



Welcome to worship at Spirit of Christ!

We are a member congregation of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. We gather here as the living body of Jesus Christ to be nourished and empowered by the Holy Spirit in what we call the “Means of Grace” — God’s gifts of Word and Sacrament. Through these Means of Grace, we receive the promise of the Gospel: that in the Spirit of Christ God forgives us, remakes us, and reigns in us. May the Lord bless your worship today!

Christmas Day Worship

December 25th, 2023

Invocation and Opening Sentences

P In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P O God, our maker and redeemer, you wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature. Grant that we may ever be alive in him who made himself to be like us.

C Amen.

During the invocation the sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

O Come, All Ye Faithful

LSB 379

1 O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him
Born the king of angels: *Refrain*

ref O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!

2 Highest, most holy,
Light of Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father
Now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

3 Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God
In the highest: *Refrain*

- 4** Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father
Now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

Stand

Confession and Absolution

- P** We confess that we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep.
- C** **We have followed the desires of our own heart.**
- P** We have left undone things we ought to have done.
- C** **We have done things we ought not to have done.**
- P** Spare us, O God, and restore us according to your promises declared in your newborn son, Jesus Christ.
- C** **We see in the manger the Savior of the world; the Savior who brings God's forgiveness.**

We take time in silence to confess our personal and communal sin before God, confident that we will receive forgiveness.

- P** Light has come into the world. We admit that we seek darkness and sin instead of light and love. But Jesus is the Son of our loving God, and he takes away the sin of the world. Jesus has come to save you from darkness, sin and death. Hear the promise of Christ, "I have come into the world to be a light. No one who believes in me will stay in darkness." (*John 12:46*) He is talking about you. Because of Jesus, your sin is forgiven, and you will live as God's holy child forever. Let us praise God for his love and for the gift of Jesus!
- C** **O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

Sharing of the Peace

- P** The peace of the Christ child be with you always.
- C** **And also with you.**
- P** We share Christ's peace with one another.

The people greet one another in the name of the Lord, saying, "Peace be with you," as a sign of reconciliation and of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Matt. 5:22-24; Eph. 4:1-3).

Christmas Prayer

- P** O God, you we thank you for the gift we celebrate each year – the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ. Give us joy in his redemption and confidence in his judgment and forgiveness. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord,

who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Sit

First Reading

Isaiah 52:7-10

⁷How beautiful on the mountains
are the feet of those who bring good news,
who proclaim peace,
who bring good tidings,
who proclaim salvation,
who say to Zion,
“Your God reigns!”

⁸Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices;
together they shout for joy.
When the LORD returns to Zion,
they will see it with their own eyes.

⁹Burst into songs of joy together,
you ruins of Jerusalem,
for the LORD has comforted his people,
he has redeemed Jerusalem.

¹⁰The LORD will lay bare his holy arm
in the sight of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth will see
the salvation of our God.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

Hebrews 1:1-12

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways,² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.³ The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.⁴ So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

⁵For to which of the angels did God ever say,
“You are my Son;
today I have become your Father”?

Or again,
“I will be his Father,
and he will be my Son”?

⁶And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says,
“Let all God’s angels worship him.”

⁷In speaking of the angels he says,

“He makes his angels spirits,
and his servants flames of fire.”

⁸ But about the Son he says,

“Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever;
a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.

⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions
by anointing you with the oil of joy.”

¹⁰ He also says,

“In the beginning, Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands.

¹¹ They will perish, but you remain;
they will all wear out like a garment.

¹² You will roll them up like a robe;
like a garment they will be changed.

But you remain the same,
and your years will never end.”

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

Alleluia and Verse

C Alleluia.

Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life.

Alleluia, alleluia.

Holy Gospel

John 1:1-18

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

C Glory to you, O Lord.

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

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

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

¹⁴The 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.

¹⁵(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.’”) ¹⁶Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No 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.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

Of the Father's Love Begotten

LSB 384

- 1 Of the Father's love begotten
Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega,
He the source, the ending he,
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see
Evermore and evermore.
- 2 Oh, that birth forever blessèd,
When the virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving,
Bore the Savior of our race,
And the babe, the world's Redeemer,
First revealed his sacred face
Evermore and evermore.
- 3 This is he whom seers in old time
Chanted of with one accord,
Whom the voices of the prophets
Promised in their faithful word.
Now He shines, the long-expected;
Let creation praise its Lord
Evermore and evermore.
- 4 O ye heights of heav'n, adore him;
Angel hosts, his praises sing.
Pow'rs, dominions, bow before him
And extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent,
Ev'ry voice in concert ring
Evermore and evermore.

5 Christ, to thee, with God the Father,
And, O Holy Ghost, to thee
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving
And unending praises be,
Honor, glory, and dominion,
And eternal victory
Evermore and evermore. Amen.

Homily

Stand

Creedal Hymn

tune of LSB 365

- 1 In God we believe: the Creator whose pow'r
In mercy has brought us for worship this hour.
He graciously grants us our years and our days
And blesses with kindness our work and our ways.
- 2 In Jesus the Savior our hope is secured;
True God and true man once the cross he endured
To grant our lives wholeness; forgiveness of sin,
With hearts freed from guilt we know true peace
within.
- 3 God's Spirit at work in our lives we confess
With power and truth the Church now he does bless.
As Saints, God's forgiven, one day we shall then
Be living in glory forever! Amen!

