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The Miracles of Christmas

December 25, 2023



Christmas Day

WELCOME, GUESTS!!! We are so glad you came! If you have any questions or would like more information about our church, any member of Grace would be happy to speak with you. Please take the time to fill out the guest register in the church's entrance. Restrooms are located to the left as you exit the sanctuary. Congregational responses are indicated by indent and boldened letters.

ORDER FOR TODAY'S SERVICE: MORNING PRAISE (MATINS) – CW. Pg.45

OPENING HYMN:

#55

HOSANNA TO THE COMING LORD

*****Please stand for the last verse*****



1 Oh, come, all ye faith - ful, Joy - ful and tri - um - phant, Oh,
2 God from true God, and Light from 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, oh, come ye to Beth - le - hem;
Born of a vir - gin, to earth he comes,
Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav'n a - bove.
Je - sus, to thee be all glo - ry giv'n,



Come and be - hold him, Born the King of an - gels.
On - ly be - got - ten Son of God the Fa - ther.
Glo - ry to God, all Glo - ry in the high - est.
Word of the Fa - ther, Now in flesh ap - pear - ing.

Refrain

Oh, come, let us a - dore him, Oh, come, let us a - dore him,

Oh, come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord.

Text: John F. Wade, c. 1711–86; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–80, alt.
Tune: ADESTE FIDELES (Irregular) John F. Wade, c. 1711–86, alt.

M: O Lord, o - pen my lips.

C: And my mouth shall de - clare your praise.

M: Has - ten to save me, O God.

C: O Lord, come quick - ly to help me.

M: The Lord be with you.

C: And al - so with you.

M: (Christmas) Unto us the _____ Christ is born: let us wor - ship him.

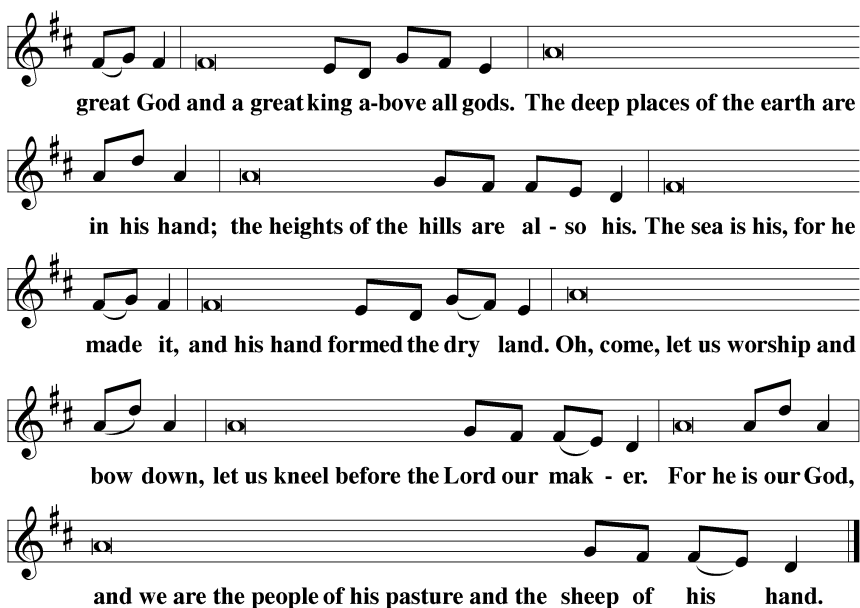
OH COME, LET US SING TO THE LORD

VENITE

C: Oh, come, let us sing to the Lord, let us make a joyful noise to the rock of

our sal - va - tion. Let us come into his presence with thanks - giv - ing,

let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise. For the Lord is a



great God and a great king a-bove all gods. The deep places of the earth are
in his hand; the heights of the hills are al - so his. The sea is his, for he
made it, and his hand formed the dry land. Oh, come, let us worship and
bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our mak - er. For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.

Please be seated

PSALM OF THE DAY:

PSALM 98

Refrain



Sing to the Lord a new song, for
he has done mar - vel - ous things.

