

CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP
DECEMBER 25, 2019 – 9:30 AM



ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
LAKWOOD, COLORADO

MEMBER CONGREGATION
CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION (CLC)

A SERVICE OF NINE LESSONS & CAROLS FOR CHRISTMAS

Welcome and Responsive Invocation

P Welcome in the name of the Father,
C who from eternity planned our salvation;
P and the Son,
C who became human when the fullness of the time had come;
P and the Holy Spirit,
C who conceived our holy Savior in the womb of the virgin Mary.
P Triune God, we ask Your blessing on our worship on this Christmas Day,
as we praise You for the gift of the Christ Child born for us at Bethlehem.
C (says) Amen.

Opening Hymn – Once in Royal David’s City

Hymn 376:1-2
stanza 1, pastor; stanza 2, congregation

Prayer

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First Lesson – Genesis 3:8-15,17-19

God tells sinful Adam that he has lost the life of Paradise
and that his Seed will bruise the serpent’s head.

And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, “Where are you?” So he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.” And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?” Then the man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.” And the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” So the LORD God said to the serpent: “Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’: ‘Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.’”

After the reading: Thanks be to God.

Carol 1 – Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord

Hymn 352 (1,5,6)

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Second Lesson – Genesis 22:15-18

God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed
shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said: “By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son— blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”

After the reading: Thanks be to God.

Carol 2 – Now Sing We, Now Rejoice

Hymn 386 (1-2)

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Third Lesson – Isaiah 9:2,6-7

The prophet foretells the coming of the Savior.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined. | For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

After the reading: Thanks be to God.

Carol 3 – Behold a Branch is Growing

TLH 645 (1,2,4)

**C Behold a branch is growing Of loveliest form and grace,
As prophets sung, foreknowing; It springs from Jesse's race
And bears one little Flower In midst of coldest winter,
At deepest midnight hour.**

**P Isaiah hath foretold It In words of promise sure,
And Mary's arms enfold It, A virgin meek and pure.
Through God's eternal will This Child to her is given
At midnight calm and still.**

**C This Flower, whose fragrance tender With sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor The darkness everywhere.
True Man, yet very God; From sin and death He saves us
And lightens every load.**

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Fourth Lesson – Micah 5:2-4
The Messiah will be born in Bethlehem.

But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting. Therefore He shall give them up, until the time that she who is in labor has given birth; then the remnant of His brethren shall return to the children of Israel. And He shall stand and feed His flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD His God; and they shall abide, for now He shall be great to the ends of the earth.

After the reading: Thanks be to God.

Carol 4 – O Little Town of Bethlehem

Hymn 361 (1-3)

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Fifth Lesson – St. Luke 1:26-35,38
The angel Gabriel announces the birth of Jesus to the virgin Mary.

Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!" But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. | Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

After the reading: Thanks be to God.

All “From heav’n above to earth I come
To bear good news to ev’ry home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
Whereof I now will say and sing:

“To you this night is born a child
Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;
This little child, of lowly birth,
Shall be the joy of all the earth.

P “This is the Christ, our God most high
Who hears your sad and bitter cry;
He will Himself your Savior be
From all your sins to set you free.

“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’ns and earth were made.”

Men/Boys Welcome to earth, O noble Guest,
Through whom the sinful world is blest!
You came to share my misery;
That You might share Your joy with me.

Ah, Lord, though You created all,
How weak You are, how poor and small,
That You should choose to lay Your head
Where lowly cattle lately fed!

Women/Girls Instead of soft and silken stuff
You have but hay and straw so rough,
On which as King, so rich and great,
To be enthroned in royal state.

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled,
Within my heart, made clean and new,
A quiet chamber kept for You.

P My heart for very joy must leap,
My lips no more can silence keep;
I, too, must sing with joyful tongue
That sweetest ancient cradle-song:

All Glory to God in highest heaven,
Who unto us His Son has given!
While angels sing with pious mirth
A glad new year to all the earth.

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Sixth Lesson – St. Luke 2:1-7
St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

After the reading: Thanks be to God.

Carol 6 – Away in a Manger

Hymn 364

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Seventh Lesson – St. Luke 2:8-16
The shepherds go to the manger.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, 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, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

After the reading: Thanks be to God.

Carol 7 – Where Shepherds Knelt

Hymn 369
stanza 1, pastor; stanzas 2-4, congregation

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Eighth Lesson – St. Matthew 2:1-11

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.” When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. So they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: “But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.” Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also.” When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

After the reading: Thanks be to God.

Carol 8 – As with Gladness Men of Old

Hymn 397

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Ninth Lesson (congregation stands) – St. John 1:1-14

St. John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

After the reading: Thanks be to God.

Carol 9 – See in Yonder Manger Low

Hymn 711 (tan hymnal)
(all remain standing)

Prayer and Blessing

P The Lord be with you

C And also with you.

P Let us pray. Lord God, gracious Father, who when the time had fully come sent Your Son to assume our flesh and become our Brother, we thank You for Your truth and fatherly goodness in giving us this Savior, by whose birth we are delivered from sin, death, Satan, and hell; and we implore You, keep us unto the end in true knowledge of our Redeemer, that with all the holy angels, we may rejoice at His nativity and behold Him, together with You and the Holy Spirit in glory and majesty, forever and ever.

All (say) Amen.

P May He who by His Incarnation, gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, grant you the fullness of inward peace and joy as you place your trust in Him, and may the blessing of God Almighty – the Father, Son and Holy Spirit – be and remain with you always.

All (say) Amen.

Closing Hymn – Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hymn 380 (1,3)

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SERVING US AT GOD’S HOUSE TODAY

Organist: Suzannah Miller

Ushers: Bob Rankin, Don Claeys

Elder: Larry Reed

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This service has been adapted from The first Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols in King’s College, Cambridge. The service was first broadcast on the British Broadcasting Corporation in 1928, and since the early 1930s has been broadcast live to many parts of the world on the BBC World Service, as well as domestically on the Radio 4. It is estimated that each year there are millions of listeners worldwide.