



Altar Copy

Tuesday, December 24, 2024
Nativity of Our Lord I: Christmas Eve
Zion Lutheran Church
 230 Cemetery Road
 P. O. Box 4
 West Jefferson, Ohio 43162
 614 879-8107
 Jon Meister, Presider
www.zionlutheranwj.org

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the World and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that birth of Jesus is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole World.

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GOD MOMENTS

CHRISTMAS CALL TO WORSHIP

Please stand as you are able.

- P Sing to the Lord a new song,
 C **For He has done marvelous things.**
- P The Lord has made His salvation known
 C **And revealed His righteousness to the nations.**
- P He has remembered His love and His faithfulness to Israel;
 C **All the ends of the Earth have seen the salvation of our God.**
- P Shout for joy to the Lord, all the Earth,
 C **Burst into jubilant song with music;**
- P Make music to the Lord with the harp,
 C **With the harp and the sound of singing.**
- P Let the sea resound, and everything in it,
 C **The World, and all who live in it.**
- P Let the rivers clap their hands,
 C **Let the mountains sing together for joy.**
- P Let them sing before the Lord, for He comes to judge the Earth,
 C **He will judge the World in righteousness and peoples with equity.**
- P Sing to the Lord a new song,
 C **For He has done marvelous things!**



CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Please stand as you are able

- P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.
 C **Amen.**

Silence is kept for reflection.

- P God-with-us,
 C **we confess that we have turned away those seeking shelter, claiming there is no room when we have plenty. We have made power and wealth our idols, while you show us true glory: a baby in a manger. We have overlooked the shepherds, expecting good news in prettier packaging. Too often, we have valued violence instead of your peace. Turn us from our ways to your ways. Grant**

us the grace to begin again. Free us from all that keeps us bound, and forgive our sin, through Jesus Christ, who gives himself for us. Amen.

P Hear the good news and rejoice! You are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, ✝ forgiven in Christ, and freed to respond in joy.

C Amen.

ENTRANCE HYMN: O Come, All Ye Faithful (ELW 283)

Sing only verses 1, 3, and 4.

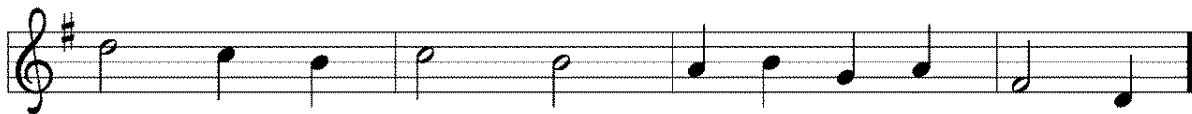
O, Come, All Ye Faithful



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
 2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
 born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;
 sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
 Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!



come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:
 Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
 Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

Refrain is on the next page

Refrain

Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,
O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,

ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.
O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711–1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–1880, sts. 1, 3–4; tr. unknown, st. 2
Music: ADESTE FIDELES, attr. John Francis Wade

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GREETING

- P** Today Christ is born: Alleluia, alleluia! 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** Let us pray. Almighty God, you made this Holy Night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant here on earth we may walk in the light of the presence of Jesus 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 Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE *(music sung to the tune of: Away in the Manger)*

- P** Jesus Christ is the Light of the world, the Light no darkness can overcome.

(sung:) **O God, with your glory you once filled the night,
And now we behold in Christ Jesus the light.
May his presence brighten each pathway we take
Until in his glory at last we awake.**

- A** The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Those who dwelt in deep darkness, on them the light has shined.
- C** **We have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.**
- A** Jesus Christ is the Light of the World, the Light no darkness can overcome.

(sung:) **The darkness is ended, its shadows are gone.
In Christ, our Redeemer, we greet God's new dawn.
His Spirit surrounds us, and death's reign is o'er.
We walk in the light of God's love evermore.**

- A** If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin.
- C** **We have his glory, the glory of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.**
- P** Jesus Christ is the Light of the world, the Light no darkness can overcome.

(sung:) **Now let the good tidings of great joy be heard:
Fulfilled in Christ's birth is the prophets' sure word.
As each land and nation is told of this birth,
The dawn of salvation brings light to the Earth.**

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9: 2-7

Please be seated.

- L** A reading from Isaiah.

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!

- ² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness — on them light has shined.
- ³ You 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.
- ⁴ For 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.
- ⁵ For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
- ⁶ For 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.
- ⁷ His 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.**

PSALM: Psalm 96

Read responsively.

¹ Sing a new song to the LORD, who has done marvelous things, whose right hand and holy arm
have won the victory.

