

# *Christmas Day Festival Worship*

*December 25, 2021*



## **WOODLAWN EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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**Christmas Call to Worship**

Pastor: We begin our Christmas Day worship in the name of the Father, our Creator; the Son, our Redeemer; and the Holy Spirit, our Sanctifier.

**Congregation: Amen.**

P: With joy we gather to honor the birth of Jesus Christ;

**C: He came to be our Savior.**

P: We as sinners ought to cower before the mighty hand of God;

**C: But the Lord removes our fear by promising us his grace and love.**

P: Our God is a mighty God who has the power to crush armies and rain down fire and brimstone;

**C: But when he came down to earth he came as a humble little child.**

P: Today we face the mystery of how Jesus can be both God and man at the same time:

**C: Lord, give us a child-like faith to believe that Jesus is both God and man.**

P: Lord, as we ponder the meaning of the lowly manger and see the baby Jesus lying there,

**C: Help us to see and believe that he lies there as our God and Savior. While we look back at the manger, help us also to look ahead to heaven where we will be with Jesus.**

P: On this day of Christmas fill our hearts again with appreciation for this great truth of the Bible:

**C: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."**

**Hymn 354**

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

**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.**

**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***

**Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!  
Glory to God, all Glory in the highest:  
*Refrain***

**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***

Text: John F. Wade, c. 1711-86; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-80, alt.

### **Confession & Absolution**

P: Sisters and brothers in Christ: there was a time when the world sat in darkness, separated from God because of sin. Since we human beings were unable to find God in that darkness, he came to us as a baby, born of a virgin, bringing with him the great light of our salvation. Come near to God, open your hearts to him, and confess to him your sins.

*Silence for personal reflection and confession*

P: Heavenly Father,

**C: We confess that we have sinned against you in our thoughts, words, and deeds. The world has tempted us in this Christmas season to put our delight and joy in material things, to be envious of others, and to center our celebrations around ourselves rather than on you. As a result, we have sinned against you and against one another.**

P: The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

**C: The celebration you desire is the worship of the heart. Forgive our sins, O Lord, for the sake of the one born in Bethlehem, Jesus Christ, who died for our sins. Decorate our hearts with repentance and joy that our Christmas celebration may be pleasing to you.**

P: This Child whose birth we celebrate came among us to live perfectly in our place, to give his life in payment for our sins, to rise from the grave for our justification, and to give us new life. In his name and at his command, I as a called and ordained servant of the Word, forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✕ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

P: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

**Hymn 366: 1-3**

*O Rejoice, All Christians Loudly*

**O 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 thus,  
That he has befriended us.**

***Refrain:***

**Joy, O joy, beyond all gladness!  
Christ has done away with sadness!  
Hence, all sorrow and repining,  
For the Sun of grace is shining!**

**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.**

***Refrain***

**Lord, how shall I thank you rightly?  
I am saved eternally  
By your life and death for me.  
Let me not forget it lightly,  
But with all my heart believe  
That from you I shall receive.**

***Refrain***

Text: Christian Keimann, 1607-62; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-78, alt.

## Reading

**Romans 8:31-32**

<sup>31</sup> What then will we say about these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup> Indeed, he who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also graciously give us all things along with him?

## **Handbells**

*Ring the Bells on Christmas Day*

## Gospel

**John 1:1-18**

**P:** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.

**C: Through him everything was made, and without him not one thing was made that has been made.**

**P:** In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind.

**C: The light is shining in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

**P:** There was a man, sent from God, whose name was John. He came as an eyewitness to testify about the light so that everyone would believe through him. He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light.

**C: The real light that shines on everyone was coming into the world.**

**P:** He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not recognize him.

**C: He came to what was his own, yet his own people did not accept him.**

**P:** But to all who did receive him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. They were born, not of blood, or of the desire of the flesh, or of a husband's will, but born of God.

