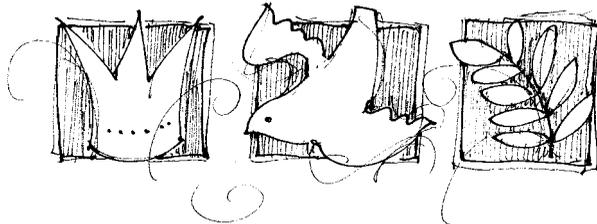


December 24th, 2017
Children's Christmas Eve Service
"From Heaven Above"

I S A I A H 9 : 6

WONDERFUL
COUNSELOR
MIGHTY GOD
EVERLASTING
FATHER
PRINCE of
PEACE



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
MISSOURI ~ SYNOD
308 Byrne Street
Smithville, TX 78957
512-237-2108

Pastor Timothy Appel



Welcome to Grace Lutheran Church! We give thanks that our gracious Lord Jesus Christ has gathered us together here for his Divine Service. Today again our Lord comes to serve us and lavish us with his gifts of life, forgiveness, and salvation. Rejoicing in those wonderful gifts, we sing with David in Psalm 84: “How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! A day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.”

Hearing, Ask an usher for one of the wireless hearing assistance units.

Attendance Registration cards are located in the Hymnal racks of each pew. We ask all members and our guests to complete one and pass it to the center aisles. An usher will collect them after the offering is taken to the altar. The cards are important as they enable our secretary to track members' attendance as well as guests interested in joining our church. Thank you for your help.

Reflecting the joy within his family, Martin Luther wrote this hymn for his children's Christmas Eve celebration either in 1534 or 1535. The pattern of a pre-Reformation singing game gave Luther's simple hymn structure. Stanzas 1–5 report what the angels said. Stanzas 6 and 15 give voice to the family's response, while stanzas 7–14 make application of the angel's good news. Originally, Luther used the tune of the singing game, especially since the hymn was sung in the family. When the hymn began to be used in church services, Luther provided as a new tune the one used here. (From *The Hymns of Martin Luther*, copyright © 2016 Concordia Publishing House, pp. 26–27.)



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Edited by Lisa A. Krenz

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THE PRELUDE WELCOME

Stand

The Processional Hymn: Angels We Have Heard on High
Congregation and Children

LSB 368

- 1 Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply,
Echoing their joyous strains *Refrain.*
- Refrain 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? *Refrain*
- 3 Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. *Refrain*

THE INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.**

P From heaven above,

C **The angels sing.**

P On earth below,

C **Our praises bring.**

P Our Lord has come,

C **With us to dwell.**

P Now we go out:

C **Good News to tell.**

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P Let us pray. O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth 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.**

Sit

CHRISTMAS HOMILY

SHARING OF THE PEACE AND OFFERING

Hymn: What Child Is This

LSB 370

Congregation and Children

- 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 ox and ass 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!

THE MESSAGE PRESENTED BY THE CHILDREN

I. The Birth of Jesus in Bethlehem – Luke 2:1-7

Hymn: Away in a Manger

LSB 364

Children Only

- 1 Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
 The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,
 The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

- 2 The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
 But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
 And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

- 3 Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
 Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
 And take us to heaven to live with Thee there.

ACTION RHYME BY THE CHILDREN

Children: From heaven above,

Congregation: To earth in love!

Hymn: From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

LSB 358, sts. 1-4

Stanza 1: Children Only

1 "From heav'n above to earth I come
 To bear good news to ev'ry home;
 Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
 Whereof I now will say and sing:

Stanzas 2-4: Congregation and Children

2 **"To you this night is born a child
 Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;
 This little child of lowly birth
 Shall be the joy of all the earth.**

3 **"This is the Christ, our God Most High,
 Who hears your sad and bitter cry;
 He will Himself your Savior be
 From all your sins to set you free.**

4 **"He will on you the gifts bestow
 Prepared by God for all below,
 That in His kingdom, bright and fair,
 You may with us His glory share.**

II. The Shepherds Hear the Good News – Luke 2:8-14

Hymn: O Come, All Ye Faithful

LSB 379

Stanza 1: Children Only

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: Refrain

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

Stanzas 2-4: Congregation and Children

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

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

4 **Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father
Now in flesh appearing! *Refrain***

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

ACTION RHYME BY THE CHILDREN

Children: From heaven above,
Congregation: To earth in love!

Hymn: From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

LSB 358, sts. 5-7

Stanza 5: Children Only

5 **“These are the signs that you shall mark:
The swaddling clothes and manger dark.
There you will find the infant laid
By whom the heav'ns and earth were made.”**

Stanzas 6-7: Congregation and Children

6 **How glad we'll be to find it so!
Then with the shepherds let us go
To see what God for us has done
In sending us His own dear Son.**

7 **Come here, my friends, lift up your eyes,
And see what in the manger lies.
Who is this child, so young and fair?
It is the Christ Child lying there.**

III. The Shepherds See the Christ Child – Luke 2:15-20

Hymn: From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

LSB 358, sts. 8-12

Stanzas 8-12: Congregation and Children

- 8 Welcome to earth, O noble Guest,
Through whom the sinful world is blest!
You came to share my misery
That You might share Your joy with me.
- 9 Ah, Lord, though You created all,
How weak You are, so poor and small,
That You should choose to lay Your head
Where lowly cattle lately fed!
- 10 Were earth a thousand times as fair
And set with gold and jewels rare,
It would be far too poor and small
A cradle for the Lord of all.
- 11 Instead of soft and silken stuff
You have but hay and straw so rough
On which as King, so rich and great,
To be enthroned in royal state.
- 12 And so it pleases You to see
This simple truth revealed to me:
That worldly honor, wealth, and might
Are weak and worthless in Your sight.

