



## **CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE**

God's Word Is Our Great Heritage

*The Bible Is the Cradle wherein Christ Is Laid*

# GOD'S WORD IS OUR GREAT HERITAGE

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*Tonight's service leads us through the promises of a Savior, the birth of our Savior Jesus, and the announcement of his birth, highlighted by commentary and hymns written by Martin Luther.*

## PRESERVICE MUSIC

*performed by St. Paul's students*

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## *I. Opening*

### PREK-8 SONG

*Oh Come, Little Children*

### GREETING

### INVOCATION

We worship in the name of our Triune God.

**In the name of the Father, who sent his one and only Son to be our Savior**

In the name of His son, our Lord Jesus, who was born of the virgin Mary

**In the name of the Holy Spirit who brought about this miraculous conception in Mary's womb.**

**To our loving and merciful God be all glory now and forever. Amen**

### PRAYER

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true light. Grant that as we have known on earth the wonder of that light, we may also behold him in all his glory in the life to come; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## CONGREGATIONAL HYMN

354 O Come, All Ye Faithful

**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:*

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

**God from true God, and Light from Light eternal,  
born of a virgin, to earth he comes!  
Only-begotten Son of God the Father: *(Refrain)***

**Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!  
Glory to God, all glory in the highest: *(Refrain)***

**Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n!  
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: *(Refrain)***

Text: tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–1880, alt.; John F. Wade, c. 1711–1786  
Text: Public domain

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## *II. Annunciation*

### GRADES 7-8

*Isaiah 9:6*

For to us a child is born. To us a son is given. The authority to rule will rest on his shoulders. He will be named: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

## GRADES 7-8

*Luther Comment*

"This is for us the hardest point, not so much to believe that He is the son of the Virgin and God himself, as to believe that this Son of God is ours. That is where we wilt, but he who does feel it has become another man. Truly it is marvelous in our eyes that God should place a little child in the lap of a virgin and that all our blessedness should lie in him. And this Child belongs to all mankind."

## PREK-8 SONG

*God's Word Is Our Great Heritage*

## GRADES 5-6

*Luke 1:26–38*

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin pledged in marriage to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women."

<sup>29</sup>But she was greatly troubled by the statement and was wondering what kind of greeting this could be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, because you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>Listen, you will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will never end."

<sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

<sup>35</sup>The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. <sup>36</sup>Listen, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age even though she was called barren, and this is her sixth month. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible for God."

<sup>38</sup>Then Mary said, "See, I am the Lord's servant. May it happen to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

## PREK-8 SONG

*331 From Heaven Above to Earth I Come sts. 1–2*

<sup>18</sup>This is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. His mother, Mary, was pledged in marriage to Joseph. Before they came together, she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Joseph, her husband, was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her. So he decided to divorce her privately. <sup>20</sup>But as he was considering these things, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

<sup>22</sup>All this happened to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: <sup>23</sup>"Look, the virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son. And they will name him Immanuel," which means, "God with us."

<sup>24</sup>When Joseph woke up from his sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him. He took Mary home as his wife, <sup>25</sup>but he was not intimate with her until she gave birth to her firstborn son. And he named him Jesus.

**CONGREGATIONAL HYMN**

*301 Savior of the Nations, Come sts. 1, 3, 5*

**Savior of the nations, come;  
Virgin's Son, make here your home.  
Marvel now, O heav'n and earth,  
that the Lord chose such a birth.**

**Wondrous birth! O wondrous Child  
of the virgin undefiled,  
though by all the world disowned,  
yet to be in heav'n enthroned!**

**Praise to God the Father sing,  
praise to God the Son, our King,  
praise to God the Spirit be  
ever and eternally.**

Text: tr. William M. Reynolds, 1812–1876, alt.; German version, Martin Luther, 1483–1546, abr.; Ambrose of Milan, 340–397, abr.  
Text: Public domain

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## III. Nativity

### GRADES 7-8

*Luther Comment*

"Behold Christ lying in the lap of his young mother, still a virgin. What can be sweeter than the Babe, what more lovely than the mother!...Look at the Child, knowing nothing. Yet all that is belongs to him, that your conscience should not fear but take comfort in him. Doubt nothing...Look upon this Lord of Peace and your spirit will be at peace."

### CONGREGATIONAL HYMN

*331 From Heaven Above to Earth I Come sts. 3-4*

**"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.**

**"He will on you the gifts bestow  
prepared by God for all below,  
that in his kingdom, bright and fair,  
you may with us his glory share.**

Text: tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, alt.; Martin Luther, 1483-1546  
Text: Public domain

### GRADES 3-4

*Luke 2:1-7*

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governing Syria. <sup>3</sup>And everyone went to register, each to his own town. <sup>4</sup>And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the town of Nazareth, into Judea, to the town of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was from the house and family line of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, his wife, who was pledged to him in marriage and was expecting a child.

