

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
December 24, 2016

Candlelight Christmas Service

Thank you for joining us on this special evening. Tonight's service is a candlelight service. At the appointed time near the end of the service, candles for each congregation member will be lit from the Christ Candle, representing the light of Christ shining in our dark world of sin. Please note the reminders to hold the lit candles upright to avoid dripping wax. Parents are encouraged to consider and decide whether their children are able to hold a lit candle on their own.

PRESERVICE

**O Little Town of Bethlehem
and Now Sing We Now Rejoice**
Setting by Paul Manz

Angels We Have Heard on High
Setting by Michael Burkhardt

Still, Still, Still and Infant Holy
Played by the Handbell Choir

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
Clarinet Duet

ORDER OF WORSHIP

WELCOME

OPENING HYMN

On Christmas Night All Christians Sing
Christian Worship #52

Minister: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Amen.

RESPONSIVE READING

M: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. *(Isaiah 9:2)*

C: **The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.** *(John 1:5)*

M: Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness, on them light has shined. *(Isaiah 9:2)*

C: **We have seen the glory of the Christ, the glory of the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.** *(John 1:14)*

M: For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given. *(Isaiah 9:6)*

C: **In him was life, and that life was the light of men.** *(John 1:4)*

M: O Loving God, you once caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. Turn our thoughts toward Bethlehem and the Christ-child, born to save us. May the words of Scripture we hear tonight remind us again that the old story is ever so new. May the hymns and carols we sing tonight reveal to us again the mystery of his birth. May all who have known that Light on earth come to the full measure of its joys in heaven.

C: **O Come, Emmanuel, and fill our hearts with peace and light. Amen.**

WORSHIP CHOIR

Long Awaited One

*Come now, Child of promise, hope of all the earth.
This broken world will be healed by Your most humble birth.
Come now, Child of mercy, Prince of Peace and grace.
Your life will silence our fears and all our sins erase.*

*REFRAIN: Long-awaited One, we will find rest in Your love.
We have walked in darkness; let us see light from above.
Emmanuel, God with us, hope has begun.
Emmanuel, You are the light, God's only Son.
You will come to save us all, O long-awaited One.*

*Come now, Child of heaven, Savior, King and Friend.
O living Word of the Father now to us descend.
Come now, Child of wonder, reign in majesty.
Awaken all of creation, set our spirits free. REFRAIN*

By Nicole Elsey, Arranged by Douglas Nolan: © 2016 Hal Leonard Corporation.

Please stand

CONFESSION OF SINS

M: Dear friends, let us approach God with a true heart and confess our sins, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.

C: Lord of life, I confess that I am by nature dead in sin.
For faithless worrying and selfish pride,
for sins of habit and sins of choice,
for the evil I have done and the good I have failed to do,
you should cast me away from your presence forever.
O Lord, I am sorry for my sins. Forgive me, for Jesus' sake.

M: Glory to God in the highest!

In love that astounds us, the eternal God sent his one and only Son to live among us, to obey as we could not, and to suffer what we deserved. In Christ there is indeed peace on earth. In him God extends his good will to all people. He was born to save us. Because of Christ and by his authority, I say to you what God himself says: In Christ your sins are forgiven!

C: Glory to God in the highest! Amen.

HYMN

Now Sing We, Now Rejoice
Christian Worship #34

Please be seated

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 his own town to register. So 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. 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 room for them in the inn.

VOCAL QUINTET

Hallelujah, Light Has Come

*Mmm, my Baby, heaven sent You to me.
All the world's been praying: Who will save?
But who am I that, here tonight,
I hold the One who'll bring us life?*

*REFRAIN: Hallelujah! We've been found.
A Child is born to save us now. Jesus!
Hallelujah! Light has come, a Savior who will set us free,
The Promise for those who believe.*

*Do you hear the angels sing to You, my Baby?
Men and kings have come to bow to You.
But here in my arms, so close to me,
The Son of God, now all can see. REFRAIN*

Praise to God on high. He has heard our cry. REFRAIN

By Barlow Girl © 2008 Word Music, LLC.

LESSON 2

PEACE HAS COME AT LAST

Luke 2:8-14

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 of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."



1 Peace came to earth at last that cho - sen night
 2 And who could be the same for hav - ing held
 3 You show the Fa - ther none has ev - er seen,
 4 How else could I have known you, O my God!



When an - gels clove the sky with song and light And
 The in - fant in their arms and lat - er felt The
 In flesh and blood you bore our griefs and pain, In
 How else could I have loved you, O my God! How



God em - bod - ied love and sheathed his might— Who could but
 wound-ed hands and side, all doubts dis - pelled— Who could but
 bread and wine you vis - it us a - gain— Who could but
 else could I em - brace you, O my God! Who could but



gasp: Im - man - u - el! Who could but sing: Im - man - u - el!
 sigh: Im - man - u - el! Who could but shout: Im - man - u - el!
 see: Im - man - u - el! Who could but thrill: Im - man - u - el!
 pray: Im - man - u - el! Who could but praise: Im - man - u - el!

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LESSON 3

TREASURE GOD'S PRICELESS GIFT

Luke 2:15-20

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." 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. 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.

OFFERING

O Holy Night

Members of Grace respond to their Savior's love with offerings that are given joyfully, generously, regularly, and in a way that is proportionate to how the Lord has blessed them. Their cheerful gifts support the mission and ministry of our congregation. If you are a guest today, please know that we do not expect you to contribute to our congregation's work. However, if you would like to give an offering to the Lord in response to his love to you, we are happy to receive it and put it to work in God's kingdom.

Please fill out the Friendship Register located in the red folder at the end of the row and pass it along. Thank You!



If you prefer, use your smart phone to give online by scanning this QR code.

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

The pastor takes the light of the Christ candle to the assistants. They pass the light on to the congregation. Please tip only the unlighted candle to prevent wax from dripping.

Please stand

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

M: Almighty God, heavenly Father, we are thankful that you fulfilled all of your ancient promises and sent us a Savior, who is Christ, the Lord. Your Son left the glory of heaven and became flesh of our flesh. He became our brother so that through him we might become your children. We marvel at his grace, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, so that we through his poverty might become rich. We are indeed rich, for we have peace with you and access to your throne in every need.

Dear Savior, give us a simple, childlike faith that sees your glory even in your lowliness. Help us all to rejoice in your birth. In sincere faith we join the song of the angels, share the delight of the shepherds, and adore you with the Magi. May the truth, love, and redemption that you have brought dwell in our hearts and lives. Like Mary may we keep all these things and ponder them in our hearts. And since you came for all people, help us share the good news of great joy we have in you.

As you have shown us your glory on this holy evening, so one day bring us into your glory in heaven, where we will take our places among the saints and angels. There we will forever praise and glorify you for the grace and mercy you have shown to us poor sinners. Hear us, O Lord, for the sake of your name. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as 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 the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

BLESSING

M: May he who by his incarnation gathered things earthly and heavenly into one, fill us with such joy that comes with the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life. And the blessing of God Almighty—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—be upon you and remain with you always.

C: Amen.

Please be seated

CLOSING HYMN

Silent Night! Holy Night
Christian Worship #60

- 1 **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.

- 2 **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!

- 3 **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.

*Following the singing of the hymn, please extinguish your candles by gently blowing them out.
Candles may be left in the baskets at either exit.*

POSTLUDE

Behold, a Branch Is Growing
Setting by Willem Vogel