**² O LORD, you have made known your victory, you have revealed your righteousness in the
sight of the nations.**

³ You remember your steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have
seen the victory of our God.

⁴ Shout with joy to the LORD, all you lands; lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.

⁵ Sing to the LORD with the harp, with the harp and the voice of song.

⁶ With trumpets and the sound of the horn shout with joy before the king, the LORD.

⁷ Let the sea roar, and all that fills it, the World and those who dwell therein.

⁸ Let the rivers clap their hands, and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD, who comes

to judge the earth.

⁹The LORD will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with equity.

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.

SECOND READING: Titus 2: 11-14

L A reading from Titus.

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.

¹¹For the 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 ACCLAMATION: (ELW 289)

Please stand as you are able.

P Alleluia. I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

C **Alleluia.**

Angels We Have Heard on High

1. Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain

Gloria in excelsis Deo;
gloria in excelsis Deo.

2. Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heav'nly song?

Refrain

GOSPEL: Luke 2: 1-20, John 1: 1-5. 9-14. 16

L The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the second chapter.

P The Holy Gospel according to John, the first chapter.

P In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing has been made.

L In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register. Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

L To us will be born a Savior.

C **Jesus Christ our Lord.**

L While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths, and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

P In Him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

L And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you Good News that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

L To us is born a Savior.

C **Jesus Christ our Lord.**

P The true Light that gives light to everyone was coming into the World. He was in the World, and though the World was made through Him, the World did not recognize Him. He came to that which was His own, but His own did not receive Him.

L Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest Heaven, and on Earth Peace to those on whom His favor rests." When the angels had left them and gone into Heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

P Yet to all who did receive Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become Children of God—children not of a natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.

P To us has been born a Savior.

C **Jesus Christ our Lord.**

L So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen Him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

P The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.

L But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

P We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. From His fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

P To us has been born our Savior.

C **Jesus Christ our Lord.**

P Jesus Christ is the Word. This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CELEBRATING THE GOSPEL: (ELW 289)

3. Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn king.

Refrain

**SERMON**

Please be seated.

HYMN OF THE DAY: (ELW 300)

Please stand as you are able. Sing verses 1, 2, and 4.

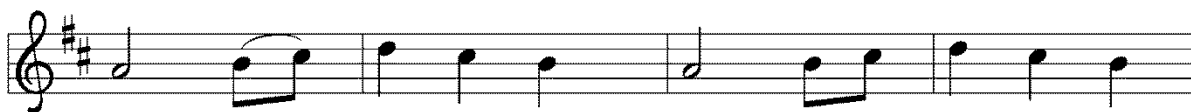
The First Noel



1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to
 2 They look - ed up and saw . . . a star shin - ing
 3 And by the light of that . . . same star three . .
 4 This star drew near to the . . . north - west, o'er . .
 5 Then en - tered in those wise . . . men three, full . .

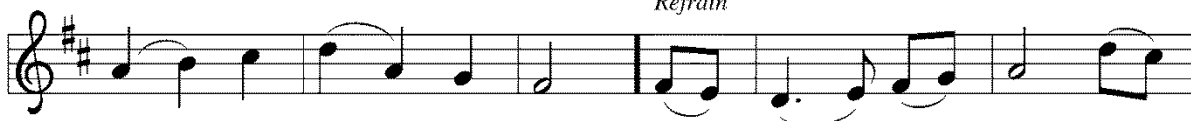


cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where
 in . . . the east . . . be - yond . . . them far; and to the
 wise . . . men came . . . from coun - try far; to seek for a
 Beth - le - hem . . . it took . . . its rest; and there it
 rev - 'rent - ly . . . up - on . . . their knee, and of - fered



they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's
 earth it gave . . . great light, and . . . so it con -
 king was their . . . in - tent, and to fol - low the
 did both stop . . . and stay right . . . o - ver the
 there in his . . . pres - ence their . . . gold, . . . and

Refrain



night that was so deep.
 tin-ued both day and night.
 star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -
 place where Je - sus lay.
 myrrh, and frank - in - cense.



el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

Text: English traditional

Music: THE FIRST NOWELL, English traditional

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NICENE CREED

P The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

C **We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son,* who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A Filled with good news of great joy, let us offer our prayers for the church, the earth, and all people.

A brief silence.