*continued...*

<sup>6</sup>And so it was that while they were there, the time came for her to give birth.  
<sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son, wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

## CONGREGATIONAL HYMN

*Gentle Mary Laid Her Child*

**Gentle Mary laid her child Lowly in a manger;  
There he lay, the undefiled, To the world a stranger.  
Such a babe in such a place—Can he be the Savior?  
Ask the saved of all the race Who have found his favor.**

**Angels sang about his birth; Wise men sought and found him.  
Heaven's star shone brightly forth, Glory all around them.  
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight, Heard the angels singing.  
All the plains were lit that night; All the hills were ringing.**

**Gentle Mary laid her child Lowly in a manger;  
He is still the undefiled, But no more a stranger.  
Son of God, of humble birth, Beautiful the story;  
Praise his name in all the earth, Hail the King of glory!**

Text: Text: Joseph S. Cook, 1859–1933.

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## *IV. Shepherds*

### GRADES 7-8

*Luther Comment*

“See what God did in heaven about this birth which the world despised and did not even see and know. The joy was so great that the angels could not stay in heaven, but had to break out and tell man on earth. The angels proclaimed to the shepherds ‘tidings of great joy.’ This is a mighty comfort to us. What the world despised the angels honored. They would have had a much bigger celebration if God had allowed them, but he wished to teach us through his Son to despise the pomp of the world.”

## CONGREGATIONAL HYMN

*335 To Shepherds as They Watched by Night sts. 1, 3, 6*

**To shepherds as they watched by night  
appeared a host of angels bright;  
“Behold the tender babe,” they said,  
“in yonder lowly manger laid,**

**O then rejoice that through his Son  
God is with sinners now at one;  
made like yourselves of flesh and blood,  
your brother is th’ eternal God.**

**You shall and must at last prevail;  
God’s own you are, you cannot fail.  
To God forever sing your praise  
with joy and patience all your days.**

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. Richard Massie, 1800–1887, alt.  
Text: Public domain

## PREK-K

*Luke 2:8–12*

<sup>8</sup>There were in the same country shepherds staying out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock at night. <sup>9</sup>An angel of the Lord appeared to 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 behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which will be for all people: <sup>11</sup>Today in the town of David, a Savior was born for you. He is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup>And this will be a sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”

## GRADES 1-2 SONG

*Away in a Manger*



## GRADES 1-2

*Luke 2:13–14*

<sup>13</sup>Suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude from the heavenly army, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward mankind.”

## CONGREGATIONAL HYMN

*331 From Heaven Above to Earth I Come sts. 5–7*

**“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.”**

**How glad we’ll be to find it so!  
Then with the shepherds let us go  
to see what God for us has done  
in sending us his own dear Son.**

**Come here, my friends, lift up your eyes,  
and see what in the manger lies.  
Who is this child, so young and fair?  
It is the Christ Child lying there.**

Text: tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.; Martin Luther, 1483–1546  
Text: Public domain

## GRADES 1-2

*Luke 2:15–20*

<sup>15</sup>When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Now let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” <sup>16</sup>So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they had seen him, they told others the message they had been told about this child. <sup>18</sup>And all who heard it were amazed by what the shepherds said to them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

**GRADES 7-8***Luther Comment*

"Our God begins with angels and ends with shepherds. Why does he do such preposterous things? He puts a Babe in a crib. Our common sense revolts and says, 'Could not God have saved the world some other way?' I would not have sent an angel. I would simply have called the devil and said, 'Let my people go.' The Christian faith is foolishness. It says that God can do anything and makes him so weak that either his Son had no power or wisdom or else the whole story is made up. Surely the God who in the beginning said: 'Let there be light,' 'Let there be a firmament,' 'Let the dry land appear,' could have said to the devil, 'Give me back my people, my Christians.' God does not even send an angel to take the devil by the nose. He sends, as it were, an earthworm lying in weakness, helpless without his mother, and he suffers him to be nailed to a cross. The devil says, 'I will judge him.' So spoke Caiaphas and Pilate, 'He is nothing but a carpenter,' and then in his weakness and infirmity he crunches the devil's back and alters the whole world. He suffered himself to be trodden under the foot of man and to be crucified, and through weakness he takes the power and the Kingdom."

**HYMN***361 Go, Tell It on the Mountain**Congregation joins for verse 3 and final refrain**Refrain:*

Go, tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills, and ev'rywhere;  
go, tell it on the mountain  
that Jesus Christ is born.