**C: The Word became flesh and dwelled among us. We have seen his glory, the glory he has as the only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

**P:** John testified about him. He cried out, "This was the one I spoke about when I said, 'The one coming after me outranks me because he existed before me.'"

**C: For out of his fullness we have all received grace upon grace.**

**P:** For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

**C: No one has ever seen God. The only-begotten Son, who is close to the Father's side, has made him known.**

**Hymn of the Day 352**

*Joy Has Dawned*

*Choir: Joy has dawned upon the world,  
Promised from creation:  
God's salvation now unfurled,  
Hope for every nation.  
Not with fanfares from above,  
Not with scenes of glory.  
But a humble gift of love:  
Jesus born of Mary.*

*Sounds of wonder fill the sky  
With the songs of angels,  
As the mighty Prince of Life  
Shelters in a stable.  
Hands that set each star in place,  
Shaped the earth in darkness,  
Cling now to a mother's breast,  
Vulnerable and helpless.*

**C: Shepherds bow before the Lamb,  
Gazing at the glory.  
Gifts of men from distant lands  
Prophesy the story:  
Gold - a King is born today;  
Incense - God is with us;  
Myrrh - His death will make a way,  
And by His blood He'll win us.**

**Son of Adam, Son of heaven,  
Given as a ransom;  
Reconciling God and man,  
Christ our mighty Champion!  
What a Savior! What a Friend!  
What a glorious myst'ry!  
Once a babe in Bethlehem,  
Now the Lord of hist'ry.**

**Sermon:**

**Exodus 33:18-23, 34:5-7**

<sup>18</sup> Then Moses said, "Please show me your glory."

<sup>19</sup> The LORD said, "I will make all my goodness pass in front of you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD in your presence. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy." <sup>20</sup> He said, "You cannot see my face, for no human may see me and live."

<sup>21</sup> The LORD also said, "Look, there is a place next to me, where you shall stand on the rock. <sup>22</sup> It will happen that, while my glory passes by, I will put you in a crevice in the rock. I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by. <sup>23</sup> Then I will take away my hand, and you will see my back. But my face will not be seen."

<sup>5</sup> The LORD came down in the cloud. He took his stand there with Moses and proclaimed the name of the LORD. <sup>6</sup> The LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed: "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, and overflowing with mercy and truth, <sup>7</sup> maintaining mercy for thousands, forgiving guilt and rebellion and sin. He will by no means clear the guilty. He calls their children and their children's children to account for the guilt of the fathers, even to the third and the fourth generation."

*In a Baby, the Everlasting Lord  
Hides and Reveals His Glory*

**THE CHRISTMAS CREED**

**I believe in God the Father almighty, who sent His Son to be my Savior.**

**And I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, announced by the angels, worshiped by the shepherds, adored by the wise men, who lived to suffer, die, and rise again, to free me from all sin, death, and from the power of the devil.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, who has brought me to faith in my Savior, and by whose continuous work in my heart I rejoice in my salvation, show forth His praises, and will one day live and rule with Him in all eternity. Amen.**

**Christmas Prayer**

**P:** Lord, we need Christmas. We need Your presence in our lives; we need Your love, Your blessing, and Your protection.

**C:** Bless us this Christmas Day and each day of the year.

P: Lord, we know that Christmas ultimately is not about gifts and parties and decorations. We know that Christmas is about the coming of Your Son, and we know He is coming again.

**C: Be with us, and help us live with the awareness that Jesus comes daily to us through Your Word, and that He is coming again in judgment, to take His followers to eternal life.**

P: Lord, allow this Christmas Day to be more than a one-day-a-year experience; may the presence of Your Son, our Savior, impact our daily existence.

**C: Lord, we find it so easy to live for ourselves. Guide us daily in understanding the joy of sharing those abundant blessings that You have showered upon us.**

P: Be with us, our families, our friends, our neighbors and our co-workers, that we live out Your love, each and every day in Jesus' name. Amen.

