



OUR SAVIOR'S  
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH



*Christmas Day*

## **Welcome to Worship**

We welcome you to God's house for worship on this joyous Christmas Day! What a marvelous gift God gives us – his one and only Son, born in human flesh, so that we might live forever in heaven. Truly this is “Good News of Great Joy”! May Jesus Christ - Immanuel (“God with us”) - be present to bless us as we give him our worship and praise.

## **Prayer Before Worship**

Dear Father in heaven, bless our worship together this morning as we unite our hearts and voices with the angels to praise you for your great love in sending your only Son in human flesh to this earth to save us from our sins so we can live with you one day forever. Amen.

## **Serving in Worship**

- Minister ~ Pastor Walter Davidson
- Organist ~ Marie Kurth
- Ushers ~ Dan & Carrie Stelzer

## **Acknowledgments**

Setting One from Christian Worship

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# Christmas Day

December 25, 2023

*Glory to God in the Highest!*

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## Christmas Greeting

## Opening Hymn

CW 353

*Joy to the World*

- 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.
- 2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!  
Let men their songs employ,  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
- 3 No more let sins and sorrows grow  
nor thorns infest the ground;  
he comes to make his blessings flow  
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,  
far as, far as the curse is found.
- 4 He rules the world with truth and grace  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness  
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his love.

## Invocation & Opening Dialogue for Christmas

In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

Sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things.  
**His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.**

The LORD has made his salvation known and revealed his  
righteousness to the nations.  
**All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.**

But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he  
appears?  
**If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?**

Restore us again, O God our Savior, and put away your displeasure  
toward us.  
**Show us your unfailing love, O LORD, and grant us your salvation.**

Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has  
redeemed his people.  
**My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my  
Savior.**

When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman,  
born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the  
full rights of sons.  
**The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We  
have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came  
from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

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.  
**Glory to God in the highest!**

## Glory Be to God

Tune: From Heav'n Above

1. All glory be to God on high!  
Your name, O Lord, we glorify;  
We praise you for your peace and grace,  
Your favor toward our fallen race.
2. Our grateful thanks to you we bring,  
For your great glory, heav'nly King,  
For all, O Father, you have done  
Through Jesus Christ, your only Son.
3. O Lamb of God, to you we pray.  
You take all human sin away.  
Have mercy, Lord; receive our prayer;  
From God's right hand, your mercy share.
4. You, Christ, are holy – Lord alone;  
The Father's glory you made known.  
We by your Spirit sing again:  
"All glory be to God!" Amen.

## Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, grant that the birth of your only Son in the flesh may set us free from our old bondage under the yoke of sin; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

# The Word

## First Reading

*Isaiah 11:1–9*

<sup>1</sup>A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. <sup>2</sup>The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—  
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,  
the Spirit of counsel and of might,  
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—  
<sup>3</sup>and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.

He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; <sup>4</sup>but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. <sup>5</sup>Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

<sup>6</sup>The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. <sup>7</sup>The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup>The infant will play near the cobra's den, and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest. <sup>9</sup>They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

# Behold, a Branch Is Growing

CW 360 sts. 1-3



1 Be - hold, a branch is grow - ing of love - liest form and  
2 I - sa - iah had fore - told it in words of prom - ise  
3 This flow'r, whose fra - grance ten - der with sweet - ness fills the



grace! As proph - ets sang, fore - know - ing, it springs from Jes - se's  
sure, and Mar - y's arms en - fold it, a vir - gin meek and  
air, dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor the dark - ness ev - 'ry -



race and now be - gins to flow'r in midst of  
pure. Through God's e - ter - nal will this child to  
where. True man, and yet true God, from sin and



cold - est win - ter, at deep - est mid - night hour.  
her is giv - en at mid - night calm and still.  
death he saves us and light - ens ev - 'ry load.

Text: tr. Harriet R. K. Spaeth, 1845-1925; German, 16th cent.  
Tune: Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengeseng, Köln, 1599  
Text and tune: Public domain

## Second Reading

Galatians 4:4-7

<sup>4</sup>But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup>to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. <sup>6</sup>Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." <sup>7</sup>So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

Stand

# Gospel Acclamation

Galatians 4:4,5

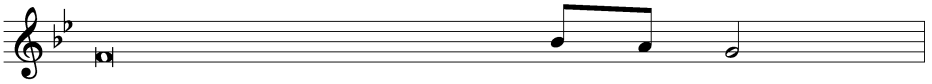


## Refrain

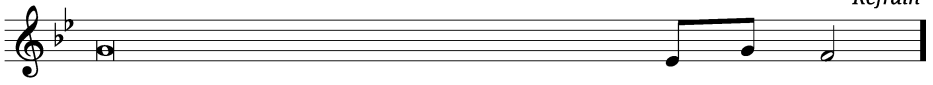


Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

## Tone



But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son,



born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those un - der the law.

Tune: © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 716671

# Gospel

John 1:1–18

*God became man; the Word became flesh*

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup>Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

<sup>9</sup>The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. <sup>11</sup>He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. <sup>12</sup>Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— <sup>13</sup>children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.



