

Zion Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, SD  
 Christmas Eve Worship  
 zionlutheranaberndeen.org



## INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

*In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.*

## PRELUDE

*Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine*  
 Sonya Kempf—organ; Sue Gates—piano

Lani Smith

*Carols Four*  
 Zach Anderson & Zoe Kempf, vocalists

Carl Strommer

## THE PROCLAMATION OF THE CHRIST CHILD

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

Every year we light our candles.  
 We watch the flames flicker with wonder.

God's light is here.  
 This light is life for all people.

The darkness will never overcome it.  
 Christ is with us always. Thanks be to God!

## OPENING HYMN

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

ELW #283

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*

O come, let us adore him,  
 O come, let us adore him,  
 O come, let us adore him,  
 Christ the Lord!

- 2     The 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*

#### **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.**

#### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray together: **Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

#### **SPECIAL MUSIC**

*Mary's Boy Child*

Donna Bratland, vocalist

#### **THE CHRISTMAS GOSPEL**

Tonight is the night of our dear Savior's birth. Let us hear again the glad story of how God chose to come among us and to dwell with us.

#### **READING**

**Luke 2:1-7**

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her

child. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

## HYMN

### *Away in a Manger*

ELW #277

- 1     Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;  
the stars in the bright 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 you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky  
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.
- 3     Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay  
close by me forever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in your tender care  
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

## READING

### Luke 2:8-14

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,  
<sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

## HYMN

### *The First Noel*

ELW #300 vs. 1-2

- 1     The first Noel the angel did say  
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,  
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

### *Refrain*

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!  
Born is the King of Israel.

- 2     They looked up and saw a star  
shining in the east beyond them far;  
and to the earth it gave great light,  
and so it continued both day and night. *Refrain*

**READING****Luke 2:15-20**

<sup>15</sup>When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

**HYMN***O Little Town of Bethlehem***ELW #279**

- 1 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.
- 2 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!
- 3 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.
- 4 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;  
oh, come to us, abide with us,

our Lord Immanuel!

## CHRISTMAS HOMILY

Pastor Jim Holthus

### HYMN

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

ELW #289

- 1 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.

- 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*

### OFFERING

*We glorify God in our giving. Our offering is an act of worship that makes the ministries of this congregation possible. We encourage everyone to give. We encourage you to consider giving a gift online at [zionlutheranaberdeen.org/giving](http://zionlutheranaberdeen.org/giving) or by mail as you are able. If you would like, use the QR code scanner on your smart phone to give online.*



*The children are welcome to come forward and place their offerings in the "For Children Everywhere" box.*

### OFFERING HYMN

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

Sonya Kempf—organ; Sue Gates—piano

### OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray together:

God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. 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.

## LITANY

Each of us is broken by sin and less than God has created us to be, but this does not disqualify us from being touched by God and serving God in any capacity, large or small, broken as we are.

God uses broken things. It takes broken clouds to give rain, broken ground to give grain, broken grain to give bread, broken bread to give strength.

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

### LORD'S PRAYER

Let us pray in confidence the words our Savior gave 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.

## COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

*All who believe that our Lord Jesus Christ is truly present in the bread and wine of The Lord's Supper bringing to us the gift of forgiveness and the promise of eternal life, are welcome to gather at the Lord's Table.*

## COMMUNION HYMNS

*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*  
*Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*  
*I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve*

ELW #282  
ELW #276  
ELW #271

### It Came upon the Midnight Clear

- 1 It came upon the midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth  
to touch their harps of gold:  
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,  
from heav'n's all-gracious king."  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
to hear the angels sing.
- 2 Still through the cloven skies they come  
with peaceful wings unfurled,  
and still their heav'nly music floats  
o'er all the weary world.  
Above its sad and lowly plains  
they bend on hov'ring wing,  
and ever o'er its babel sounds  
the blessed angels sing.
- 3 And you, beneath life's crushing load,  
whose forms are bending low,  
who toil along the climbing way  
with painful steps and slow:  
look now, for glad and golden hours  
come swiftly on the wing;  
oh, rest beside the weary road  
and hear the angels sing!
- 4 For lo! The days are hast'ning on,  
by prophets seen of old,  
when with the ever-circling years  
shall come the time foretold,  
when peace shall over all the earth  
its ancient splendors fling,  
and all the world give back the song  
which now the angels sing.

### Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

- 1 Infant holy, infant lowly,  
for his bed a cattle stall;  
oxen lowing, little knowing  
Christ the child is Lord of all.  
Swiftly winging, angels singing,  
bells are ringing, tidings bringing:

Christ the child is Lord of all!  
Christ the child is Lord of all!

- 2     Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping  
vigil till the morning new  
saw the glory, heard the story,  
tidings of a gospel true.  
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,  
praises voicing, greet the morrow:  
Christ the child was born for you!  
Christ the child was born for you!

### **I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve**

- 1     I am so glad each Christmas Eve,  
the night of Jesus' birth!  
Then like the sun the star shone forth,  
and angels sang on earth.
- 2     The little child in Bethlehem,  
he was a king indeed!  
For he came down from heav'n above  
to help a world in need.
- 3     He dwells again in heaven's realm,  
the Son of God today;  
and still he loves his little ones  
and hears them when they pray.
- 4     I am so glad each Christmas Eve!  
His praises then I sing;  
he opens now for ev'ry child  
the palace of the king.
- 5     And so I love each Christmas Eve,  
and I love Jesus too;  
and that he loves me ev'ry day  
I know so well is true.

### **POST COMMUNION BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ born of Mary this night, strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray together:

God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

## LIGHTING OF CANDLES

### HYMN OF LIGHT

*Silent Night, Holy Night*

ELW #281

- 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 your holy face,  
      with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
      Jesus, Lord, at your birth,  
      Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

## BENEDICTION

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

**Christ our Savior is born!**

The faithful have come to adore Christ our Lord.

**Christ our Savior is born!**

Now go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere!

**Christ our Savior is born!**

The blessings of God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, be with you now and forever.

**Amen!**

**CLOSING HYMN**

*Go Tell It on the Mountain*

**ELW #290**

*Refrain*

Go tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills and ev'rywhere;  
go tell it on the mountain  
that Jesus Christ is born!

1 While shepherds kept their watching  
o'er silent flocks by night,  
behold, throughout the heavens  
there shone a holy light. *Refrain*

2 The shepherds feared and trembled  
when, lo, above the earth  
rang out the angel chorus  
that hailed our Savior's birth. *Refrain*

3 Down in a lonely manger  
the humble Christ was born;  
and God sent us salvation  
that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

**POSTLUDE**

*Noel Fanfares*

Charles Callahan