

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2021

What child is this?





SHEPHERD of the LAKES

LUTHERAN CHURCH

*Shepherding Christ's flock and
seeking the lost sheep by
sharing the good news of Jesus
Christ with all!*

114 East Blue Earth Avenue

Fairmont, MN 56031

Sunday Worship: 9:30am

Sunday School and Bible Class: 10:45am

www.shepherdofthelakes.net

Pastor Jason Zuehlke

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FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE...

A room for any parents with children in need of a quiet place is located just outside of the back of the sanctuary. Restrooms are located in the hallway toward the front of the sanctuary. Please ask if you have any further questions or concerns

SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

Our worship this evening is an adaptation of the *Lessons and Carols* service traditionally held at King's College, Cambridge, England, on December 24th every year. *Lessons and Carols* was first held on Christmas Eve, 1918. It was planned by Eric Milner-White, who at the age of thirty-four had just been appointed Dean of King's College after experience as an army chaplain.

OUR THEME FOR THIS NIGHT: *WHAT CHILD IS THIS?*

There is something that sets this child apart from all others. It is not simply his humble beginnings, with a cattle trough as his first cradle. It is not just the miraculous nature of his birth, his mother being a virgin. There is so much more. This child is the only hope we have for peace and a future. This child can wipe away every tear, drive away every fear. Here is the truth of Christmas. With this child, you lack nothing. Without him, you have nothing. Let us use this season of Christmas to answer this most important question: WHAT CHILD IS THIS?

PRAYER FOR BEFORE WORSHIP

Heavenly Father, as I worship you today, curb my wandering thoughts. Open my heart to hear and believe your word, so that through faith your Son may take his rightful place not just in the manger, but also in my heart. Encourage me with your Word, that my faith is strengthened, my confidence and hope renewed, and I am recommitted to serve you faithfully. In Jesus' name, amen.

+ ORDER OF SERVICE +

STAND

EXHORTATION AND PRAYER

M: Beloved in Christ: In this Christmas season it is our duty and delight to hear again the message of the angels and, in heart and mind, to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us, the Christ-child, lying in a manger.

Let us read and learn in Holy Scripture the story of the loving purposes of God from the first days after our fall, and into the birth and glorious redemption brought to us by this Holy Child. Let us hear how peace was lost, and how peace is restored.

But first, let us pray, for this is good and right.

Heavenly Father, we pray for ourselves and all people who worship you and your Son this holy night. By your holy Word, lead us to say with the angels,

C: Glory to God in the highest!

M: We pray for your blessing upon the people of our city, our state, our nation, and our world.

C: Glory to God in the highest!

M: We pray for the poor and helpless, the cold and hungry, the sick and sad, that you would give them the joy of your salvation and the comfort of your presence.

C: Glory to God in the highest!

M: We pray for unbelievers and enemies of the Church, that through your Law and Gospel you would lead them to recognize your Son as their only hope for eternal life.

C: Glory to God in the highest!

M: Finally, we remember before you all those who rejoice with us in heaven, who live in greater light and beauty than we, that multitude which no one can number, who died in faith, and now praise you in your heavenly temple. We confess that we are united with them and with one another.

C: Glory to God in the highest!

M: We humbly offer up these prayers and praises in the words that Christ himself taught us.

C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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.

CAROL

OH, COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL (vv 1-3)

**Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant,
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him, Born the King of angels.
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, 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.
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

**Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation;
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above.
Glory to God, all Glory in the highest.
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

Be seated

THE CHILD OF PROMISE

FIRST LESSON

GENESIS 3:8-15

CHORAL ANTHEM

WHITE AS SNOW

A CHILD OF BLESSINGS

SECOND LESSON

GENESIS 22:15-18

CAROL

OF THE FATHER'S LOVE BEGOTTEN (vv 1,2,4)

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.

Oh, that birth forever blessed 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.

Let the 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.

A CHILD OF LIGHT

THIRD LESSON

ISAIAH 9:2,6-7

CAROL

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

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

**Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come, Offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail th' incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel!
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"**

**Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all you nations rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With th' angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
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A CHILD OF HUMBLE ORIGIN

FOURTH LESSON

MICAH 5:2-4

CAROL

ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY (vv 1,2,4)

**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.**

**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.**

**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.**

A CHILD OF A VIRGIN

FIFTH LESSON

LUKE 1:26-35,38

CAROL

THE ANGEL GABRIEL FROM HEAVEN CAME

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
"All hail," said he to meek and lowly Mary,
"Most highly favored maiden." Gloria!

