



“¹⁴And 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. ‘

~John 1:14

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
The Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Day – December 25, 2018

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*We welcome you to St. John Lutheran Church. We are delighted to have you worship with us this morning. Should you have no permanent church-home in this community, why not consider making this one your own? You are most welcome here at St. John! Most elements of our service can be found in the bulletin, everything else is in the hymnal. Page refers to the numbered pages towards the front of the hymnal, hymns are bold and towards the back. Please rise when there is an *, congregational responses are in **bold**, and underlined elements of the service are found in the hymnal.*

HOLY COMMUNION

The Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Day – December 25, 2018

On this Christmas morning the people of God gather to celebrate the birth of the Word made flesh, Christ our Lord. Luke recounts the familiar story of shepherds and angels; John's gospel tells of the Word that dwells among us, full of grace and truth. The meaning of Christmas is made clear: the light shines in the darkness. It is in the liturgy that we encounter the Word made flesh—in the people of God gathered together as the body of Christ, and in the meal around the holy table. We go forth to be bearers of light as we proclaim this good news to all the ends of the earth.

PRELUDE: *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence* – Franklin Ritter

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the Holy One of Israel,
the Word made flesh,
the Power of the Most High,
✠ one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Gathered in the name of Jesus,
let us confess our sin against God and our neighbor.

Gracious God,
**in Christ Jesus you come among us
as light shining in darkness.
We confess our failure to welcome this light.
Forgive us and renew our hope,
so that we may live in the light of your grace,
and welcome the truth of Christ the Lord. Amen.**

I bring you good news of great joy for all the people:
To you is born a Savior, Christ the Lord.
Your sins are forgiven in ✠ Jesus' name. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN #298: *The Bells of Christmas

***GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

***KYRIE**

In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,

and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. A - men.

HYMN OF PRAISE #289: *Angels We Have Heard on High

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you gave us your only Son to take on our human nature and to illuminate the world with your light. By your grace adopt us as your children and enlighten us with your Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST 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.

⁷How 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."

⁸Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices,
together they sing for joy;
for in plain sight they see
the return of the LORD to Zion.

⁹Break forth together into singing,
you ruins of Jerusalem;
for the LORD has comforted his people,
he has redeemed Jerusalem.

¹⁰The 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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 98



All the ends of the earth have seen the vic-to-ry of our God.

¹Sing a new song to the LORD, who has done | marvelous things,
whose right hand and holy arm have | won the victory.

²**O LORD, you have made | known your victory,
you have revealed your righteousness in the sight | of the nations.**

³You remember your steadfast love and faithfulness to the | house of Israel;
all the ends of the earth have seen the victory | of our God.

⁴**Shout with joy to the LORD, | all you lands;
lift up your voice, re- | joice, and sing. R**

⁵Sing to the LORD | with the harp,
with the harp and the | voice of song.

⁶**With trumpets and the sound | of the horn
shout with joy before the | king, the LORD. R**

⁷Let the sea roar, and | all that fills it,
the world and those who | dwell therein.

⁸**Let the rivers | clap their hands,
and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD,
who comes to | judge the earth.**

⁹The LORD will judge the | world with righteousness
and the peo- | ples with equity. **R**

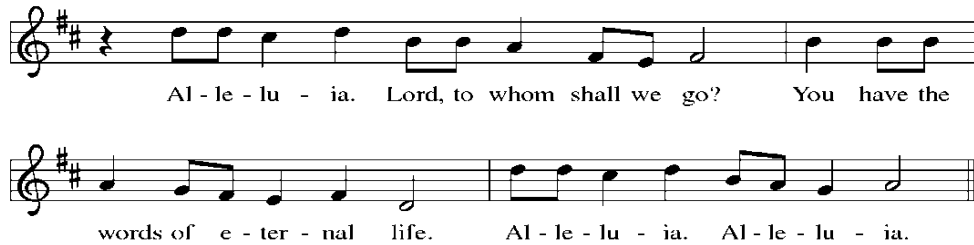
SECOND READING: Hebrews 1: 1-4 [5-12]

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.

¹Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, ²but 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. ³He 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, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



***GOSPEL READING: John 1: 1-14**

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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.”

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

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And 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.

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY #295: *Of the Father’s Love Begotten

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God,

the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;

he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Created in the image and likeness of God, we pray for the light of life in all people, for new birth among us, and for communities that long for new life.