### **NOW REJOICE! a carol setting for Holy Communion**

**Preface**     *"Good Christians Friends, Rejoice" (CW 363)*

Pastor:     Oh, may the Good Lord be with you.

**Cong:     And may the Lord be with you too.**

Pastor:     Lift your hearts to Him in praise.

**Cong:     To the Lord our hearts we raise.**

Pastor:     Let us offer praises true

**Cong:     It is fitting so to do:  
              Gratefully we sing  
              To the Lord, our King!**

### **Proper Preface**

**Sanctus**     *"As With Gladness Men of Old" (CW 372)*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord**

**God of hosts, by all adored:**

**Heav'n and earth cannot contain**

**All the glory of Your name!**

**With the heav'nly host we sing**

**Highest praises to our King:**



**Hail! Hosanna! Endless fame  
Be to Him who, in God's name  
Now draws nigh with us to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel!  
Hail! Hosanna! Praises be  
To the Lord eternally!**

## **Consecration**

**Lord's Prayer**    *"Away in a Manger" (CW 341)*

**Our Father in heaven,  
    all praise to Your name!  
Your kingdom among us,  
    Your will done the same  
By mortals and angels.  
    Come, Lord, reign alone:  
Oh, hear us and bless us  
    from heaven's high throne.**

**The bread that we yearn for  
    provide us each day;  
As we forgive others,  
    our sins take away;  
In times of temptation,  
    to lead us be near;  
From evil deliver  
    Your children most dear.**

**For Yours is the kingdom;  
    o'er all things Your reign.  
And Yours is the power;  
    all things You maintain.  
To You be the glory,  
    resounding again  
From all of creation,  
    forever! Amen.**

***HOLY COMMUNION:*** *Holy Communion will be celebrated in our service today. In this sacrament we receive Christ's very body and blood for the forgiveness of sins. Those who are not members of Woodlawn are asked to speak with our Pastor before partaking of this sacrament so that the unity of faith might be established. Thank you for honoring this request.*

## Distribution

### Distribution Hymn 346      *Angels We Have Heard on High*

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.

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

#### *Refrain*

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

#### *Refrain*

Text: *Nouveau recueil de cantiques*, 1855; tr. *The Crown of Jesus*, Part 2, London, 1862, alt.

### The Thanksgiving      *"Angels from the Realms of Glory" (CW 347)*

Thank the Lord, His praises voicing  
For His promised faithfulness!  
All who seek the Lord, rejoicing  
Tell His love, His name confess,  
For He leads us, with thanksgiving  
In the paths of righteousness.

At Your Word, Lord, let Your servant  
Go in peace, for with my eyes  
I have seen Your bright salvation,  
Israel's Light, begin to rise  
As the Glory of the nations,  
Leading us to Paradise.

## Prayer

**Benediction**      “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (CW 333)

Pastor: Now may the good Lord bless and keep,  
His love in you increase;  
Lift up His face with shining grace,  
And grant eternal peace.

**Cong: To Father, Son and Spirit,  
Eternal One-in-Three,  
Be thanks and praise through all our days  
And to eternity!**

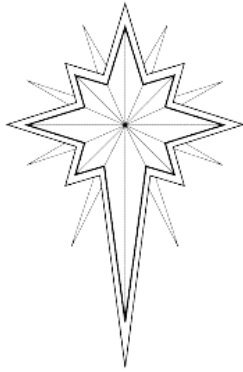
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**Serving Us Today**

**Preacher:** Pastor Benjamin B. Wessel  
**Organist:** Dee Ann Techlin  
**Choir Director:** Jean Kaldunski  
**Ring Praise Director:** Tina Graham

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*Food Pantry Door Collection:* As you leave today, a door collection will be taken for the food pantries we support. Thank you for your donations.



*May the Lord's light brighten your day  
And may His love warm your heart.  
Merry Christmas!*