"I come from heav'n to tell the Lord's decree:
A blessed virgin mother you shall be.
Your Son shall be Immanuel, by seers foretold,
"Most highly favored maiden." Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head;
"To me be as it pleases God," she said.
"My soul shall praise and magnify his holy name."
Most highly favored maiden, Gloria!

Of her Immanuel, the Christ, was born
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say,
"Most highly favored maiden." Gloria!

A CHILD OF HUMBLE ORIGIN

SIXTH LESSON

Luke 2:1-7

CAROL

O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM (vv 1-3)

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.

For Christ is born of Mary, And, gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, The 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.

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.

A CHILD OF JOY

SEVENTH LESSON

Luke 2:8-20

CAROL

ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain: Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be Which inspire your heav'nly song? *Refrain*

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

A CHILD FOR ALL

EIGHTH LESSON

Matthew 2:1-12

CAROL

ONCE AGAIN MY HEART REJOICES (vv 1,5-6)

Once again my heart rejoices
As I hear Far and near
Sweetest angel voices.
"Christ is born!" their choirs are singing
Till the air Ev'rywhere
Now with joy is ringing.

Softly from his lowly manger
Jesus calls One and all,
"You are safe from danger.
Children, from the sins that grieve you
You are freed; All you need
I will surely give you."

Come, then, banish all your sadness!
One and all, Great and small,
Come with songs of gladness;
We shall live with him forever
There on high In that joy
Which will vanish never.

YOUR SAVING GOD

NINTH LESSON

John 1:1-14

CAROL

WHAT CHILD IS THIS

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!

Why lies he in such mean estate
Where oxen now are feeding?
Good Christians, fear; For sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through;
The cross he'll bear for me, for you.
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
The babe, the Son of Mary!

**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!**

THANK OFFERING

*Offerings can be placed in the offering plate in the back of our sanctuary. They can also be mailed to our church office at **114 E. Blue Earth Avenue, Fairmont, MN 56031** or made on our website under the “Donate” tab at the top of the homepage or taken to Profinium Bank in Fairmont.*

***To our visitors:** Our offering is not a debt we owe God, but a way that we return to God a portion of what he generously gave to us. Our motivation, then, is not obligation, but love for God. The members of Shepherd of the Lakes have joined together to spread God’s message both in this community and around the world. As our guest, please do not feel obligated to contribute. We’re happy that you’re with us to hear about God’s love for you.*

Stand

CLOSING PRAYER

M: When all was still and it was midnight, our eternal Word, O Lord, descended from the almighty throne to dwell among us. May we receive him in the peace of forgiven hearts and proclaim your gracious goodwill to all people on earth, for he is God with us, Emmanuel, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

BLESSING

M: May he who by his incarnation gathered things earthly and heavenly into one, fill us with such joy that comes with the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life. And the blessing of God Almighty — the Father, the (+) Son, and the Holy Spirit — be upon you and remain with you always.

C: **Amen.**

LIGHTING THE CHRISTMAS CANDLES *Ushers will come to your pew and light the candle nearest the center aisle. Please then light the candle next to you until all the candles are lit in the pew. When all the candles are lit, the lights will be dimmed. Remember to tip the unlit candle and leave the lit candle vertical.*

CLOSING HYMN

SILENT NIGHT

**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.**

**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.**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Organist / Pianist: Linda Hughes

Choral Singers: Linda Hughes, Sharon Scheff, Doris Rosener, Deb Sulzle, Crystal Hughes

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The first thing you should consider is that the child who is born is yours, just as we sing: “For us today is born a child—Accord him acclamation!” The words to us you must use well to your advantage and diligently flesh them out. You must take the four letters T-O U-S and make them as large as heaven and earth. Yes, he is a child. But to whom is he born? To us! Not to his mother. Not to his relatives. Not to God or the angels, who do not need his birth. No, to us who are humans he is born. . .

So then, reach out and take this child in your arms, whoever is able. I’ll say it again: God causes this child to be born for those who are damned and lost. So hold out your hands and say, “I myself am certainly damned. But against this fact I set the tiny little child whom my poor Mary has in her lap. She has my treasure at her breast. He eats flour mash and is rocked to sleep. He is mine, and I set him against everything I do not have.. Though I am not upright or honorable, I am still saved eternally in this child. And this is just as certain as if I could see it with my eyes. . .

Martin Luther

Sermon for Christmas Eve Vigil on Isaiah 9:6

December 24, 1531

*Merry Christmas and
God’s blessings at this
the nativity of our
Savior!*



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Church (WELS) of Fairmont, MN*

