

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

December 25th, 2021



MARTIN LUTHER
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

St. Louis, MO

Pastor Seth Georgson

314-914-6457

ORDER OF SERVICE

Hymn ----- Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful

CW 55

1. Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant,
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him, Born the King of angels.

Refrain

Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, 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. [Refrain]
3. Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation;
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above.
Glory to God, all Glory in the highest. [Refrain]
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. [Refrain]

Stand.

M: Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

C: Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

M: By right, we should have nothing to sing about. We do not deserve God's love. He created humankind in his perfect image to live with him in peace forever. But Adam and Eve sinned against him, and we have sinned against him no less than they. Therefore let us confess our sins to God and ask him to forgive us.

C: Heavenly Father, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed.

M: We are embarrassed to think of our sins here. Our hearts are filled with love for you, but we confess we have often loved others more than you. Our eyes behold your glory, but we confess we have lusted for what you forbid. Our lips praise you, but we confess we have spoken evil again and again.

C: We deplore our sins, O Lord.

M: They have only gained us trouble. They have not given us the happiness they promised.

C: For the sake of Jesus, forgive us for sinning against you, O Lord.

M: Remind us that Christ came into the world to free us from the guilt of sin. Proclaim to us that his life and death cover our sins. Keep us from being attracted to sin. Spare us from being enslaved by sin. Help us make up for the sins we commit against one another.

C: Deliver us from sin's power, O Lord.

M: Glory to God in the highest! In love that astounds us, the eternal God sent his one and only Son to live among us, to obey as we could not, and to suffer what we deserved. In Christ there is indeed peace on earth. In him God extends his good will to all people. Because of Christ and by his authority, I tell you the truth: your sins are forgiven.

C: Amen.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

M: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

Hark the Herald Angels Sing (CW 61)

C: 1. Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"

Joyful, all you 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 Godhead 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!"

3. Hail, the heav'nly 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 we no more may die,
Born to raise us from the earth, Born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Prayer of the Day

M: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

M: Let us pray.

Almighty God, grant that the birth of your one and only Son in the flesh may set us free from our old bondage under the yoke of sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Be seated.

THE WORD

First Lesson ----- Isaiah 52:7-10

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.

Psalm of the Day ----- Psalm 98

CWS p.53

Refrain

**The Word became flesh and lived among us. Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia!**

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

Second Lesson ----- Hebrews 1:1-9

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 ----- Galatians 4:4,5a

M: Alleluia. When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law. Alleluia.

Oh, Rejoice, All Christians, Loudly (CW 45:1,2)

C: 1. Oh, rejoice, all Christians, loudly, For our joys have now begun;
Wondrous things our God has done.

Tell abroad his goodness proudly, Who our race has honored so,
That he lives with us below.

Joy, oh, joy beyond all gladness,
Christ has done away with sadness!

Hence all sorrow and repining, For the Sun of grace is shining!

2. See, my soul, your Savior chooses Poverty and weakness, too;
In such love he comes to you.

Neither crib nor cross refuses, All he suffers for your good
To redeem you by his blood.

Joy, oh, joy beyond all gladness,
Christ has done away with sadness!

Hence all sorrow and repining, For the Sun of grace is shining!

Stand.

Gospel ----- Luke 2:1-20

After the announcement of the Gospel, the congregation sings:



Glo-ry be to you, O Lord! Glo-ry be to you, O Lord!

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first census taken while Quirinius

was governing Syria. And everyone went to register, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the town of Nazareth, into

with rational soul and human flesh,
equal to the Father as to his deity,
less than the Father as to his humanity;
And though he is both God and man, Christ is not two persons but one,
one, not by changing the deity into flesh,
but by taking the humanity into God;
one indeed, not by mixture of the natures,
but by unity in one person;
For just as the rational soul and flesh are one human being,
so God and man are one Christ.