Sit

Prayers of the Church

- P** We adore, thank, and praise you, Lord God, because when darkness covered the Earth and when darkness held our human hearts, you provided a Savior to deliver us into the light.
- C** Lord God, you gave your eternal Son to take on flesh. Through him bring light and pardon, power and peace, life and eternal salvation to your creation and to lost and fallen humankind.
- P** We adore, thank and praise you, that by the birth of our Lord Jesus we, who lost paradise, are born again to a new kingdom and an endless paradise with you.
- C** Holy Spirit, give us hearts to joyfully welcome Jesus as he reigns in us.
- P** Let the good tidings of great joy that we rejoice in this night be know everywhere.
- C** Bless your church throughout the world that it may be faithful in its witness and service to our Lord and to all people on Earth.

- P** Guide the rulers of nations that peace may be found.
- C** **Meet the needs of all people by your good and gracious will.**
- P** Heal the ill and unburden those who struggle with depression and mental illness.
- C** **Let everyone who lives in sorrow look to you for consolation and be comforted.**
- P** Send the joy of your salvation to every person so that they may rejoice and give glory to you because Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.
- C** **And so help, defend, and keep us all, through him who was born in Bethlehem, so that when he comes again to redeem us we might celebrate him eternally.**
- P** We thank you for the child, for Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose name we pray,
- C** **Amen.**

Presentation of the Offering/Offertory Prayer

- P** Let us pray. Lord of Christmas,
- C** **We are mindful of the supreme gift that you gave us in the manger at Bethlehem. Humbly we offer our gifts of service and possessions in joyful thanksgiving for the love you have shown us. Accept these gifts for the sake of your son who was born to us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

Stand

Eucharist Liturgy

- P** Lord God, Heavenly King, we give you thanks and praise on this holy morning when, in your goodness, you showed your supreme love for us by sending forth your only begotten Son, our Savior, to be born of a virgin, to save us all from sin.
Before you formed the heavens and the earth, he was your Word. In him you made all things. In him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.
Yet he did not count equality with God as a thing to be grasped but emptied himself to take the form of a servant, being born in our own likeness, even as a baby, lying in a manger.
For all these things, we give you thanks and herald his coming with the song of the angels:
- C** **Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace and goodwill to all people.**
- P** Eternal God, your Son, Jesus Christ, came to us in your name and showed your steadfast love for us. All that he did was by your will. All that he did was in your name. When we saw him, we saw the Father, for he was the image of the invisible God.
- C** **Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**
- P** For love of you, O Lord, and for love of us, he offered himself up to death on a cross, that we might be saved from sin and death. Yet you did not let the powers of darkness prevail over him, but raised him from the dead to sit at

your right hand in glory. And now you have given to us who believe in him the promise of resurrection and eternal life.

C Hosanna in the highest!

P On the night before he died, 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 in remembrance of me. After supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this in remembrance of me.

C On this holy morning, O Lord we remember your humble birth in a manger. We proclaim your death and resurrection. We await your coming in glory.

P Send now your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine. As Christ is Emmanuel, God with us, so fill our communion with his eternal presence, that we might know the joy and peace of his coming, have our faith renewed, and be strengthened in our hope for his return.

C O Word made flesh, be born in us again.

P Accept our prayers and praises, O Father, through your Son, our Savior, who was born this night, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, we give all honor and glory from generation to generation.

C Amen.

P As our Savior has taught us, we are bold to pray:

Lord's Prayer

Distribution

We believe that as we partake of the bread and wine in Holy Communion, Jesus the Messiah is feeding us with his own true body and blood. In eating his body and drinking his blood we receive the promise that our sins are forgiven, and that we will therefore live eternally with God.

We also believe that this eating and drinking is a confession of our faith. If you share our faith, and particularly if you share our understanding of Christ's Real Presence in this meal, you are welcome to receive Christ's body and blood for your benefit. If you do not confess the understanding of the Christian Faith as expressed by the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, you may still come to the altar to receive a blessing. Please fold your hands to indicate that you will not be receiving the sacrament.

What Feast of Love

WOV 701

- 1** What feast of love is offered here,
what banquet come from heaven?
What food of everlasting life,
what gracious gift is given?

*Ref This, this is Christ the king,
the bread come down from heaven.
Oh, taste and see and sing!*

How sweet the manna given!

- 2 What light of truth is offered here,
what covenant from heaven?
What hope of everlasting life,
what wondrous word is given? *Refrain*
- 3 What wine of love is offered here,
what crimson drink from heaven?
What stream of everlasting life,
what precious blood is given? *Refrain*

Go Tell it on the Mountain

LSB 388

*ref Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and ev'rywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born!*

- 1 While shepherds kept their watching
O'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens
There shone a holy light. *Refrain*
- 2 The shepherds feared and trembled
When lo, above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus
That hailed our Savior's birth. *Refrain*
- 3 Down in a lonely manger
The humble Christ was born;
And God sent us salvation
That blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

On Christmas Night All Christians Sing

LSB 377

- 1 On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring,
On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring,
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth.
- 2 Then why should men on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad,
Then why should men on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad,
When from our sin he set us free,
All for to gain our liberty?

- 3 When sin departs before his grace,
Then life and health come in its place,
When sin departs before his grace,
Then life and health come in its place;
Angels and men with joy may sing,
All for to see the newborn King.
- 4 All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night,
All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night:
“Glory to God and peace to men
Now and forevermore. Amen.”

Now Sing We, Now Rejoice

LSB 386

- 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;
Through 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!**

Benediction

P May God the Father hold you in his comfort, peace, and joy.

C Amen.

P May the Lord Jesus Christ, who entered our world as the Son of Mary, enter your hearts with his grace.

C Amen.

P May the Holy Spirit open the gifts of the Lord's salvation to you.

C Amen.

Joy to the World

LSB 387

- 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.**

Sending



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**Our Mission: To live in love for God and one another reaching out to all people,
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