<sup>14</sup>The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

<sup>15</sup>(John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, “This is the one I spoke about when I said, ‘He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’”) <sup>16</sup>Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. <sup>17</sup>For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

## Hymn of the Day

**CW 366**

*O Rejoice, All Christians Loudly*

- 1 O rejoice, all Christians, loudly, for our joy has now begun;  
wondrous things our God has done.  
Tell abroad his goodness proudly, who our race has honored thus,  
that he has befriended us.  
Joy, O joy, beyond all gladness! Christ has done away with sadness!  
Hence, all sorrow and repining, for the Sun of grace is shining!
- 2 See, my soul, your Savior chooses poverty and weakness, too;  
in such love he comes to you.  
Neither crib nor cross refuses, all he suffers for your good  
to redeem you by his blood.  
Joy, O joy, beyond all gladness! Christ has done away with sadness!  
Hence, all sorrow and repining, for the Sun of grace is shining!
- 3 Lord, how shall I thank you rightly?  
I am saved eternally by your life and death for me.  
Let me not forget it lightly,  
but with all my heart believe that from you I shall receive.  
Joy, O joy, beyond all gladness! Christ has done away with sadness!  
Hence, all sorrow and repining, for the Sun of grace is shining!

- 4 Jesus, guard and guide your members,  
fill them with your boundless grace,  
hear their prayers in ev'ry place.  
Fan to life faith's glowing embers;  
grant all Christians far and near holy peace, a glad new year.  
Joy, O joy, beyond all gladness! Christ has done away with sadness!  
Hence, all sorrow and repining, for the Sun of grace is shining!

Text: tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.; Christian Keimann, 1607–1662  
Text: Public domain

## Sermon

Luke 2:11–12

<sup>1</sup>Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>2</sup>This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

### **"Never Judge a Gift by Its Wrapping!"**

1. *Our Savior comes humbly wrapped in the cradle*
2. *Our salvation comes special delivery from the cross*

## The Christmas Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, who sent his Son to be my Savior.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, my Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, announced by the angels, worshipped by the shepherds, adored by the wise men; who lived to suffer, die and rise again to free me from all sin, from death, and the power of Satan.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, who has brought me to faith in my Savior, and by whose continuous work in my heart I rejoice in my salvation, show forth his praises, and will one day live and reign with him through all eternity. Amen.

## 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 of the Church

Gracious Father, when the time had fully come, you sent your Son to carry out your plan to save the world from the tyranny of sin, the threat of death, and the power of Satan. On this holy day, strengthen our faith as we ponder the depth of your divine love.

**Lead us to quiet awe as we remember your gracious compassion.**

Impress on us the poverty and pain your Son endured in our place, how he willingly set aside his power and place and assumed the weakness of an infant and the starkness of a stable. Lead us to acknowledge the sins which compelled his humiliation and the love which accepted his lowliness.

**Forgive us and move us to trust in his mission to save us.**

Take away our fears and fright and fill us with joy as we hear the message that Jesus was born for us and that he came to restore peace with you and mend the bond broken by sin. Move us to sing our carols and hymns not with passing pleasure but with the depth of praise for his extraordinary love.

**Let our songs and hymns reflect our faith in the redemption gained by Christ.**

Lead us to kneel at his manger with hearts of faith and to see there the God-man who takes away the sins of the world. Guide and guard us so that the happiness shared with family and friends does not delay or discourage our journey to his holy crib.

**Make the birth of Christ our highest priority and deepest pleasure.**

Fill us with an eager joy that moves us to share the good news with others, especially those who may have forgotten or dismissed the love of God in Christ. Give us faith-filled maturity to recognize that the best gift we can give to children is the story of Jesus who was born as a baby and died on a cross to save them for heaven.

**Move us to tell the good news we have seen and heard.**

During this hectic holiday, provide us with quiet times to remember what the birth of Jesus really means for us and all people, that he came to free us from the evil forces that separated us from your love, that he lived and died to forgive our sins, and that he rose in triumph to prepare a place where we will live with you forever.

**Move us to sing with hearts of faith, “Glory to God in the highest!” Amen.**

## **Lord’s Prayer**

**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**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and † give you peace.

**Amen.**

## Closing Hymn

CW 363

*Now Sing We, Now Rejoice*

- 1 Now sing we, now rejoice, now raise to heav'n our voice;  
he from whom joy streameth poor in a manger lies;  
not so brightly beameth the sun in yonder skies.  
Thou my Savior art! Thou my Savior art!
- 2 Come from on high to me; I cannot rise to thee.  
Cheer my wearied spirit, O pure and holy Child;  
thro' thy grace and merit, blest Jesus, Lord most mild,  
draw me unto thee! Draw me unto thee!
- 3 Now through his Son doth shine the Father's grace divine.  
Death was reigning o'er us through sin and vanity  
till he opened for us a bright eternity.  
May we praise him there! May we praise him there!
- 4 Oh, where shall joy be found? Where but on heav'nly ground,  
where the angels singing with all his saints unite,  
sweetest praises bringing in heav'nly joy and light.  
Oh, that we were there! Oh, that we were there!

Text: tr. Arthur T. Russell, 1806–1874, alt.; Latin and German, 14th cent.

Text: Public domain





# OUR SAVIOR'S

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

*Growing in Jesus, Sharing His Love*

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