A Angels sing with praise, and shepherds run with haste. As we glorify and praise you in this place, send us into the world, proclaiming the salvation you have revealed this night. God of grace,

C **receive our prayer.**

A The seas roar, and the trees of the forest sing for joy. As creation resounds with praise, inspire us with awe, reverence, and a renewed care for all that fills the fields, skies, and seas. God of grace,

C **receive our prayer.**

A The nations declare your glory. Uphold the leaders of the earth with your justice and righteousness. Break the rod of the oppressor in every land, and bring peace where there is conflict. God of grace,

C **receive our prayer.**

A The holy family finds shelter around the animals' manger. Draw near to persons experiencing homelessness, those who are alone this holiday season, and all for whom this world makes no room. Wrap all your children in bands of love and mercy especially Michael, Niki, Braxton and those in our hearts. God of grace,

C **receive our prayer.**

A A child is born for us and light shines on the weary. Watch over those who give birth this night and attend to those who are dying. Be present in our joys and in our sorrows. God of grace,

C **receive our prayer.**

A The heavenly host praises you. With thanksgiving for Mary, Joseph, and all your saints, sustain us in the blessed hope revealed this night. Fashion us by their example into a people zealous for good deeds, sharing your love and mercy with all. God of grace,

C **receive our prayer.**

- P** We commend these prayers to you, O God, trusting your grace made known to all, through the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
- C** **Amen.**

SHALOM

- P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.
- C** **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THANKS

- P** Let us pray. God of heaven and earth, from the beginning, you have called forth life, in which you take delight. The trees, the fields, and the seas sing for joy. Bless now these gifts, received from your bounty, that we may join the chorus of creation to tell of your salvation from day to day.
- C** **Amen.**



