

“Come to Bethlehem and See”
Christmas Eve Worship at 6:00 pm
December 24, 2020

Opening Prayer

Opening Hymn: “O Come, All ye Faithful” 379

O come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant! O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him, Born the King of angels:

Refrain: O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

Highest, most holy, Light of Light eternal, Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
Son of the Father Now in flesh appearing! **Refrain:**

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation, Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God In the highest: **Refrain:**

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

Christmas Eve Litany:

P: Behold the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous
branch! **C:** *This is the name by which He will be called: **The Lord is our Righteousness!***

P: He shall reign as King and deal wisely, and shall execute Justice and righteousness in the
land. **C:** *This is the name by which He shall be called: **The Lord is our Righteousness!***

P: The Virgin shall be with Child through the Holy Spirit and power of the Most High!
C: *His name shall be called “Jesus”. He is **“The Lord our Righteousness!”***

P: Bethlehem Ephrathah small among the clans of Judah- chosen for our Savior’s Birth
C: *This is His name by which He shall be called, **“The Lord our Righteousness!”***

P: His birth was the promise that all of Holy Scripture pointed to! **C:** *His name shall be called
“Jesus”: He is **“The Lord our Righteousness!”***

Confession: *Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus, the Christ-Child, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.*

Absolution: *Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son, the Christ-Child, to die for you and for His Sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of the Christ-Child, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Psalmody: *Psalm 24: 1, 3-5*

P: I will tell the decree: C: *The Lord said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you."*

P: The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, C: *The World and those who dwell therein.*

P: Who shall ascend to the hill of the Lord? C: *And who shall stand in His holy place?*

P: He who has clean hands and a pure heart, C: *Who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.*

P: He will receive blessing from the Lord C: *And righteousness from the God of his salvation.*

ALL: *Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. Amen!*

Collect: *O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of Your only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. C: Amen.*

Hymn: *"O Little Town of Bethlehem" 361 vs. 1, 2*

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!

Old Testament: Micah 5 2-5a *"But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity. Therefore, He will give them up until the time When she who is in labor had born a child. Then the remainder of His brethren will return to the sons of Israel. And He will arise and shepherd His flock, in the strength of the Lord, In the majesty of the name of the Lord His God. And they will remain, because at that time He will be great to the ends of the earth. And this One will be our peace."*

Bethlehem was prophesied in Micah- though it was so very small, too small to have any value in terms of how human worth is decided; was to be the place of divine holiness. In fact, it would be the most holy place on earth when the Lord Himself would come and bring His life to the world as the Son of God. The Father, sent His angels, a multitude of His angels to the field outside of Bethlehem to demonstrate that all of heaven was celebrating the birth of His Son. Only a few shepherds witnessed this, but the message was a message of praise to the Father for His giving to earth His Son, His only Son.

Hymn: “*Angels We Have Heard on High*” 368

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 heavenly song? **Refrain**

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

Bethlehem - City of David- Jesse was blessed by God with eight children. His youngest son was named David. Jesse and his sons raised sheep outside of the city of Bethlehem in the fields that surrounded the city for miles. Samuel- God's priest- was asked by God to go and anoint one who would be the next King of Israel. When Samuel came to Bethlehem to the house of Jesse, he asked to see his sons. As the first seven sons were brought before him Samuel was told by God that none of them were the one He had chosen. So Jesse's youngest was out in the fields watching over the flocks. When Samuel saw him, God made it known that David was the one and Samuel, with the horn of the altar filled with olive oil, anointed David and God declared him to be the King of His choice. Bethlehem from then on would be known as the City of David!

Hymn: Once in Royal David's City 376

Once in royal David's city Stood a lowly cattle shed Where a mother laid her 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 Live on earth our Savior holy.

And our eyes at shall see Him, Through His own redeeming love;
For that child so dear and gentle Is our Lord in heav'n above;
And He leads His children on To the place where He is gone.

Bethlehem - House of Bread – throughout the history of the people of Israel, God made bread a symbol of acceptance, of being welcomed, and as a way of acknowledging the wonder of being bound to each other. Jesus came into this world as the “Bread of Life”. He was going to “feed Himself” to His people and demonstrate they were bound to the Father and bound to each other. The very place chosen by the Father, for His Son to be born, in and of itself, proclaims the role and purpose of His Son. He was the Bread of life- the one from which all life came and which all everlasting life will come. He is the giver of life and the food for our souls, and the Sustainer of our spiritual life. He is the Bread of Life, born in the place meaning: House of Bread, so we could know He was the everlasting Savior who came to earth to redeem us.

