



OUR SAVIOR'S

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH



Christmas Eve

December 24, 2023 ~2:00 pm

Welcome

One of the great traditions of the Christmas season is the Service of Lessons and Carols, sung by church choirs large and small in every part of the English-speaking world. The model on which this event is based is the service that takes place annually on Christmas Eve at King's College, Cambridge, England. It has been a tradition at King's since 1918.

Welcome to God's house for worship on this most holy of nights! Jesus Christ, the Light of all, was born into this dark world at Christmas to bring eternal life and the light of God's love and forgiveness to all people – and that includes you! Whether you are a first-time guest, a curious observer with little religious background, or a member of Our Savior's Church family, we are delighted and honored to share our Christmas Eve worship with you.

A Prayer Before Worship

Almighty God, you dealt wonderfully with your servant Mary, in choosing her to be the mother of your dearly beloved Son and thus graciously made known your regard for the poor and lowly and despised. Grant us grace in all humility and meekness to receive your Word with hearty faith and to rejoice in Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, in whose name we pray. Amen. *(This prayer was written by Martin Luther)*

Serving in Worship

- Minister ~ Pastor Jeff Mahnke
- Organist ~ Marie Kurth
- Ushers ~ Rick & Karen Leopold

Acknowledgments

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From Heav'n Above to Earth I Come

A Service of Lessons and Carols

Words of Welcome

Once in Royal David's City

CW 343



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly
2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and
3 And our eyes at last shall see him through his own re -
4 Not in that poor, low - ly sta - ble with the ox - en



cat - tle shed, where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a
Lord of all, and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his
deem - ing love, for that child, so dear and gen - tle, is our
stand - ing by shall we see him, but in heav - en, set at



man - ger for his bed: Mar - y was that moth - er
cra - dle was a stall; with the poor and mean and
Lord in heav'n a - bove, and he leads his chil - dren
God's right hand on high. Then like stars his chil - dren



mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
low - ly lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
on to the place where he is gone.
crowned, all in white, his praise will sound.

Text: Cecil F. Alexander, 1818–1895, abr., alt.

Tune: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805–1876

Text and tune: Public domain

Stand

Exhortation & Prayer

Dear people of God, in this Christmas season, it is our duty and delight to hear again the message of the angels and, in heart and mind, to go to Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us—the Christ Child lying in a manger.

Let us read and learn in Holy Scripture the story of the loving purposes of God from the first days after our fall into sin to the glorious redemption brought to us by this holy child.

But first, let us pray for people all over the world who would delight with us to know the good news of Jesus Christ and who would join with us in singing his praises. Let us pray for the people of the Wausau area, and for all those in our own congregation.

And, because this would please our Lord, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who are sad, the lonely and the unloved, and the elderly and the little children. We especially remember all those who do not know the Lord Jesus, those who do not love him, and those who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

Finally, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us in heaven, who live in greater light than we, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, who died in faith, and who live before the throne of God and praise him each day in his temple. We confess that we are united with them as we are united with one another. To sum up all these petitions, let us pray as Christ himself taught us:

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.

From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

CW 331 sts. 1-7



1 "From heav'n a - bove to earth I come to bear good
 2 "To you this night is born a child of Mar - y,
 3 "This is the Christ, our God most high, who hears your
 4 "He will on you the gifts be - stow pre - pared by



news to ev - 'ry home; glad ti - dings of great
 cho - sen vir - gin mild; this lit - tle child of
 sad and bit - ter cry; he will him - self your
 God for all be - low, that in his king - dom,



joy I bring, where - of I now will say and sing:
 low - ly birth shall be the joy of all the earth.
 Sav - ior be from all your sins to set you free.
 bright and fair, you may with us his glo - ry share.

- 5 "These are the signs which you shall mark:
 the swaddling clothes and manger dark.
 There you will find the infant laid
 by whom the heav'n's and earth were made."
- 6 How glad we'll be to find it so!
 Then with the shepherds let us go
 to see what God for us has done
 in sending us his own dear Son.
- 7 Come here, my friends, lift up your eyes,
 and see what in the manger lies.
 Who is this child, so young and fair?
 It is the Christ Child lying there.

Text: tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, alt.; Martin Luther, 1483-1546
 Tune: Geistliche lieder, Leipzig, 1539, ed. Valten Schumann
 Text and tune: Public domain

Part One - I Come in Promises Foretold

Reading

Genesis 3:8–15

⁸Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

¹⁰He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”

¹¹And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”

¹²The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

¹³Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?”

The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

¹⁴So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this,

“Cursed are you above all livestock
and all wild animals!

You will crawl on your belly
and you will eat dust
all the days of your life.

¹⁵And I will put enmity
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will crush your head,
and you will strike his heel.”

Joy Has Dawned

CW 352



1 Joy has dawned up - on the world, prom - ised from cre - a - tion—
 2 Sounds of won - der fill the sky with the songs of an - gels
 3 Shep - herds bow be - fore the Lamb, gaz - ing at the glo - ry.
 4 Son of Ad - am, Son of heav'n, giv - en as a ran - som;



God's sal - va - tion now un - furled, hope for ev - 'ry na - tion.
 as the might - y Prince of life shel - ters in a sta - ble.
 Gifts of men from dis - tant lands proph - e - sy the sto - ry:
 rec - on - cil - ing God and man, Christ, our might - y cham - pion!



Not with fan - fares from a - bove, not with scenes of glo - ry,
 Hands that set each star in place, shaped the earth in dark - ness,
 gold— a king is born to - day; in - cense—God is with us;
 What a Sav - ior! What a friend! What a glo - rious mys - t'ry!



but a hum - ble gift of love— Je - sus born of Mar - y.
 cling now to a moth - er's breast, _ vul - n'ra - ble and help - less.
 myrrh— his death will make a way, and by his blood he'll win us.
 Once a babe in Beth - le - hem, _ now the Lord of his - t'ry.

