



**Christ enters the world
as true man and true God**

**A Candlelight Service
for
Christmas Eve
December 24, 2024**

Christ Ev. Lutheran Church, Cochrane

**Christ enters the world as
true man and true God.
We rejoice in his salvation.**

Christmas Eve

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Setting the Theme:

Angels, shepherds, wise men, and a star are all part of the account of how God sent his Son, Jesus, into this world to be our Savior. Let's use all these things again to see how greatly God has loved us. He takes on human flesh and blood in order to save us from our sins.

Opening Hymn: #354 "O, Come, All Ye Faithful"

1. 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.
O, come, let us adore him ... Christ the Lord.

2. God from true God, and Light from Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, to earth he comes,
Only begotten Son of God the Father.
O, come, let us adore him ... Christ the Lord.

3. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above.
Glory to God, all glory in the highest.
O, come, let us adore him ... Christ the Lord.

4. 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.
O, come, let us adore him ... Christ the Lord.

P: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen. We come this holy night to rejoice in the newborn Christ.

P: Let us pray: Lord God, you once caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. As we celebrate the birth of our Savior, give us eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to receive the love he brings. And may our lives continually display the fact that he lives in us and we have found true life in him. We pray in the name of him who came to be the Revealer of your grace and truth, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and rules with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Part One: The Christmas Star

Hymn: #347:1,3 “Angels From the Realms of Glory”

1. Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o’er all the earth
Once you sang creation’s story; now proclaim Messiah’s birth:
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King.

3. Magi, leave your contemplations; brighter visions beam afar.
Seek the great desire of nations; you have seen the Savior’s star.
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King.

P: God made two great lights – the greater light to govern the day
and the lesser light to govern the night. He made the stars also.

**C: He laid the earth’s foundations, marking off its dimensions –
while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted
for joy.**

P: O Lord, when we consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

**C: Who are we that you are mindful of us; who are we that you
care for us?**

P: Yet your Word rang out: “A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter
will rise out of Israel.”

**C: And when the time had fully come, you sent your Son, born of
woman. The star came; the scepter arose!**

Hymn: #372:1-3 “As With Gladness Men of Old”

1. As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold,
As with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright,
So, most gracious Lord, may we evermore be led by thee.

2. As with joyful steps they sped, Savior, to thy lowly bed,
There to bend the knee before thee whom heav’n and earth adore,
So may we with willing feet ever seek thy mercy seat.

3. As they offered gifts most rare at thy cradle, rude and bare,
So may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin’s alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav’nly King.

P: Magi from the east saw his star and came to worship him.

**C: The star went ahead of them until it stopped over the place
where the child was.**

P: They were filled with joy and bowed down and worshiped him.

**C: Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts
of gold and incense and myrrh.**

P: Through the good news, a light shining in a dark place, the
Morning Star has risen also in our hearts.

**C: Through Jesus, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of
praise, the fruit of lips that confess his name. And let us not
forget to do good and to share with others, for with such
sacrifices God is pleased.**

P: The One who came will come again, the Root and Offspring of
David, the bright Morning Star.

**C: Then those who are wise will shine like the heavens, and those
who lead others to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.**

Part Two: The Christmas Song

Hymn: #346 “Angels We Have Heard on High”

1. Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.

Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

2. Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be Which inspire your heav’nly song?

Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

3. Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

P: Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.”

C: Be exalted, O Lord, in the strength of your love; we too will sing to the praise of your glory.

P: You have saved us, O Lord, our Savior; our tongues will speak of your righteousness.

C: We will praise the name of Jesus in song and glorify him with thanksgiving.

P: We have waited for you, O Lord, and you have come to us and have heard our cries for help.

C: You have put a new song in our mouths, a hymn of praise to you, our God.

Hymn: #350:1-2 “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

1. 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 th’angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

2. Christ, by highest heav’n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin’s womb.

Veiled in flesh the God-head see, hail th’incarnate Deity!

Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel!

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

P: Give us steadfast hearts, O God; then we will always be ready to sing and make music. We will sing of you among our friends and among strangers.

C: For great is your love. It reaches down from the heavens; your faithfulness touches all generations.

P: May the Word of Christ dwell in us richly as we sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in our hearts to God.

C: Whatever we do, whether in word or deed, let us do it in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

P: Standing in heaven with the Lamb will be all who believed in him.

C: There we will sing a new song before his heavenly throne.

Part Three: The Christchild

Hymn: #344 “What Child Is This?”

1. 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!

2. Why lies he in such mean estate where oxen now are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through; the cross be borne for me, for you.

Hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the Son of Mary!

3. 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!

P: The angel Gabriel said to Mary, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you; the power of the Most High will overshadow you. The holy one to be born will be the Son of God."

C: The angel said to Joseph, "Do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

P: The Word became flesh and lived for a while among us.

C: We have seen his glory, the glory of the one-and-only Son, full of grace and truth.

P: This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many, and to be a sign to be spoken against.

C: God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned.

P: The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

C: In Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form. And we have been given fullness in him, who is the head over every power and authority.

P: The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.

C: And he will reign forever and ever.

Hymn: #353 "Joy to the World"

1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare him room and heav'n and nature sing...

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2. Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy...

3. No more let sins and sorrows grow nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found...

4. He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love...

The Sermon: Hebrews 2:14-15

The Lord Shares in Our Humanity

¹⁴ Since the children have flesh and blood, Jesus too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death – that is, the devil – ¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

The Prayer for Communicants

P: Lord Jesus, in the wonder and mystery of your birth you have opened our eyes to the glory of your grace and renewed in our hearts the fervor of your love. Rejoicing in your grace, we now come to this heavenly feast in which you give your children on earth your true body and blood to eat and to drink. Remove from us the soiled garments of self-righteousness and sin, and clothe us with the righteousness purchased with your blood. Strengthen our faith, increase our love, especially for those with whom we share this blessed communion, and after this life grant us a place at your heavenly table. We pray, Jesus, in your name, as you have also taught us to pray:

The Lord's Prayer

The Words of Institution

Communion Distribution and Prayer

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THE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

(The minister, taking a large candle, lights it from an altar candle, which symbolizes Christ, the Light of the world. The ushers light their candles from the pastor's candle, then light the candle of each worshiper nearest the aisle. The lighted candle is never tilted, but is always held upright when giving light to another candle.)

THE CHRISTMAS GOSPEL – Luke 2:1-20

¹In those days Caesar Augustus ordered that a census be taken of the whole world. ²This was the first census while Quirinius was governing Syria. ³Everyone went to register, each to his own town.

⁴Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to David's town in Judea, which is called Bethlehem, because he was one of the descendants of David, ⁵to register with Mary, his fiancée, who was going to have a child.

⁶Now while they were there, the time came for her to have her baby, ⁷and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in baby clothes and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn.

⁸And there were shepherds living out in the countryside nearby. They were taking turns watching their flocks at night.

⁹Then an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone all around them. They were terrified. ¹⁰“Stop being afraid,” the angel said to them, “for look, I have good news for you. A great joy will come to all the people, ¹¹because the Savior, who is Christ the Lord, was born for you today in David's town. ¹²And this is how you will know him: you will find an infant wrapped in baby clothes and lying in a manger.”

¹³Suddenly there was with the angel a large number of the angels of heaven, who were praising God and saying: ¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest heavens, and on earth peace to those who have his good will!”

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “The Lord has told us what has happened. Let's go to Bethlehem and see it.”

¹⁶Then they came in a hurry and found Mary and Joseph, and the Baby lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they had seen him, they told

others what they had been told about this child. ¹⁸And everyone was surprised to hear the story that the shepherds told.

¹⁹But Mary treasured all these things in her heart and kept thinking about them.

²⁰The shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for everything they had heard and seen. It was just as they had been told.

Closing Hymn: #337 “Silent Night”

(The congregation sings verse 1 in German)

Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!

Alles schläft, einsam wacht

Nur das traute hochheilige Paar

Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar;

Schlaf' in himmlischer Ruh!

Schlaf' in himmlischer Ruh!

1. 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.

2. Silent night! Holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar; Heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia;
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!

3. 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.

(After the hymn is sung, the candles are extinguished. Please remember to hold them upright until the melted wax sets.)

The Closing Prayer

P: We thank you, Almighty God, for the gift of your Son who humbled himself to become our Brother. Grant that the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ free us from the slavery of sin and bring us into the glorious liberty of serving him in his kingdom. We ask this for the

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

C: Amen.

The Benediction

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: Amen.

OUR LORD tells us that in Holy Communion, we receive bread and wine and also the body and blood of Jesus. God gave us this meal to bless us, but if someone comes to communion without a proper understanding, he will receive it to his judgment instead of his blessing. In communion, we are also expressing the fellowship we have together as believers (1 Corinthians 11:23-32 and 10:16-17).

In accordance with Scripture, we practice close communion. We invite repentant disciples who are of our fellowship (members or those who have previously announced to the pastor) and who have properly examined themselves to commune at the Lord's table.