



Words to the hymns can be found on the back pages of this PDF file.

Welcome to Grace Lutheran Church! We are brothers and sisters in Christ who are about **“Proclaiming God’s grace through faith and love.”**

If you are a visitor, please make yourself at home and don’t hesitate to ask a question. Tonight we celebrate Holy Communion. If you are not a member of Grace and desire to commune, please speak with the pastor **before the service**. If you are physically unable to commune at the altar, the pastor would be happy to serve you in your pew. Please notify an usher before the service begins.

You can follow the whole service here in this folder as well as on the displays. Some parts of the service will be found in the burgundy “Lutheran Service Book” hymnals in the pew back.

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24, 2021

Today in Worship

- Light has become synonymous with Christmas. Lights on houses. Lights on Christmas trees. Lights in luminaries that brighten walkways. Yet, all these lights are little more than sentimental decoration if we do not recognize the greater light that shined at Christmas. Isaiah reminds us, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light” (Isaiah 9:2). God shines light in darkness. Tonight, we rejoice in Jesus, the light of the world, who gives deeper meaning to all other Christmas lights.
- The words to most of tonight’s hymns won’t be printed in the bulletin. All hymn words will be on the displays or you can find them in the *Lutheran Service Book* hymnal.
- God’s Grace to you as you partake of Your one and only Savior Jesus this day.

Prelude

Ringing of the Bells

Welcome

- P** The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
C **those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.** (*Is. 9:2*)
- P** In Christ was life, and the life was the light of men.
C **And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.**
(*Jn 1:4-5*)
- P** Our opening hymn invites all to come and worship Jesus, “highest, most holy,
Light of Light eternal.”

Opening Hymn

Lutheran Service Book #379
“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath + Christ Candle

The first candle is lit during the first response:

- P** Jesus Christ is the hope of the nations.
C **In His Word do we hope.**

The second candle is lit:

- P** Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace.
C **In His Word do we rest.**

The third candle is lit:

- P** Jesus Christ is the source of all joy.
C **In His Word do we rejoice.**

The fourth candle is lit:

- P** Jesus Christ is the Lord of love.
C **In His Word His love finds us.**

- P** Now let us light the Christ candle as we celebrate the birth of our Savior Jesus.
C **Thank you, God, for your light in this world through Jesus Christ.**

The Christ candle is lit.

P The light shines in the darkness.

C **And the darkness has not overcome it.**

P That our Savior, the God of all Heaven and Earth would make His home here with us, shining His light into our lives, gives us great reason to rejoice and fill our hearts with song.

Verse

“Now Sing We, Now Rejoice” – LSB#386, v. 1, 4

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!

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!

Confession & Absolution

P We come together tonight. We sing and speak about "Peace on Earth." Yet because of our brokenness and sin, we don't experience peace. As we prepare to celebrate the gift of our Prince of Peace wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger, let's go to our Lord and confess our brokenness and sin.

Silence for private confession and meditation

P O God,

C **Have mercy on me, according to Your steadfast love; according to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You may be justified in Your words and blameless in Your judgment. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. (Psalm 51: 1-5)**

P We are born sinners, yet God gives us the gift of Jesus, who was born to be our Savior. For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession who are zealous for good works. *(Titus 2:11-14)*

C Give thanks to the LORD of hosts, for the Lord is good, for His steadfast love endures forever! *(Jeremiah 33:11)*

P At the command of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen!

P Peace be with you!

C Amen!

Verse

“Now Sing We, Now Rejoice” – LSB#386, v. 3

Now through His Son doth shine The Father’s grace divine.

Death was reigning o’er us Through sin and vanity.

Til He opened for us A bright eternity.

May we praise Him there! May we praise Him there!

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 7:10-14

L The Old Testament Reading for Christmas Eve is from Isaiah, chapter seven.

¹⁰ Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz: ¹¹ “Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹² But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.” ¹³ And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Choir Anthem

“Mary Did You Know”

Epistle Reading

1 John 4:7-16

L The Epistle reading is from First John, chapter four:

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

¹³ By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. ¹⁶ So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel

Luke 2:1-20

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

P In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.

