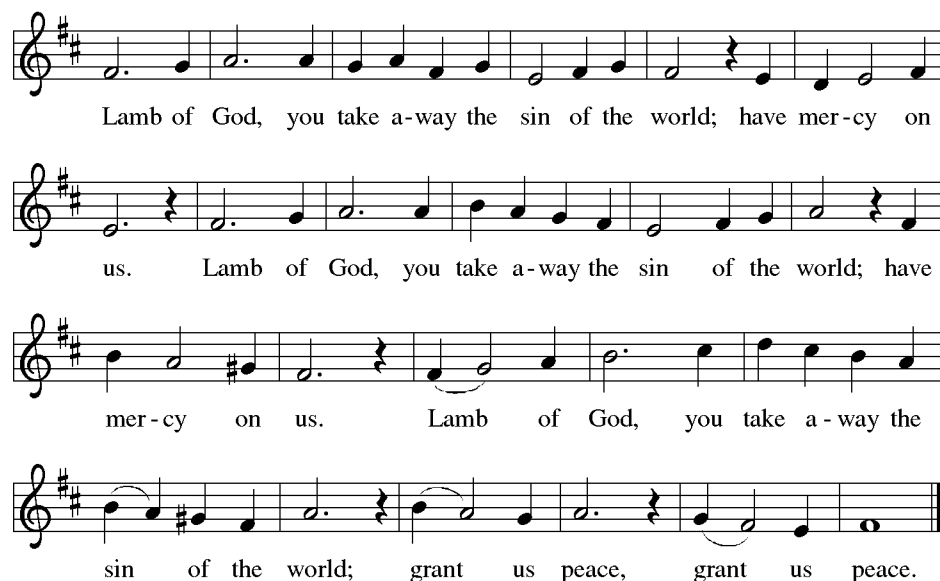
All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

HYMNS



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

“Et in Terra Pax Hominibus” from Gloria
Translation: and peace to God’s people on earth

Vivaldi

“What Child Is This”

ELW 296

“Go Tell It on the Mountain”

ELW 290

BLESSING AND PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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

Let us pray. Radiant God, with our eyes we have seen your salvation, and in this meal we have feasted on your grace. May your Word take flesh in us, that we may be your holy people, revealing your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Sending

God blesses us and sends us to serve.

BLESSING

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.
Amen.

SENDING SONG *“Silent Night, Holy Night!”* **ELW 281**

POSTLUDE *“From Heaven Above to Earth I Come”* **Wilbur Held**

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Worship Leaders

Presiding Minister Meta Carlson
Preacher Mark Hallonquist
Music Director/Organist Joyce Larson
Violin Rachel Osterhouse
Violin Rachael Victoria Athmann
Viola Ed Wharton
Cello Nathan Davis
Harpsichord Ann Paulson
Communion Preparation Anna & Steve Carlson (4:00 PM)
Nursery Ben Kercheval, Kit Kercheval (4:00 PM)