Text: Stuart Townend, b. 1963; Keith Getty, b. 1974

Tune: Stuart Townend, b. 1963; Keith Getty, b. 1974

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Part Two - I Come in Joyful Anticipation

Reading

Isaiah 9:2–7

²The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. ³You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder.

⁴For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. ⁵Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire.

⁶For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

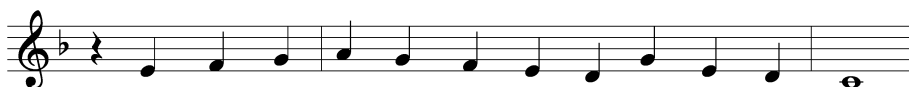
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end.

He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

Where Shepherds Lately Knelt

CW 345 sts. 1, 3



1 Where shep-herds late - ly knelt and kept the an - gel's word,
3 How should I not have known I - sa - iah would be there,



I come in half - be - lief, a pil - grim strange - ly stirred;
his proph - e - cies ful - filled? With pound - ing heart I stare:



but there is room and wel - come there for me,
a child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me,



but there is room and wel - come there for me.
a child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me.

Text: Jaroslav J. Vajda, 1919–2008

Tune: Carl F. Schalk, 1929–2021

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Part Three - I Come in a Divine Miracle

Reading

Luke 1:26–38

²⁶In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

²⁹Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

³⁴"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

³⁵The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. ³⁷For no word from God will ever fail."

³⁸"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

A Great and Mighty Wonder

CW 349 sts. 1, 4

- 1 A great and mighty wonder, a glorious mystery:
a virgin bears an infant who veils his deity.
Proclaim the Savior's birth:
"To God on high be glory and peace to all the earth!"
- 4 Since all he comes to ransom, by all be he adored,
the infant born in Bethl'em, the Savior and the Lord.
Proclaim the Savior's birth:
"To God on high be glory and peace to all the earth!"

Part Four - I Come in a Humble Manger

Reading

Luke 2:1–7

¹In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ²(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴So 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. ⁵He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷and 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.

Away in a Manger

CW 340

- 1 Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
 the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
 The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
 the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.
- 2 The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
 but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
 I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,
 and stay by my side until morning is nigh.
- 3 Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay
 close by me forever and love me, I pray.
 Bless all the dear children in your tender care,
 and take us to heaven to live with you there.

Text (sts. 1–2): The Myrtle, Boston, 1884; (st. 3): Vineyard Songs, Louisville, 1892, alt.
Text: Public domain

Part Five - I Come in Angelic Triumph

Reading

Luke 2:8–14

⁸And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

¹³Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

Angels We Have Heard on High

CW 346 sts. 1, 2

- 1 Angels we have heard on high,
 sweetly singing o’er the plains,
 and the mountains in reply,
 echoing their joyous strains.
 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?
 Gloria in excelsis Deo;
 gloria in excelsis Deo.

Text: tr. The Crown of Jesus, Part 2, 1862, alt.; French
Text: Public domain

Part Six - I Come in Heartfelt Worship

Reading

Luke 2:15–20

¹⁵When 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.”

¹⁶So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

O Little Town of Bethlehem

CW 333 sts. 1, 3–4

- 1 O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.
- 3 How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv’n!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav’n.
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.
- 4 O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Immanuel!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835–1893, abr., alt.
Text: Public domain

Part Seven - I Come in the Gospel's Power

Reading

Titus 2:11–14

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. ¹²It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, ¹⁴who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

CW 331 sts. 13–15

13 Ah, dear - est Je - sus, ho - ly Child, pre - pare a
14 My heart for ver - y joy must leap; my lips no
15 Glo - ry to God in high - est heav'n, who un - to

bed, soft, un - de - filed with - in my heart, made
more can si - lence keep. I too must sing with
us his Son has giv'n, while an - gels sing with

clean and new, a qui - et cham - ber kept for you.
joy - ful tongue that sweet - est an - cient cra - dle song:
pi - ous mirth a glad new year to all the earth!

Text: tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.; Martin Luther, 1483–1546

Tune: Geistliche lieder, Leipzig, 1539, ed. Valten Schumann

Text and tune: Public domain

Thank Offering & Friendship Register

Members of Our Savior's give generous and free will gifts to honor the Lord and support our ministry of the gospel. Guests are welcome to give but should not feel obligated to do so.

As the offering is gathered, please sign the Friendship Register as it is passed down the pew.

Prayer & Blessing

When all was still and it was midnight, your eternal Word, O Lord, descended from the almighty throne to dwell among us. May we receive him in the peace of forgiven hearts and proclaim your gracious goodwill to all people on earth, for he is God with us, Immanuel, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

May he who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill us with such joy that comes with the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life.

The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son †, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always.

Amen.

337 Silent Night, Holy Night

CW 337



1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,



all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
at the sight. Glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
love's pure light ra - dian beams from thy ho - ly face



Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
heav'n - ly hosts sing, Al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at thy



peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
birth, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.

Text: tr. John F. Young, 1820–1885; Franz Joseph Mohr, 1792–1848

Tune: Franz Xaver Gruber, 1787–1863

Text and tune: Public domain



Christmas Day Festival Worship

Monday, December 25 ~ 9:00 AM

*On behalf of the entire staff at Our Savior's and their families,
we extend our wishes for a most blessed Christmas season!*



Growing in Jesus, Sharing His Love

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