Verse

“Angels We Have Heard On High” – LSB#368, v. 1,3

**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.**

**Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

P And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a Baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!" When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this Child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

The Apostles Creed

☒ I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell.

The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life ☩ everlasting. Amen.

Message for Children from God’s Word

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book #380
“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

Sermon

Hymn of Response

Lutheran Service Book #387
“Joy to the World”

Offering

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone..” – Isaiah 9:2

We encourage you to place your offering in the dropbox in the narthex before service. When the usher brings the offering forward at this time you may also hold it up and place it in the plate as the usher walks by. Please also use this time for prayer and reflection upon what we have heard from the Lord’s Word this morning.

During the Offering:

Offertory

“Gesù Bambino”, Pietro A. Yon
Arr. Sharon Elery Rogers

7:00pm Service

Choir Anthem

“Adore”

Stand

Prayer of the Church

Responses after each petition:

- P** O come, let us adore Him,
- C** Christ the Lord!

The prayers conclude:

- P** “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light ... for to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”
- C** Amen.

Service of the Sacrament

The Lord’s Supper is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that, as he says, our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but his very body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with him and with one another. Our Lord invites to his table those who trust his words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as he forgives and loves us, that they may show forth his death until he comes.

Because those who eat and drink our Lord’s body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the sacrament, are asked first to speak with the pastor.

Hymn of Preparation

Lutheran Service Book #621
"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

Pastor only verse 1:

1. Let all mortal flesh keep silence And with fear and trembling stand;
Ponder nothing earthly minded, For with blessing in his hand
Christ our God to earth descending Comes our homage to demand.

Congregation verses 2 - 4

2. **King of kings, yet born of Mary, As of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture In the body and the blood
He will give to all the faithful His own Self for heavenly food**
3. **Rank on rank the host of heaven Spreads its vanguard on the way,
As the Light of Light descendeth From the realms of endless day,
That the powers of hell may vanish As the darkness clears away.**
4. **At his feet the six-winged seraph; Cherubim with sleepless eye
Veil their faces to the Presence, As with ceaseless voice they cry:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia, Lord most high!**

Proper Preface for Christmas

P It is truly meet, right, and salutary that we should at all times and all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; for in the mystery of the Word made flesh You have given us a new revelation of Your glory that, seeing You in the person of Your Son, we may know and love those things which are not seen. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus *"On Christmas Night All Christians Sing"*

LSB #377, verse 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.**

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.

Words of Our Lord

Pax Domini *"The Peace of Our Lord"*

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

P The light shines in the darkness.

C And the darkness has not overcome it.

Agnus Dei *"On Christmas Night All Christians Sing"*

LSB #377, verse 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.

Distribution Hymns

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

Lutheran Service Book # 361

"What Child Is This"

Lutheran Service Book # 370

"It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"

Lutheran Service Book # 366

"Once in Royal David's City"

Lutheran Service Book # 376

"Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"

Lutheran Service Book # 359

Nunc Dimittis *"On Christmas Night All Christians Sing"*

LSB #377, verse 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."

Communion Prayer and Dismissal

P Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay close by me forever and love me, I pray.

C Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care, And take us to heaven to live with Thee there. Amen.

The Service of Light

P Jesus Christ is the Light of the world,

C the light no darkness can overcome.

P Stay with us, Lord, for it is evening,

C and the day is almost over.

P Let Your light scatter the darkness,

C and illumine your church.

P The Lord be with you.

C and also with you.

Candlelight Ceremony

Pastor will come down the center aisle to the congregation. The person at the end of each pew should approach the pastor as he comes by to light their candles, then light others' candles in their pew. A lighted candle is NEVER tilted but always held upright while giving light to another lest wax be dripped on the floor and pews.

Hymn *(Candles will be lit during this hymn.)*

“Away in a Manger” - LSB 364

**1. Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head;
The stars in the 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 Thee, Lord Jesus! look down from the sky,
And stay by my cradle, ‘til morning is nigh.**

**3. Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray;
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And take us to heaven, to live with Thee there.**

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

P O God, because You once caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light, grant that we who have known the mystery of that Light here on earth may come to the full measure of its joys in heaven; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C Amen.