He suffered for our salvation,
descended into hell,
rose the third day from the dead.
He ascended into heaven,
is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty,
and from there will come to judge the living and the dead.
At his coming all people will rise with their own bodies.
This is the true Christian faith.

Be seated.

Hymn of the Day ----- Of the Father's Love Begotten

CW 35

1. Of the Father's love begotten Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending he,
Of the things that are, that have been, And that future years shall see
Evermore and evermore.

2. Oh, that birth forever blessed When the virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving, Bore the Savior of our race,
And the babe, the world's Redeemer, First revealed his sacred face
Evermore and evermore.
3. This is he whom heav'n-taught singers Sang of old with one accord;
Whom the Scriptures of the prophets Promised in their faithful word.
Now he shines, the long-expected; Let creation praise its Lord
Evermore and evermore.
4. Let the heights of heav'n adore him, Angel hosts his praises sing,
Pow'rs, dominions bow before him And extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent, Ev'ry voice in concert ring
Evermore and evermore.
5. Christ, to you, with God the Father, And the Spirit ceaselessly
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving And unending praises be,
Honor, glory, and dominion And eternal victory
Evermore and evermore.

Sermon ----- Luke 2:1-20

And Heaven and Nature Sing

Hymn ----- Once Again My Heart Rejoices

CW 37, Arranged by Mark Knickelbein

Choir: 1-3, 5; Congregation: 4, 6

1. Once again my heart rejoices
As I hear Far and near Sweetest angel voices.
"Christ is born!" their choirs are singing
Till the air Ev'rywhere Now with joy is ringing.

2. Hear! The conqueror has spoken:
 “Now the foe, Sin and woe, Death and hell are broken!”
 God is man, man to deliver,
 And the Son Now is one With our blood forever.

3. Should we still fear God’s displeasure,
 Who, to save, Freely gave His most precious treasure?
 To redeem us he has given
 His own Son From the throne Of his might in heaven.

4. **God becomes the victim, taking
 Mankind’s place By his grace, Full atonement making.
 For our life his own he tenders,
 And his grace All our race Fit for glory renders.**

5. Softly from his lowly manger Jesus calls One and all,
 “You are safe from danger. Children, from the sins that grieve you
 You are freed; All you need
 I will surely give you.”

6. **Come, then, banish all your sadness!
 One and all, Great and small, Come with songs of gladness;
 We shall live with him forever
 There on high In that joy Which will vanish never.**

Offering

Stand.

*Online giving option:
mluther.org/offerings*



*Offerings support the spread
 of the Gospel here and around the world.*

Prayer of the Church

M: 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 your Son to be our Savior, we give you our heart-felt thanks and praise.

C: Unto us a child is born! Unto us a Son is given!

M: What a great mystery of our faith is this: 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.

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

M: In the midst of 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.

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

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

M: 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 remains in our hearts.

C: Glory to God in the highest! Amen.

Lord's Prayer

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 tres-

pass 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.

THE SACRAMENT

M: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

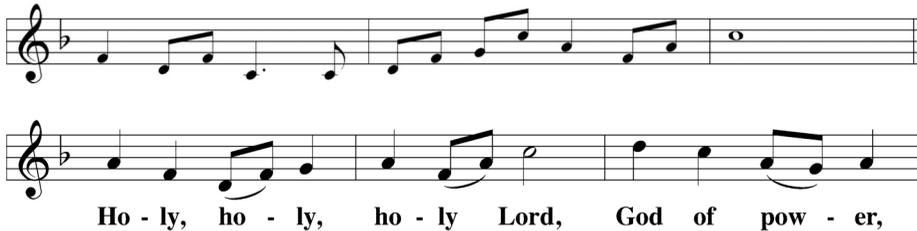
M: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

C: **It is good and right so to do.**

M: It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, for in the wonder and mystery of his birth you have opened our eyes to the glory of your grace and renewed in our hearts the fervor of your love.

Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

Holy, Holy, Holy



The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the hymn. The second staff contains the melody for the second line, with the lyrics 'Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er,' written below it. The lyrics are aligned with the notes: 'Ho' under the first note, 'ly,' under the second, 'ho' under the third, 'ly,' under the fourth, 'ho' under the fifth, 'ly' under the sixth, 'Lord,' under the seventh, 'God' under the eighth, 'of' under the ninth, 'pow' under the tenth, and 'er,' under the eleventh.

God of might: heav'n and earth are full of your glory. Ho-san - na in the high - est. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

The musical score consists of four staves of music in a single system. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The final note of the fourth staff is marked with a circled '8', indicating an eight-measure rest.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

M: Blessed are you, Lord God, eternal King and gracious Father. In love you made us the crown of your creation. In mercy you planned our salvation. In grace you sent your Son to redeem us from sin.

We remember and give you thanks
 that your eternal Son, Jesus Christ, became flesh and made his
 dwelling among us,
 that he willingly placed himself under law to redeem those under law,
 that he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death on a cross,
 that he has destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light
 through the gospel.

Bless us as we receive your Son's body and blood in this Sacrament. Forgive our sins, increase our faith, strengthen our fellowship, and deepen our longing for the day when Christ will welcome us to his eternal feast. Praise and thanks to you, O God our Father, and to your Son, and to the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Words of Institution

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my † body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

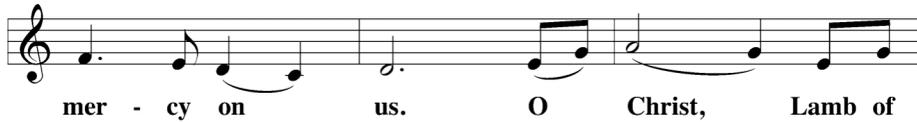
Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my † blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

M: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen.

O Christ, Lamb of God





Be seated.

DISTRIBUTION

In Holy Communion we believe that Jesus gives us his own body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of our sins. We ask that, in keeping with God's Word, only confirmed members who are in confessional unity with our church (WELS and ELS) would come forward to receive this sacrament. If you have any questions or are interested in communicant membership, please speak with the pastor.

During the distribution, the congregation sings the following hymn:

Hymn ----- From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

CW 38

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;
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.
5. “These are the signs which 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.”
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 Christchild lying there.
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 all the world’s wealth, honor, might
Are weak and worthless in your sight.
13. Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled
Within my heart, made clean and new, A quiet chamber kept for you.

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 cradle song:**
15. **Glory to God in highest heaven, Who unto us his Son has given!
While angels sing with pious mirth A glad new year to all the earth.**

After the distribution is finished the congregation stands and sings:

Now Sing We, Now Rejoice (CW 34)

**C: 1. Now sing we, now rejoice, Now raise to heav'n our voice;
He from whom joy streameth Poor in a manger lies;
Not so brightly beameth The sun in yonder skies.
Thou my Savior art! Thou my Savior art!**

**4. Oh, where shall joy be found? Where but on heav'nly ground?
Where the angels singing With all his saints unite,
Sweetest praises bringing In heav'nly joy and light.
Oh, that we were there! Oh, that we were there!**

M: O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.

C: And his mercy endures forever.

M: O God the Father, source of all goodness, in your loving kindness you sent your Son to share our humanity. We thank you that through him you have given us pardon and peace in this sacrament. We also pray that you will not forsake us but will rule our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit so that we willingly serve you day after day, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Blessing

M: May he who by his incarnation gathered things earthly and heavenly into one, fill us with such joy that comes with the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life. And the blessing of God Almighty – the Father, the Son †, and the Holy Spirit – be upon you and remain with you always.

C: Amen.

Remain standing for the closing hymn.

Hymn ----- Joy to the World

CW 62

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,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.
2. Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, 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,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, 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,
And wonders of his love,
And wonders, wonders of his love.



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