



CHRISTMAS LESSONS & CAROLS

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2020

☒ Bishop ☒ Lector ☒ Assisting Minister ☒ All

Prelude

God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen

arr. Raymond H. Haan

Joy Bauer, Minister of Music
Ascension Lutheran Church, Towson, MD

Gaudete

Anonymous

Memorial Episcopal Church, Bolton Hill, MD

Advent Fantasy

arr. Judy Phillips

Handbell Choir
St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Newark, DE

Advent Candles

Gracia Grindal

Richard McCready, Director of Music
Abiding Savior Lutheran Church, Columbia, MD

Words of Welcome

*The Rev. William (Bill) Gohl, Jr., Bishop
Delaware-Maryland Synod, ELCA*

O Holy Night

John S. Dwight

Jason Collier, Director of Contemporary Worship and Communications
St. John's Lutheran Church, Sweet Air, MD

GATHERING

Invocation

☒ We gather this day as we live each of our days, in the name of the Father,
and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

☒ Amen.



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king;
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3 Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righ - teous - ness!



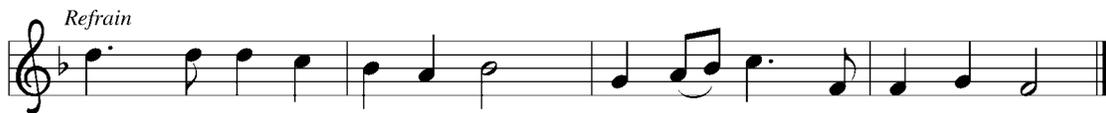
peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled."
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God-head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with an - gel - ic hosts pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.



Refrain
Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.

Music: MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–1847; arr. William H. Cummings, 1831–1915

Apostolic Greeting & Prayer of the Day

- ☒ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- ☒ **And also with you.**
- ☒ Let us pray. Gracious God of heaven and earth, you have brought love to life in the world through Jesus. Though born in a manger, he is the firstborn of all creation. Though crucified on a cross, Jesus is the Lord of life. Fill us with the wonder and joy of his presence in the world and in our hearts.
- ☒ **Amen.**

HEARING THE WORD

Lesson

St. Luke 1:26-35

*Read by Pastor Martha Clementson
Grace Lutheran Church, Westminster, MD*

☐ A Reading from the Gospel of Luke:

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words, and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called the Son of God. " Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word."

☐ The Word of the Lord.

☑ Thanks be to God.

Prayer

☐ Let us pray. Almighty God, in choosing the virgin Mary to be the mother of your Son, you made known your gracious regard for the poor and lowly. Grant us grace to receive your Word in humility, and so to be

made one with your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Carol

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence
St. John's Lutheran Church, Columbia, MD

ELW #490



1 Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and trem - bling stand;
2 King of kings, yet born of Mar - y, as of old on earth he stood,
3 Rank on rank the host of heav - en spreads its van-guard on the way;
4 At his feet the six - winged ser - aph, cher - u - bim with sleep - less eye,

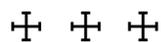


pon - der noth - ing earth - ly - mind - ed, for with bless - ing in his hand
Lord of lords in hu - man ves - ture, in the bod - y and the blood,
as the Light of light, de - scend - ing from the realms of end - less day,
veil their fac - es to the pres - ence, as with cease - less voice they cry:



Christ our God to earth de - scend - ing comes full hom - age to de - mand.
he will give to all the faith - ful his own self for heav'n - ly food.
comes, the pow'rs of hell to van - quish, as the dark - ness clears a - way.
"Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia, Lord Most High!"

Text: Liturgy of St. James; tr. Gerard Moultrie, 1829–1885, alt.
Music: PICARDY, French folk tune, 17th cent.



Lesson

St. Matthew 1:18-21

Read by Pastor Sue Loney

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Wilmington, DE

A Reading from the Gospel of Matthew:

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her

husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

℣ The Word of the Lord.

