

PRELUDE**WE GATHER FOR WORSHIP****WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS****LIGHTING OF CHRISTMAS CANDLES**

O Holy God, we light the Christ candle. It shines on smiles and tears. It shines on younger and older. It shines and we hear angels. It shines and we see a manger. It shines and we remember the story. It shines on our world, like Bethlehem long ago. It can never be extinguished, because you are the candle tonight, and we promise to be the candle tomorrow. Amen.

CAROL (with bells) *Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful.* #283 (1,3)

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!

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

CALL TO WORSHIP (*Ring bells each time you hear "Ring out."*)

P: O come, all ye faithful, come and see the gift of God born for you.

C: We come with joy and celebration.

P: **Ring out** with joy the blessed news upon this holy night,

C: That Christ, the Savior of the World, has come to be its light.

P: **Ring out** the news so wondrous sweet; O ring it far and wide.

C: Till all creation knows the joy of holy Christmastide.

P: **Ring out, ring out**, O Christmas bells; ring out o'er land and sea.

C: That he who brings good will to earth is King eternally.

P: Ring out, ring out the tidings sweet of heaven's goodwill and peace.

C: Ring out the news so dear to all that strife one day must cease.

P: Gracious God, on the first Christmas the angels proclaimed the savior – your savior – is born. "This will be a sign for you, you will find a baby wrapped in bands of cloth lying in a manger." Then the skies were filled with the song the angels rejoicing in the good news of great joy.

C: As we gather to worship and praise you this day, may the ringing of the bells, the music of the carols, and the joy in our hearts give you glory. Amen.

CAROL (with bells) *Joy to the World* #267 (1,4)

1 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.

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Together, let us pray. **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 only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

WE HEAR THE PROMISE

FIRST READING

Isaiah 9: 2-7

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. ³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. The word of the Lord.

CAROL

***O Little Town of Bethlehem* #279 (1,4)**

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.
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!

SECOND READING

Titus 2: 11-14

¹¹The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds. The word of the Lord.

CAROL (with bells) *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* #270 (1,3)

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 angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Refrain: Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"
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 we no more may die,
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us second birth. Refrain

CHRISTMAS GOSPEL *with carols*

Luke 2: 1-7

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph 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. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And 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.

Carol *Away in a Manger* #277 (1,3)

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.

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.

Luke 2: 8-20

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" ¹⁵When 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." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Carol (with bells) *Angels We Have Heard on High* #289 (1,3)

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.

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

SERMON **Pastor Siri Sorenson**

CAROL *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear* #282 (1,4)

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.

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.

APOSTLES' CREED

SHARING OF THE PEACE

WE RECEIVE GOD'S GRACE

OFFERTORY HYMN *What Child Is This* #296 (1,3)

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!

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!

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Good and loving God, you sent your only Son to live among us, bringing us your grace and truth. As we prepare to receive the gift of Christ's presence once again, all we have to offer is what you have given us. Receive all that we have and all that we are to your glory and for your service, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION and LORD'S PRAYER

DISTRIBUTION

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING and PRAYER

Radiant God, with our eyes we have seen your salvation, and in this meal we have feasted on your grace. May your Word take flesh in us, that we may be your holy people, revealing your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WE RECEIVE THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

THE GOSPEL OF THE INCARNATION John 1: 1-14

The Christ candle symbolizes Christ, the Light of the world. As the Reading begins, please light your candle and hold it up.

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Wonderful Counselor, increase our joy as the church gathers on this holy night to sing of our dear Savior's birth. May the story of salvation live in the hearts of all who sing of its wonders. God of grace, **Hear our prayer.**

Mighty God, you have broken the yoke of sin's burden through the birth of your Son. Comfort those whose burdens distract them from the deeper peace of this holy night and grant them a restful mind. God of peace, **Hear our prayer.**

Everlasting Father, uphold all who are in sorrow or need of your divine goodness and mercy. We remember with thanksgiving all who have died and who now rest in your peaceful light. God of love, **Hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, bathe us always in the light of your Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

HYMN OF LIGHT "Silent Night, Holy Night"

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, Son of God, love's pure light.
Radiant beams from thy holy face with the dawn of redeeming grace.
Christ the savior is born. Christ the savior is born.

BLESSING

P: May God, who has called you out of darkness to be servants of light, fill you with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ Child. Almighty God, the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

The candles are extinguished.

WE GO TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS OF CHRISTMAS!

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Proclaim the good news of Christ's birth!

C: Thanks be to God!

CAROL *Go, Tell It on the Mountain* #290 (1,3)

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.

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

POSTLUDE

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Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year from the staff at Grace Lutheran Church!
Pastor Siri, Becky, Rita, Robin, Thomas, Lisa, Gea, Jerry, Del, Dana, Dave

Christmas Day Worship is at 9:00 am – Nine Lessons and Carols