While shepherds kept their watching  
o'er silent flocks by night,  
behold, throughout the heavens  
there shone a holy light. (*Refrain*)

*continued...*

The shepherds feared and trembled  
when lo, above the earth  
rang out the angel chorus  
that hailed our Savior's birth. (*Refrain*)

**Down in a lowly manger  
the humble Christ was born,  
and God sent us salvation  
that blessed Christmas morn. (*Refrain*)**

Text: John W. Work II, 1873–1925, verses, alt.; African American spiritual, refrain  
Text: Public domain

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## V. Wise Men

### CONGREGATION

*Matthew 2:1–10*

<sup>1</sup>After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, when Herod was king, Wise Men from the east came to Jerusalem. They asked, <sup>2</sup>“Where is he who has been born King of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” <sup>3</sup>When King Herod heard this, he was alarmed, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup>He gathered together all the people's chief priests and experts in the law. He asked them where the Christ was to be born. <sup>5</sup>They said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, because this was written through the prophet:

<sup>6</sup>You, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are certainly not least among the rulers of Judah: because out of you will come a ruler, who will shepherd my people, Israel.”

<sup>7</sup>Then Herod secretly summoned the Wise Men and found out from them exactly when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. When you find him, report to me, so that I may also go and worship him.”

<sup>9</sup>After listening to the king, they went on their way. Then the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them, until it stood still over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw the star, they rejoiced with overwhelming joy.

## GRADES 7-8

*Luther Comment*

"The Wise Men were cast down and offended. They had started out in the confident expectation of finding him, and as a matter of fact found nothing. The Evangelist makes plain how rebuffed they felt when he says, 'When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.' It is as if he had said 'When the star reappeared, they were very happy and thought: "It is right after all. We were not deceived.'" We must do the same thing and hold fast to the Word."

## GRADES 5-6

*Matthew 2:11-12*

<sup>11</sup>After they went into the house and saw the child with Mary, his mother, they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup>Since they had been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they went back to their own country by another route.

## CONGREGATIONAL HYMN

*372 As with Gladness Men of Old sts. 1-2, 5*

**As with gladness men of old  
did the guiding star behold,  
as with joy they hailed its light,  
leading onward, beaming bright,  
so, most gracious Lord, may we  
evermore be led by thee.**

**As with joyful steps they sped,  
Savior, to thy lowly bed,  
there to bend the knee before  
thee, whom heav'n and earth adore,  
so may we with willing feet  
ever seek thy mercy seat**

*verse 5...*

**In the heav'nly country bright  
need they no created light;  
    thou its light, its joy, its crown,  
    thou its sun which goes not down.  
There forever may we sing  
alleluias to our King!**

*Text: William C. Dix, 1837–1898, alt.  
Text: Public domain*

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## *VI. Conclusion*

### **OFFERING**

*"Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts" (Matthew 2:11).*

### **CONGREGATIONAL HYMN**

*337 Silent Night, Holy Night*

**Stille nacht! Heilige nacht!  
Alles Schlaeft, einsam wacht  
Nur das heilige Elternparr,  
Das im Stalle zu Bethelhem war  
    Bei dem himmlischen Kind,  
    Bei dem himmlischen Kind.**

**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.**

*continued...*

**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!**

**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.**

*Text: tr. John F. Young, 1820–1885; Franz Joseph Mohr, 1792–1848  
Text: Public domain*

*Stand*

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

## **BENEDICTION**

The grace of our Lord + Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**Amen.**

*Be seated*

## **GRADES 7-8**

*Luther Comment*

Our final Luther comment this evening comes toward the end of his life as his dear wife voiced her concern on his health and welfare. – “I have a better Caretaker than you and all the angels. He it is who lies in a manger...but at the same time sits at the right hand of God, the Almighty Father. Therefore be at rest.” Let this be our parting declaration tonight as we end our service of thanks and praise.

## ALL STUDENTS

*Psalm 98*

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.  
He has revealed his righteousness to the eyes of the nations.

## CLOSING HYMN

*353 Joy to the World*

*Children sing v.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.

**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.**

**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.**

**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.**

*Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748  
Text: Public domain*

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## SERVING IN WORSHIP

**PreK-Kindergarten Teacher**  
**Grades 1-2 Teacher**  
**Grades 3-4 Teacher**  
**Grades 5-6 Teacher**  
**Grades 7-8 Teacher and Principal**  
**Pianist**  
**Organist**  
**Presiding Minister**

Mrs. Gwen Manke  
Mrs. Susan Riediger  
Mrs. Penny Adickes  
Miss Karen Bauer  
Mr. Jon Lindemann  
Paul Adickes  
Harriet Langrehr  
Pastor Brock Groth

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## Join us for Christmas Worship!

**Christmas Day Hymn Festival**

**9:00 am**



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WiFi: SPLC\_Guest  
Password: gracealone

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