☩ **Thanks be to God.**

Prayer

℣ Let us pray. O God, who from the family of your servant David raised up Joseph to be the guardian of your incarnate Son and the spouse of his virgin mother: Give us grace to imitate his uprightness of life and his obedience to your commands; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

☩ **Amen.**

O Come All Ye Faithful
 Ascension Lutheran Church, Towson, MD



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
 2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
 born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;
 sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
 Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!



come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:
 Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
 Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

Refrain

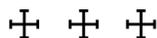


Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,
 O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.
 O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711–1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–1880, sts. 1, 3–4; tr. unknown, st. 2
 Music: ADESTE FIDELES, attr. John Francis Wade



☐ A Reading from the Gospel of Matthew:

Now when 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." Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star appeared; and he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.

☐ The Word of the Lord.

☑ **Thanks be to God.**

Prayer

☐ Let us pray. O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

☑ **Amen.**

Carol

Masters in This Hall

Traditional, arr. Neff

The Church of the Nativity & Holy Comforter, Baltimore, MD

Masters in this hall,
hear ye news today,
brought from oversea
and ever I you pray:

Refrain

Nowell! Nowell! Nowell!
Nowell sing we clear!
Holpen are all folk on earth,
born is God's Son so dear:
Nowell! Nowell! Nowell!
Nowell sing we loud!
God today hath poor folk raised
and cast a-down the proud.

When in Bethl'hem town,
wondrous joy had we,
kneeling on the ground
this little babe to see.

Refrain

This is Christ the Lord,
Masters, be ye glad!
Christmas is come in,
and no folk should be sad:

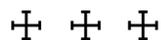
Refrain

Text: William Morris, 1834-1896

Music: MARCHE POUR LES MATELOTS, Marin Marais, 1656-1728

Arrangement: David Neff

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Lesson

St. Luke 2:1-7

Read by Pastor Melissa Helfer

Trinity Lutheran Church, Westminster, MD

☞ A Reading from the Gospel of Luke:

In those days a decree went out from the Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own

towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

📖 The Word of the Lord.

🙏 Thanks be to God.

Prayer

📖 Let us pray. Almighty God, you have made yourself known in your Son, Jesus, redeemer of the world. We pray that his birth as a human child will set us free from the old slavery of our sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

🙏 Amen.

Abiding Savior Lutheran Church, Columbia, MD



1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar-y's lap is sleep-ing?
 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas - ant, king, to own him.



Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
 Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.
 The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.

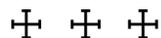


This, this is Christ the king, whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
 Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
 Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898
 Music: GREENSLEEVES, English ballad, 16th cent.



Lesson

St. Luke 2:8-14

*Read by Marleigh Toscano
 Salem Lutheran Church, Catonsville, MD*

☐ A Reading from the Gospel of Luke:

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see -- I am bringing you good news of a great joy for all the people; to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth 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 whom he favors!"

☐ The Word of the Lord.

☑ Thanks be to God.

Prayer

☑ Let us pray. O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

☑ Amen.

Carol

Angels We Have Heard on High (v. 1 & 2)

ELW #289

Delaware-Maryland Synod Lutheran Youth Organization



1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;



and the moun-tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.



Glo - ri - a

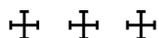


in ex - cel - sis De - o; glo - ri - a



- ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864
Music: GLORIA, French carol



☐ A Reading from the Gospel of John:

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 came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. In him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

☐ The Word of the Lord.

☑ **Thanks be to God.**

Prayer

☐ All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into our world has brightened weary hearts with peace. Call us out of darkness, and empower us to proclaim the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

☑ **Amen.**

Carol

Joy to the World (Unspeakable Joy)
Joy Reigns Lutheran Church, Edgewater, MD

arr. Tomlin, Cash, Gilder

Joy to the world the Lord is come
Let earth receive her King
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room
And heaven and nature sing
And heaven and nature sing
And heaven and heaven and nature sing

Joy to the world the Savior reigns
Let all their songs employ
While fields and floods rocks hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat repeat the sounding joy

Joy unspeakable joy
An overflowing well
No tongue can tell
Joy unspeakable joy
It rises in my soul
Never lets me go

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

CCLI Song # 5607039

Chris Tomlin | Ed Cash | George Frideric Handel | Isaac Watts | Matt Gilder

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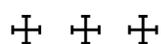
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Sermon