Blessing

P Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy.

C that will be for all the people.

P For unto you is born this day in the city of David

C a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

P The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the ✠ Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you forever.

C Amen.

Closing Hymn

Lutheran Service Book #363
"Silent Night"

- 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.**

*At the end of the hymn the light will be restored to the sanctuary.
Put out your candles and greet one another. No ushers will usher you out of the pew.
Wish everyone a Merry Christmas as you leave!*

OPENING HYMN --- "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*

refrain

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*

HYMN OF THE DAY --- “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” – LSB #380

1. Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

2. Christ, by highest heav’n adored,
Christ the ever-lasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come,
Offspring of a virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the God-head see,
Hail the incarnate Deity!”
Pleased as Man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel!
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

3. Hail, the heav’n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Ris’n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

HYMN OF RESPONSE --- "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.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN --- "O Little Town of Bethlehem" – LSB #361

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.

2. For Christ is born of Mary,
And gathered all above
While mortals sleep and angels keep
Their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the king
And peace to all the earth!

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!

DISTRIBUTION HYMN --- “What Child Is This” – LSB #370

1. What child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary’s lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The babe, the son of Mary!

2. Why lies He in such mean estate
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,
The cross be born for me, for you;
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
The babe, the son of Mary!

3. So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh;
Come, peasant, king, to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise the song on high,
The virgin sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy, for Christ is born,
The babe, the son of Mary!

DISTRIBUTION HYMN --- “It Came Upon a Midnight Clear” – LSB #366

1. It came upon a midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold:
“Peace on the earth, good-will to all,
From heav’n’s all-gracious king.”
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

2. Still through the cloven skies they come
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heav’nly music floats
O’er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hov’ring wing.
And ever o’er its babel sounds
The blessed angels sing.

3. All you, beneath your heavy load,
By care and guilt bent low,
Who toil along a dreary way
With painful steps and slow:
Look up, for golden is the hour,
Come swiftly on the wing,
The Prince was born to bring you peace;
Of Him the angels sing.

4. For lo, the days have come to pass
By prophets seen of old,
When down into the circling years
Came Christ as was foretold.
His word of peace shall to the earth God’s ancient promise bring,
And all who take this gift will hear The song of angels sing.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN --- “Once in Royal David’s City” – LSB #376

1. Once in royal David’s city
Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby
In a manger for His bed:
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.
2. He came down to earth from heaven,
Who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable,
And His cradle was a stall;
With the poor and mean and lowly
Lived on earth our Savior holy.
3. For He is our childhood’s pattern,
Day by day like us He grew;
He was little, weak, and helpless,
Tears and smiles like us He knew;
And He feels for all our sadness,
And He shares in all our gladness.
4. And our eyes at last shall see Him,
Through His own redeeming love;
For that child so dear and gentle
Is our Lord in heav’n above;
And He leads His children on
To the place where He is gone.
5. Not in that poor, lowly stable
With the oxen standing by
Shall we see Him, but in heaven,
Set at God’s right hand on high.
Then like stars His children, crowned,
All in white, His praise will sound!

DISTRIBUTION HYMN --- “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming” – LSB #359

1. Lo, how a rose e’er blooming
From tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse’s lineage coming
As prophets long have sung,
It came, a flow’ret bright,
Amid the cold of winter,
When half-spent was the night.

2. Isaiah ‘twas foretold it,
The rose I have in mind;
With Mary we behold it,
The virgin mother kind.
To show God’s love aright,
She bore to us a Savior,
When half-spent was the night.

3. This flow’r, whose fragrance tender
With sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor
The darkness ev’ry-where.
True man, yet very God,
From sin and death He saves us
And lightens ev’ry load.

4. O Savior, child of Mary,
Who felt our human woe;
O Savior, King of glory,
Who dost our weakness know:
Bring us at length we pray
To the bright courts of heaven,
And to the endless day.