

The Nativity of Our Lord  
Christmas Eve

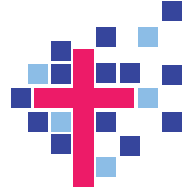


Cross of Christ Lutheran Church  
December 24, 2020

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## Welcome to Cross of Christ Lutheran Church

*By God's grace, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, we are called to:  
Worship God, Grow in faith, Share the Gospel, Serve others, Welcome all*



*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 Jesus' birth 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.*

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## INTROIT

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*O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

Ben Fowler, clarinet  
Bob Shelley, clarinet

## WELCOME

Pastor Dave Thomas

## PRELUDE

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Dean Robinson, organ

*Puer Natus in Bethlehem – Johann Gottfried Walther*

## LITANY AND OPENING PRAYER

We long to gather in person this holy Christmas Eve, to be a part of a Sanctuary full of members and guests and visitors, to sing full-throated with others the carols of Christmas, to enjoy the full worship experience of this sacred night.

Yet we remember that on the very first Christmas Eve when Christ came into the world, very few noticed. Very few gathered. Very few were aware that in the birth of Jesus, in that near-empty stable in Bethlehem, God came into our midst. Full of grace and truth. Full of love and light. Full of healing and hope. So we gather this Christmas Eve as we are able, to remember that Silent Night. That Holy Night. That night when love came down.

Let us pray: Be near us, Lord Jesus, we ask you to stay, close by us this evening, as we worship and pray. Unite us, Lord Jesus, on this night of thy birth. Bring peace to our hearts. Lord, and peace to the earth. Amen

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## OPENING SONG

ELW #277

*Away in a Manger*

1 A - way in a man-ger, no crib for his bed, the lit - tle Lord  
 2 The cat - tle are low-ing; the ba - by a - wakes, but lit - tle Lord  
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay close by me for -

Je - sus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked  
 Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes. I love you, Lord Je - sus; look  
 ev - er and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil - dren in

down where he lay, the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.  
 down from the sky and stay by my cra - dle till morn-ing is nigh.  
 your ten - der care and fit us for heav-en, to live with you there.

Text: North American, 19th cent.

Music: AWAY IN A MANGER, James R. Murray, 1841–1905



# LESSONS

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## THE FIRST LESSON

Pastor Judy Brennan

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### *Isaiah 9:2-7 (NRSV)*

*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!*

L A reading from the ninth chapter of Isaiah.

<sup>2</sup>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.

<sup>3</sup>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.

<sup>4</sup>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.

<sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup>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.

<sup>7</sup>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!**

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THE SECOND LESSON

Colin Walker

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*Titus 2:11-14 (NRSV)*

*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.*

L A reading from the second chapter of Titus.

<sup>11</sup>The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, <sup>12</sup>training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, <sup>13</sup>while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup>He 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

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*Annunciation and Magnificat from Holden Evening Prayer*

*An angel went from God to a town called Nazareth  
to a woman whose name was Mary.  
The angel said to her, "Rejoice, O highly favored,  
for God is with you.  
You shall bear a child, and his name shall be Jesus,  
the Chosen One of God Most High."  
And Mary said, "I am the servant of my God,  
I live to do your will."*

*My soul proclaims your greatness, O God,  
and my spirit rejoices in you.  
You have looked with love on your servant here,  
and blessed me all my life through.  
Great and mighty are you, O Holy One,  
strong is your kindness evermore.  
How you favor the weak and lowly one,  
humbling the proud of heart!*

*You have cast the mighty down from their thrones,  
and uplifted the humble of heart.  
You have filled the hungry with wondrous things,  
and left the wealthy no part.  
Great and mighty are you, O Faithful One,  
strong is your justice, strong your love,  
as you promised to Sarah and Abraham,  
kindness forevermore.*

*My soul proclaims your greatness, O God,  
and my spirit rejoices in you.  
You have looked with love on your servant here,  
and blessed me all my life through.*

Words: Based on Luke 1:26-28, 30-32, 38, 46-55  
Music: Marty Haugen, 1990, 2016

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THE GOSPEL

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*Luke 2:1-20 (NRSV)*

*God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.*

P The good news as recorded in the second chapter of the Gospel of Luke.

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

<sup>15</sup>When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.]

P The Gospel of the Lord.

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MESSAGE

Pastor Dave Thomas

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*A Night Like No Other*

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## HYMN OF THE DAY

ELW #272

*Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*

1 Lo, how a rose e'er bloom - ing from ten - der stem hath  
 2 I - sai - ah had fore - told it, the rose I have in  
 3 This flow'r, whose fra - grance ten - der with sweet-ness fills the  
 4 O Sav - ior, child of Mar - y, who felt our hu - man

sprung! Of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing as  
 mind; with Mar - y we be - hold it, the  
 air, dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor the  
 woe; O Sav - ior, king of glo - ry, who

seers of old have sung, it came, a flow'r so bright, a -  
 vir - gin moth - er kind. To show God's love a - right, she  
 dark-ness ev - 'ry - where. True man, yet ver - y God, from  
 dost our weak - ness know: bring us at length, we pray, to

mid the cold of win - ter, when half - spent was the night.  
 bore to us a Sav - ior, when half - spent was the night.  
 sin and death he saves us and light-ens ev - 'ry load.  
 the bright courts of heav - en and in - to end - less day.

Text: German carol, 15th cent.; tr. Theodore Baker, 1851–1934, sts. 1–2; Harriet R. Krauth,  
 1845–1925, st. 3; John C. Mattes, 1876–1948, st. 4

Music: ES IST EIN ROS, *Alte catholische geistliche Kirchengesänge*, Köln, 1599; arr. Michael Praetorius, 1571–1621

## PEACE

Christ came to bring us peace. May the peace of the Lord be with you this holy night and always.

## OFFERING INVITATION AND PRAYER

Let us pray: Heavenly Father, we are mindful of the supreme gift that you gave us, wrapped in swaddling cloths, whose first cradle was a manger. Humbly we offer our gifts to you. Accept them, we pray, as signs of our joyful thanksgiving for the love you have shown us, in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

## MUSICAL OFFERING

Emerald City Ringers, *Cross of Christ Artists in Residence*

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*Gloria Hodie* – arr. Julie Turner & Kevin McChesney

## CHRISTMAS PRAYERS

### THE 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.**

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## CANDLELIGHT LITANY

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in the land of deep darkness - on them the light has shined. For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder. His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

*Silent Night*


1. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, All is calm, all is bright  
 2. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Shep - herds first saw the sight:  
 3. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Son of God, love's pure light;

Round yon vir - gin mo - ther and child, Ho - ly in - fant, so ten - der and mild:  
 Glo - ries stream from hea - ven a - far, Heav'n - ly hosts sing al - le - lu - ia:  
 Ra - diancy beams from thy ho - ly face, With the dawn of re - deem - ing grace,

Sleep in hea - ven - ly peace, — sleep — in hea - ven - ly peace. —  
 Christ the Sav - vior is born, — Christ the Sav - vior is born. —  
 Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth, — Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth. —

Text: translated from the German of Josef Mohr (1792-1848)

Music: Franz Gruber (1787-1863); arr. John Rutter

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## BENEDICTION

As you cradle the Christ Child in your heart, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father and the joy of the Holy Spirit † be your gift now and forever. Amen.



## *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king;  
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,  
3 Hail the heav'n - born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righ-teous-ness!

peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled."  
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.  
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;  
Veiled in flesh the God-head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!  
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

with an - gel - ic hosts pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"  
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!  
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

*Refrain*

Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king!"

DISMISSAL

With angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!" Glory to the newborn King!