The Rev. William (Bill) Gohl, Jr., Bishop
Delaware-Maryland Synod, ELCA

Anthem

Lo, How A Rose
St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Newark, DE

arr. Carter

Prayers of Intercession

- ▣ Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.
- ▣ Night and day, all creation praises you, O God. Strengthen your church across nations, denominations, and traditions; bless our bishops, Elizabeth and Bill, our pastors, deacons, lay staff and disciples across this church and synod. Fill us with wisdom and unify our proclamation of your forgiveness and mercy. Hear us, O God.
- ▣ **Your mercy is great.**
- ▣ All creation is holy to you, O God. You cause the earth to bring forth its shoots and gardens to spring up. Protect hibernating animals and frozen lands that wait earnestly for longer days of awakening and growth. Hear us, O God.
- ▣ **Your mercy is great.**
- ▣ The nations are upheld by your hand, O God. Cause righteousness and praise to spring forth, inspiring leaders to serve with compassion and integrity. Send your spirit of discernment upon legislators grappling with complex decisions for the sake of the common good. Hear us, O God.
- ▣ **Your mercy is great.**
- ▣ Send the spirit of your Son into our hearts, O God. Come quickly to hearts that race with fear, hearts that break with grief, and hearts that long for wholeness especially those dear to us, and those we remember aloud, in silence and on social media using the hashtag #demdprays. Reveal your power to heal and to save. Hear us, O God.
- ▣ **Your mercy is great.**

A As you claimed us in baptism, O God, bless us with peace and joy. Strengthen those who are on the frontlines of the COVID pandemic: be with those who are experiencing illness, and those whose energy is taxed caring for the sick; help us to accompany those whose learning and livelihood has been challenged by these circumstances; remind us often to consider what it means to love our neighbor as ourselves. Make us generous in sharing with those who are in need of sustainable income, food, company, or health care. Connect us across the church and world. Hear us, O God.

G Your mercy is great.

A Let us depart in peace, O God, according to your word. For all your saints who have gone before us, we give you thanks. Prepare our salvation in the sight of all your witnesses of every time and place. Hear us, O God.

G Your mercy is great.

A Come quickly to us, we pray, with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to you, O God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

G Amen.

Lord's Prayer

B Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as we've been taught to ask:

G 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.

SENDING

Blessing

☒ May you know again the joy of the angels, the hopefulness of the shepherds, the perseverance of the magi, the faithfulness of Mary and Joseph, and the peace of the Christ-child this Christmas and in the year ahead; may the blessing of Almighty God, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit, abide in you and remain with you and those you love, always.

☒ Amen.

Sending hymn

Silent Night, Holy Night!

ELW #281

Ascension Lutheran Church, Towson, MD



Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,
1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,



ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.
all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,



Hold - er Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher
Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your



Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh.
peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792–1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820–1885
Music: STILLE NACHT, Franz Gruber, 1787–1863

Dismissal

☒ Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus!

☒ Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Joy to the World

Public domain

St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Wilmington, DE

Go, Tell it On the Mountain

arr. Kathleen Wissinger

Handbell Choir

St. John's Lutheran Church, Sweet Air, MD

Mary Did You Know?

Greene, Lowry

Virtual Praise Team

Evangelical Lutheran Church, Frederick, MD

Gentle Mary

arr. Cathy Mokolbust

Handbell Choir

Church of the Nativity & Holy Comforter, Baltimore, MD

Immanuel

Townend

St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Wilmington, DE



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The Rev. Carolyn Shank, Pastor
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The Rev. Melissa Helfer, Pastor
Trinity Lutheran Church, Westminster, MD

Marleigh Toscano
Salem Lutheran Church, Catonsville, MD

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Delaware-Maryland Synod, ELCA

Many thanks to everyone who provided the music for this service – the congregational Directors and Ministers of Music, the vocalists and instrumentalists, and those who worked hard to compile audio and video recordings, some from years past and some created especially for this unique year. This service could not have happened without you.

Special thanks to Breath of God Lutheran Church in Baltimore, MD for the use of their sanctuary.

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"Lo, How A Rose" (c) 1987 Hope Publishing Company, arr. John Carter, Tune: © 1994 Hope Publishing Company

"Go, Tell it On the Mountain" arr. Kath Wissinger, published RingTrue Press/Jeffers Handbell Supply (used with permission)

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