IV. The Shepherds Marvel and Spread the News

Children: From heaven above,

Congregation: To earth in love!

Hymn: From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

LSB 358, sts. 13-15

Stanza 13: Children Only

- 13 Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled,
A quiet chamber set apart
For You to dwell within my heart.

Stanzas 14-15: Congregation and Children

- 14 **My heart for very joy must leap;
My lips no more can silence keep.
I, too, must sing with joyful tongue
That sweetest ancient cradlesong:**
- 15 **Glory to God in highest heav'n,
Who unto us His Son has giv'n!
While angels sing with pious mirth
A glad new year to all the earth.**

V. Great News to Tell!

Children: From heaven above,

Congregation: To earth in love!

Hymn: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

LSB 380

Stanza 1: Children Only

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 the_angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

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

Stanzas 2-3: Congregation and Children

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 Godhead see,
Hail the_incarnate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel! *Refrain***

3 **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. *Refrain***

THE APOSTLES' CREED

**☩ I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life † everlasting. Amen.

LITANY OF PRAYER

- P** In peace let us pray to the Lord;
C **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord:
C **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** 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:
C **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord:
C **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For Matthew, our Synodical President, for Ken, our District President, for all pastors in Christ, for all servants of the Church, and for all the people, let us pray to the Lord:
C **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For Donald our President, for Greg our governor, for Scott our mayor, for all our leaders, for all public servants, for the government and those who protect us, that they may be upheld and strengthened in every good deed, let us pray to the Lord:
C **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For those who work to bring peace, justice, health, and protection in this and every place, let us pray to the Lord:
C **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For those who bring offerings, those who do good works in this congregation, those who toil, those who sing, and all the people here present who await from the Lord great and abundant mercy, let us pray to the Lord:
C **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord:
C **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and need, let us pray to the Lord:
C **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For the faithful who have gone before us and are with Christ, let us give thanks to the Lord:
C **Alleluia!**
- P** Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.
Silence for personal prayer.
- P** Rejoicing in the fellowship of the saints, let us commend ourselves, one another, and our whole lives to Christ, our Lord.
C **To You, O Lord.**

COLLECT FOR PEACE

- P** O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

- P** Taught by our Lord and trusting His promises, we are bold to pray:
- C** **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.

Our Candlelight Service tonight reminds us that Jesus Christ is the light of the world who has come into the world as our Savior at Christmas. He is the light that no darkness can overcome.

*Following the Lord's Prayer, the lights in the sanctuary will be dimmed. The pastor and acolytes will light their candles from the Christ candle and then pass it into the congregation from the center aisle. **As you pass the light from one person to the next, please keep the lit candle upright and tilt only the unlit candle in order to spill as little wax as possible.***

LITANY OF LIGHT

- P** In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. And God said, "Let there be light."
- C** **And there was light. And God saw that the light was good.** (*Genesis 1:1, 3*)
- P** The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
- C** **those who dwelt in a land of darkness, on them has light shined.** (*Isaiah 9:2*)
- P** The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
- C** **The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?** (*Psalms 27:1*)
- P** Because of the tender mercy of our God, the sunrise shall visit us from on high
- C** **to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.** (*Luke 1:78-79*)
- P** For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone into our hearts
- C** **to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.** (*2 Cor 4:6*)
- P** The light shines in the darkness,
- C** **and the darkness has not overcome it.** (*John 1:5*)
- P** Arise, shine, for your light has come,
- C** **and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.** (*Isaiah 60:1*)

P Let us pray. O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that as we have known the mysteries of that Light on earth we may also come to the fullness of His joys in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Sit

Hymn: Silent Night, Holy Night

LSB 363

The Congregation

- | | |
|--|---|
| 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. | 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. |
| 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! | |

THE BENEDICTION

P Let us bless the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

P The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

C **Amen.**

(As the service concludes, you are encouraged to pray silently, meditating upon God's love shown to you when Christ came into the world to save you from your sins. As the lights come back on in the sanctuary, please extinguish your candle and leave it in the box in the narthex as you leave tonight.)

THE POSTLUDE



LOWLY MANGER & BABE ASLEEP
promise in his hand

OUR CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION CONTINUES! JOIN US
TOMORROW MORNING AT 9:00 AM TO WORSHIP THE
CHRIST CHILD AND RECEIVE GIFTS FROM HIM IN WORD
AND SACRAMENT.

“O COME, LET US ADORE HIM!”