You, O God, form your church as the body of Christ. Reshape our hearts to know your grace, open our vision to see your truth, and make our mouths ready to proclaim your glory. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You speak and the creation comes into being. Call us by a new word to live in harmony with the fragile planet that is our common home. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You announce peace and salvation to all the earth. Inspire our leaders to find achievable paths toward greater comfort, justice, and peace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Your years never end. Sustain those whose increasing years make them weary, console the young who have already known struggle, and protect newborns whose years are just beginning. We pray also for Jean, Shirley, Bob, Karen, Harry, Roy, Ruth, Pastor Storm, Frieda, Kim, Bill, Francis & Grace, David & Ellen; those on our prayer list, and all whom we remember aloud or in our heart. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You are changeless from generation to generation. Anoint us with the oil of gladness and number us with your saints, who with angels and archangels know you and your majesty to be boundless love. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.** Into your outstretched arms, O God, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Jesus Christ, the light and life of the world. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

OFFERING HYMN #726: Light Dawns on a Weary World

Please stand for the final verse as the gifts are brought forward.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray,
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 have blessed us with your gifts,
let them be blessing for others.
With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven,
we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

***GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

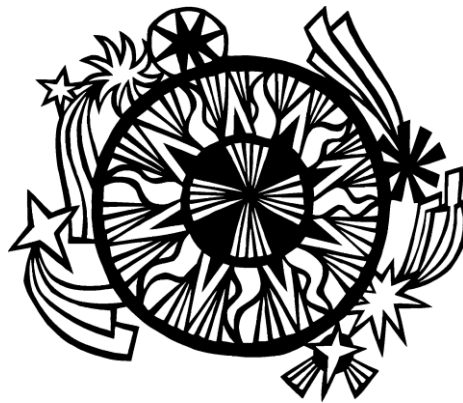
Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you,
almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ.
In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes
of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible,
we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see.
And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



*HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might.
Your glo - ry fills heav'n and earth. Ho - san - na in the high - est!
Bless - ed is the one who comes in God's ho - ly name.
Ho - san - na in the high - est! Ho - san - na in the high - est!

*EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

Holy God,

Creator of all and Source of life,
at the birth of time
your word brought light into the world.

In the fullness of time,

you sent your Word, born of Mary,
to shine in our darkness
and to make us your daughters and sons.

In the night in which he was betrayed,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore,

his birth and life among us,
his death and resurrection,
we await his coming again
when all things will be restored in him.

By your Spirit bless us and this bread and cup,

that, held and nourished by you,
we may live as your children,
shining with the light of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,

Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church,
both now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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**

*INVITATION TO COMMUNION

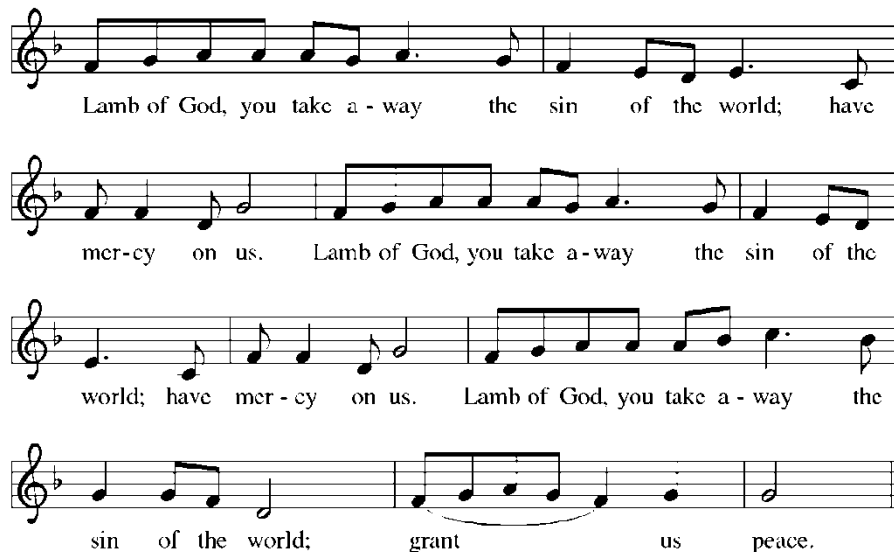
Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you. **Amen.**

COMMUNION SONG: *Lamb of God*



The image shows four staves of musical notation in G major, 4/4 time. The lyrics are: "Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; grant us peace." The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a final cadence on the last staff.

COMMUNION HYMN #270: *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

*POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in grace.

Amen.

*POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray.

Radiant God, with our eyes we have seen your salvation,
and in this meal we have feasted on your grace.

May your Word take flesh in us, that we may be your holy people,
revealing your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends in mission to the world.

***BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

Amen.

SENDING SONG #290: *Go Tell it on the Mountain

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace.

Share the good news.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: *Angels We Have Heard on High* – Henry Balcombe

10:00 am

Assisting Ministers: Denise Hager & Christine Dishong

Communion Assistant:

Acolyte:

Lector:

Usher:

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