Hymn: *O Little Town of Bethlehem* 361 vs. 3,4

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.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in, Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!

Holy Gospel: Luke 2: 1-7 In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Bethlehem- chosen City of the Father for His Son. The Almighty God, our Eternal Father never failed to follow through on His Word or prophecy. God was fulfilling His Plan, He was making sure every detail was completed. Bethlehem was the city of David, where he grew up and lived. This was the place where the Father wanted Jesus to be born. The Almighty God used the most powerful nation in the world to get Mary and Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem; using a decree from Caesar Augustus to force them to make the journey, at just the right time, for Mary to deliver Jesus in Bethlehem. Mary and Joseph traveled there to pay taxes, but ultimately to fulfill the Scriptures and to have their Son born in the city of David, the city chosen for Him by His heavenly Father.

Hymn: “*Joy to the World*” 387

Joy to the world, The Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
Let every 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 men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

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.

Holy Gospel: Luke 2: 8-14 And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths 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 with whom He is pleased!*”

Bethlehem - place of Sacrificial Lambs – for hundreds of years, in the fields around Bethlehem, shepherds raised and cared for their flocks. David was a Shepherd, it is why he could write the 23 Psalm with such insight, familiarity, and wisdom. Sheep were raised for their wool, their meat, their monetary gain, and for sacrifice. The sheep brought physical blessings to the people of Israel, as well as spiritual blessings through the promise of the Lord. Bethlehem was known for its sheep, and the use of those sheep to carry out the daily sacrifices at the temple. The True Sacrificial Lamb, was born into the city where thousands of lambs -- for hundreds of years had been used to bring forgiveness to Israel. Now the one True Sacrificial Lamb came to Bethlehem to bring forgiveness to all mankind.

Hymn: "Hark the Herald, Angels Sing" 380

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 the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem"

Refrain: Hark! The herald angels sing "Glory to the newborn King!"

Christ by highest heaven adored, Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold Him come, Offspring of a Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel!

Refrain: Hark! The herald angels sing "Glory to the newborn King!"

Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Son 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.

Refrain: Hark! The herald angels sing "Glory to the newborn King!"

Confession of Faith: *Nicene Creed*

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made; being of one substance with the Father by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one Holy Christian and apostolic Church, and I knowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Hymn: *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear* 366

It came upon a midnight clear, Th glorious song of old From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold; Peace on the earth, goodwill to all, From heav'ns all gracious king.
The world in solemn stillness lay, To hear the angels sing.

For lo, the days, have come to pass By prophets seen of old, When down into the circling years
Came Christ as was foretold. His word of peace shall to the earth God's ancient promise bring,
And all who take this gift will hear The song the angels sing.

Sermon

Prayers

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 glory forever and ever. Amen.*

Closing Christmas Eve Litany:

P: Come to Bethlehem and see C: *Him whose birth the angles sing*

P: Come adore on bended knee C: *Christ the Lord our newborn King!*

P: We are the most blessed people on earth C: *We in faith celebrate the birth of our Lord.*

P: We humbly proclaim His birth C: *The birth that has change our eternity.*

P: We will one day celebrate in heaven C: *With all the angels our salvation through Him.*

Benediction

Closing Hymn: *"Silent Night, Holy Night"* 363 (sung-- "a capella")

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; Heavenly hosts sing Al-le-lu-ia!
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.

*(Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht! Alles schläft , einsam wacht
Nur das heilige Elternpaar, Das in stalle zu Bethlehem war,
Bei dem himmlischen Kind, Bei dem himmlischen Kind.)*

***Distribution of Lord's Supper will be in Lounge immediately after "Silent Night" is Sung;
then the Elements will be blessed ---- (we are set up to handle 12-15 people at a time. You are
asked to receive His Supper and then exit to you cars. Blessings and Merry Christmas.
Thanks for keeping this night holy with your praise and worship.***

******* Offering Plate is in the back of the gym....***

Gloria in Excelsis Deo-- "Glory to God in the highest"