Psalm tone



Refrain

Sing to the LORD a new song,*
for he has done marvelous things.
The LORD has made his salvation known*
and revealed his righteousness to the nations.
He has remembered his love and his faithfulness to the house of Israel;*
all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Refrain

Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth,*
burst into jubilant song with music;
make music to the LORD with the harp,*
with the harp and the sound of singing.
Shout for joy before the LORD, the King.*
He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples with equity.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Refrain

FIRST LESSON:

ISAIAH 52: 7 – 10

The return of Israel from captivity prefigured the work of the Word made flesh, who redeemed mankind from sin. The prophecy pictures the watchmen of Jerusalem standing sentinel on the city walls. Suddenly they see messengers descending the mountains that surround Zion. The watchmen shout for joy because the messengers bring news of peace, goodness, and rescue: Your God reigns!

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of a herald, who proclaims peace and preaches good news, who proclaims salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God is king!” The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voices. Together they shout for joy, because with both eyes they will see it when the Lord returns to Zion. Break out, shout for joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, because the Lord is comforting his people. He is redeeming Jerusalem. The Lord lays bare his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation from our God.

SECOND LESSON

HEBREWS 1: 1 – 9

The arrival of God in the flesh inaugurated the last age of this earth. In Jesus Christ all the promises God made were kept. In this age of promises kept, God’s interaction with mankind fundamentally changed. God sent the One who made the universe and who sustains it by the breath of his mouth. God sent the Son who is the exact representation of God’s being and the radiance of his glory.

In the past, God spoke to our forefathers by the prophets at many times and in many ways. In these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact imprint of the divine nature. He sustains all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he took his seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

The Son became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say: You are my Son. Today I have begotten you? And again: I will be his Father, and he will be my Son. And again, when he brought his

firstborn into the world, he said: Let all God's angels worship him. About the angels he says: He makes his messengers winds and his ministers flaming fire. But about the Son he says: God, your throne is forever and ever, and the scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of joy beyond your companions.

VERSE OF THE DAY

Alleluia. When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law. Alleluia. (Galatians 4:4,5a)

*****Please stand*****

GOSPEL

JOHN 1: 1 – 14

John's Christmas story begins in eternity within the Godhead. That the Son is eternally God and that he shared in the creation of the universe only underscores the enormity of his condescension to become man.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him everything was made, and without him not one thing was made that has been made. In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind. The light is shining in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man, sent from God, whose name was John. He came as an eyewitness to testify about the light so that everyone would believe through him. He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light.

The real light that shines on everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not recognize him. He came to what was his own, yet his own people did not accept him. But to all who did receive him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. They were born, not of blood, or of the desire of the flesh, or of a husband's will, but born of God.

The Word became flesh and dwelled among us. We have seen his glory, the glory he has as the only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

*****Please be seated*****

SERMON HYMN:

#35

OF THE FATHER'S LOVE BEGOTTEN

1 Of the Fa - ther's love be - got - ten
 2 Oh, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed
 3 This is he whom heav'n taught sing - ers
 4 Let the heights of heav'n a - dore him
 5 Christ, to you, with God the Fa - ther,

Ere the worlds be - gan to be, He is
 When the vir - gin, full of grace, By the
 Sang of old with one ac - cord; Whom the
 An - gel hosts his prais - es sing, Pow'rs, do -
 And the Spir - it cease - less - ly, Hymn and

Al - pha and O - me - ga, He the source, the
 Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing, Bore the Sav - ior
 Scrip - tures of the proph - ets Prom - ised in their
 min - ions bow be - fore him And ex - tol our
 chant and high thanks - giv - ing And un - end - ing

end - ing he, Of the things that are, that
 of our race, And the babe, the world's Re -
 faith - ful word. Now he shines, the long - ex -
 God and King. Let no tongue on earth be -
 prais - es be, Hon - or, glo - ry, and do -

have been, And that fu - ture years shall
 deem - er, First re - vealed his sa - cred
 pect - ed; Let cre - a - tion praise its
 si - lent, Ev - 'ry voice in con - cert
 min - ion And e - ter - nal vic - to -

see Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 face Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 Lord Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 ring Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 ry Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.

Text: Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, 348–c. 413, abr.; tr. John M. Neale, 1818–66, st. 1–4, alt.; Henry W. Baker, 1821–77, st. 5, alt.

