

**PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP**  
Rev. John R. Hanson  
December 25, 2021, 9:00 a.m.

PRELUDE

Janet Hanson, Musician

INTRODUCTION - *On this Christmas morning, the people of God gather to celebrate the birth of the Word made flesh, Christ our Lord. John's gospel tells of the Word that dwells among us, full of grace and truth. In Christ, God's grace and love, God's compassion and mercy, God's wrath and forgiveness are verbally, physically, practically, and eternally proclaimed. This is a well-known truth! The meaning of Christmas is made clear: the light shines in times of deep darkness. Encounter the Word made flesh in the people of God as they gather together as one body in the meal around the holy table. We are sent out to bear light as we proclaim this good news to all the ends of the earth.*

HYMN

*"The Bells of Christmas"*

Green # 62

The bells of Christmas chime once more; the heav'nly guest is at the door.  
He comes to earthly dwellings still with new year gifts of peace, good will.

Now let us go with quiet mind, the swaddled babe with shepherds find,  
To gaze on him who gladdens them, the loveliest flow'r of Jesse's stem.

Oh, join with me, in gladness sing, to keep our Christmas with our king,  
Until our song, from loving souls, like rushing mighty water rolls!

THEME AND VERSE

**A holy day has dawned upon us. Come, all nations, and adore the Lord. For today a great light has come upon the earth. Let all flesh see it together!**

***I am bringing you good news of 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. (Luke 2:10-11)***

HYMN

*"It Came upon the Midnight Clear"*

Green # 54

It came upon the 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 men, from heav'n's all gracious king."  
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

And ye beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low,  
Who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow:  
Look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing;  
Oh, rest beside the weary road and hear the angels sing!

CCLI Song No. 31078 CCLI License No. 1713417

READING: Isaiah 52:7-10 *A messenger races home to Jerusalem with the marvelous words: "Your God reigns!" In comforting the people, God proves to be the best brother or sister (redeemer) they have ever known. Everyone will witness the victory (salvation) of God.*

<sup>7</sup>How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." <sup>8</sup>Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight, they see the return of the LORD to Zion.

<sup>9</sup>Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. <sup>10</sup>The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

HYMN

*"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"*

Green # 60

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 angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

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!"

CCLI Song No. 27738 CCLI License No. 1713417

Good news! He comes!

**He came not into this world to condemn the world, but that the world, through him, might be saved.**

We receive you as our Lord and King. Heaven and earth proclaim your arrival.

**Come, captive! Come, depressed and overburdened! Come, hope of every nation! Come!**

Good news! Marvelous grace! He comes to us, Jacob / Israel / God's people!

**The Lord is come!**

HYMN

*"Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful"*

Green # 45

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!***

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:

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## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The celebration of Christmas has just begun. We join all of creation and people of many nations in receiving Jesus, the Son of God, into our hearts and homes. We call out to the God of all to free us from what burdens us and to fill us with his love.

**Gracious God, you sent your son to us to show us the way. Even when we have turned our backs and followed our own paths, you offered light. Forgive us when we are so willful and stubborn. Forgive us when we think more about ourselves and our comforts. Remind us again that Jesus witnessed the Light of Love that serves, guides, and heals. Thank you for loving us so much that you would give us this most precious gift. And, when we falter and fail, lift us again with your gentle touch. Pour your Light into our lives once more, that we will fully understand the power and depth of your love for us. AMEN.**

May the light of the Christmas morning sun illuminate our lives guiding, healing, and leading us to the Christ-child. As we gather in this time and place, hearing the story of the gift of the Messiah, reassure us again, blessed God, that you continually break into our lives. In gratitude we offer our praise and our love to you.

**In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

## WELCOME / SHARING OF THE PEACE

### HYMN

*"What Child Is This"*

Green # 40

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!

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!

CCLI Song No. 30983 CCLI License No. 1713417

**READING:** Hebrews 1:1-4 *This letter opens with a lofty declaration of Jesus' preeminent status as the Son through whom God created the world and through whom our sins are cleansed. God speaks to us now through the Son, who is exalted even above the angels.*

<sup>1</sup>Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, <sup>2</sup>but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. <sup>3</sup>He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains

all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, <sup>4</sup>having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

**O God and Father of us all, though many have gone through the gift giving and feasting with family and friends, there is yet another gift which has been given. You, O loving**

**God, wrapped the gift of your son, Jesus Christ, around our lives. The light of your love through him is shining brightly. It is not a harsh light but a light that reminds us of the many ways you love us. Open us, heart and spirit, as we hear your holy scriptures and the beautiful songs we share. Bring us to you with such joy that it will seem as though we are well within your reach. Amen.**

HYMN

*“Love Came Down at Christmas”*

Love came down at Christmas, love all lovely, love divine;  
Love was born at Christmas, star and angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead, love incarnate, love divine;  
Worship we our Jesus, but wherewith for sacred sign.

HOLY GOSPEL: John 1:1-14 *The prologue to the Gospel of John describes Jesus as the Word of God made flesh, the one who reveals God to be "full of grace and truth."*

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world came

into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

HYMN

*“Love Came Down at Christmas”*

Love shall be our token, love be yours and love be mine;  
Love to God and all men, love for plea and gift and sign.

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A MESSAGE AT CHRISTMAS - Ring, Sing, Christmas! John tells us Jesus is the “Word Made Flesh.” But what we seem to forget is that the proclamation is not just for us! We are not to own the benefits of Christ’s birth, we are to become messengers of the Good News, carrying the benefits of this Word who dwell among us out to all people. If we don’t begin to live the word that The Word (Jesus) proclaims, we haven’t really heard it at all.

SERMON HYMN

*“I Heard the Bells”*

I heard the bells on Christmas day, their old familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet the words repeat of peace on earth goodwill to men.

I thought how as the day had come, the belfries of all Christendom  
Had rolled along th'unbroken song of peace on earth goodwill to men.

And in despair I bowed my head, there is no peace on earth I said,  
For hate is strong and mocks the song of peace on earth goodwill to men.

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep, God is not dead nor doth he sleep.  
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail, with peace on earth goodwill to men.

Till ringing, singing on its way, the world revolved from night to day;  
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime of peace on earth goodwill to men.

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#### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

#### PRAYER FOR COMMUNION

**Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you bless us with your gifts of forgiveness, love, and peace, let us bring blessing for others. As we, like the shepherds, return on our way, may we proclaim all we have heard and seen, praising you in word and loving deed for this gift of Jesus, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

#### HYMN

*"Angels, from the Realms of Glory"*

Green # 50

Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
Ye who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:

***Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king.***

Shepherds in the field abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,  
God with us is now residing, yonder shines the infant light.

All creation join in praising God, the Father, Spirit, Son,  
Evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One.

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#### BLESSING

Go now, bringing the joy of a Father's love with you to all that you meet. Remember that the Spirit is with you in all you do. Rejoice, dear people, for the Light of Christ has come for the whole world. Go in peace and may the glorious peace of Jesus go with you always.

**Amen.**

#### DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ goes with you.

**Thanks be to God.**

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