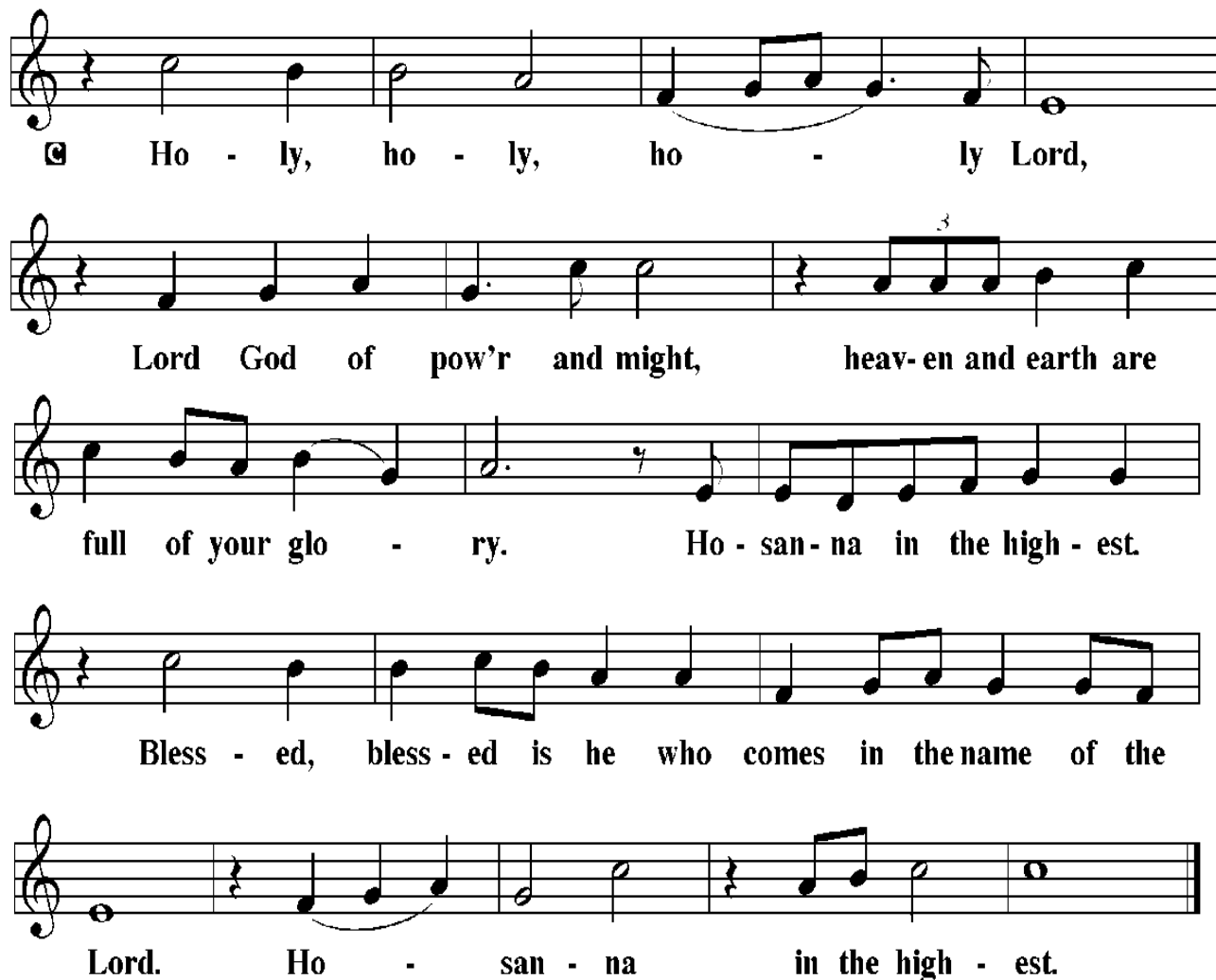
DIALOGUE

- 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 our thanks and praise.**

PREFACE

- P** It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and places give thanks and praise to You, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonders and mystery of the Word made flesh You have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of Your glory, that beholding the Son made visible, we may be drawn to love the Father whom we cannot see. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the Church on Earth and the hosts of Heaven, we praise Your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,
 Lord God of pow'r and might, heav-en and earth are
 full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Bless - ed, bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the
 Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE: CHRISTMAS

P Holy God, Creator of all and Source of life, at the birth of time your word brought light into the World. In the fullness of time, you sent your Word, born of Mary, to shine in our darkness and to make us your daughters and sons.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his birth and life among us, his death and resurrection, we await his coming again when all things will be restored in him. By your Spirit bless us and this bread and cup, that, held and nourished by you, we may live as your children, shining with the light of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

C Amen

LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom, as we pray the prayer you 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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P A child has been born for us, a Son given to us. Come, receive the gift of Jesus.

COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMN



♩ Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;




have mer-cy on us, have mer-cy on us, have mer - cy.



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;



have mer-cy on us, have mer-cy on us, have mer - cy.



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

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

Please stand as you are able.

P May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
C **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P Merciful God, we thank you for Jesus, who is our heavenly food. Strengthened by this goodness, send us forth to announce your peace, comfort the afflicted, and share the good news of great joy.
C **Amen.**

LIGHTING OF CANDLES: *Silent Night, Holy Night!: Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!* (ELW 281)

During the hymn, we will light our individual candles. In order to avoid dripping wax, please do not tip a lighted candle! Tip only an unlit candle to receive the flame. The Pastor will give light to the ushers and acolyte; they will in turn give light to the worshippers nearest the aisles, who will pass it on to the others in their pew.

***Silent Night***

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.

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BLESSING

P May the Word that Mary brought to birth carry you into new and abundant life.

C **Amen.**

P May the Word that Joseph cradled in his arms enfold you with love and strength.

C **Amen.**

P May the Word that angels proclaimed in song bring harmony to our world.

C **Amen.**

P And the blessing of almighty God, the Father, the ✝ Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always.

C **Amen.**



SENDING HYMN: (ELW 267)

Sing only verses 1, 2, and 4.

Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
 3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
 plains re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing
 flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

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DISMISSAL

A The Light has come to shine in the darkness.

C **Christ the Savior is born:**

A Proclaim the Good News, the Word of God dwells in you richly.

C **Thanks be to God. *We go out--Reaching in for the Holy Spirit, Reaching up for God's Grace, Reaching out with Christ's love. Amen!***

(The words in italics are Zion's mission statement.)

CHRISTMAS PROCLAMATION

Many ages from the time when God created the heavens and the Earth and then formed man and woman in his own image; long after the great flood, when God made the rainbow shine forth as a sign of the covenant; twenty-one centuries from the time the promise was given to Abraham and Sarah; thirteen centuries after Moses led the people of Israel out of Egypt and Miriam danced in freedom; eleven hundred years from the time of Ruth and the judges; one thousand years from the anointing of David as king, in fulfillment of the times and years and months and days discerned by the prophets; Jesus Christ, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father, desiring to sanctify the world by his most merciful coming, being conceived by the Holy Spirit and nine months of growth in the womb of his mother—now in our own times is the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, God made flesh.

POSTLUDE

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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Serving during worship this evening:

Presider: Jon Meister

Musician(s): Jerry Gossett

Food fund donations: Poinsettias donated in honor of the birth of Our Lord

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Thank you to all of you who came out to celebrate this special evening with us. Merry Christmas to each of you and to your families. Also, a big thank you to everyone who helped make this service special.



SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

We will not be worshipping here at Zion as it is the 5th Sunday of the month. We will be at First English serving breakfast to those who gather there. Many of us will stay to worship with the members of First English. Please join us if you wish.