Tune: DIVINUM MYSTERIUM (87 87 877) Plainsong melody, 13th century.

SERMON TEXT

JOHN 1: 1 - 14

SERMON:

IN THE BEGINNING THE WORD CAME

Please stand

WE PRAISE YOU, O GOD

TE DEUM

C: We praise you, O God, we acclaim you as Lord; all creation worships you,
Fa-ther ev - er - last - ing. To you all angels, all the pow'rs of heav'n,
cherubim and seraphim, sing in end-less praise: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of
heav'n - ly hosts, heaven and earth are full of your glo - ry.
The glorious company of apostles praise you. The noble fellowship of
proph - ets praise you. The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.
Throughout the world the ho - ly Church ac - claims you:
Father of majesty unbounded, your glorious, true, and on - ly Son,
and the Holy Spirit, ad - vo - cate and guide. You, Christ, are the King of
glo - ry, the eternal Son of the Fa - ther. When you became man to

set us free, you humbled yourself to be born of a vir-gin. You overcame the

sting of death and opened the kingdom of heaven to all be-liev - ers.

You sit at the right hand of God in the glory of the Fa - ther.

We believe that you will come to be our judge.

Come then, Lord, and help your peo - ple, bought with the price of

your own blood, and bring us with your saints to glory ev - er - last - ing.

****Please Be Seated****

OFFERING – Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 9: 7: “Each one should give as he has determined in his heart, not reluctantly or under pressure, for God loves a cheerful giver.” This service is our gift to our guests; should you feel obliged to give, we thank you for your generosity.

LORD, HAVE MERCY

KYRIE

M: In the morning, O Lord, I call to you; be merciful to me and hear my prayer.

C: Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer-cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

CHRISTMAS DAY PRAYER

On this holy day, dear Father, we rejoice to hear the good news of great joy that a Savior has been born for us. For fulfilling your prophecies and in the fullness of time sending you Son to be our Savior, we give you our heartfelt thanks and praise.

Unto to us a child is born! Unto us a Son is given!

What a great mystery for our faith this is: that God has become fully human for our salvation! Even though he is the all-powerful Lord of all, he is wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger.

Help us always believe that this precious child was born as our substitute to be our Savior.

Amid our joy, we grieve for the many people in our world who do not know that Jesus has come to bring them forgiveness and healing. As the shepherds spread abroad the good news of the birth of the Savior born for all the world, may we also make use of the unique opportunities this holiday presents to tell others of what we have seen and heard concerning the child.

Grant that the true peace between God and fallen mankind may comfort all people.

Special Prayers and Intercessions May Follow

Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent Prayer

As the angels sang out their praise, move us also to sing out our praise to you, today and every day, as the joy of Christmas in our hearts.

Glory to God in the highest! Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

BLESSING

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



****Please be seated****

CLOSING HYMN:

#62

JOY TO THE WORLD





earth re - ceive her King; Let ev - 'ry
all their songs em - ploy, While fields and
thorns in - fest the ground; He comes to
makes the na - tions prove The glo - ries

heart pre - pare him room And heav'n and
floods, rocks, hills, and plains Re - peat the
make his bless - ings flow Far as the
of his right - eous - ness And won - ders

na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture sing, And
sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re -
curse is found, Far as the curse is found, Far
of his love, And won - ders of his love, And

heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
as, far as the curse is found.
won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt.

Tune: ANTIOCH (CM with Repeat) George F. Handel, 1685–1759, adapt.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Adopt a Seminarian – Please keep our adopted Seminarian, Peter Estrem, in your prayers; You can also mail him cards and letters of encouragement to 6 Browns Court, Mankato, MN 56001. We hope to connect this student with our congregation.

Council Members needed – In May you have an opportunity to serve our congregation. We will be holding elections for the Vice-president and Treasurer. These are 3-year terms currently held by Mike Hanson and Greg Port (respectively.) Mike is eligible to serve one more term and Greg has asked to step down from his position. Please consider serving, your church needs you.

Sunday Morning Bible Study –For the Month of December we are going to return our attention to where we left off in the book of Acts. Email any questions or topics to Pastor Emmons. Please feel free to come and go as you like; all reading is voluntary. We will have Sunday School on Christmas and New Year's Eve.

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