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GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

December 27, 2020 - First Sunday of Christmas

*“My eyes have seen your salvation.”*

[Luke 2:30]

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WELCOME

We're glad you chose to worship with us.

**Lessons & Carols**

## BELL

*Stand as you are able***GATHERING CAROL Hark! The Herald Angels Sing****ELW 270**

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."  
 Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king."

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.  
 Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king."

**THANKSGIVING FOR THE WATERS OF BAPTISM***Stand as you are able*

God be with you.

**And also with you.**

Just as Jesus stretched his hand over the storming sea and said  
 "Peace. Be Still.", we ask for God's calming spirit to still the  
 waters of anxiety that stir inside each of us during every  
 frightening and uncertain time.

**God, we thank you for the waters of baptism that bring us  
 closer to your grace, hope, and unending love. Thank you for  
 water that grows and nourishes your people and planet.**

We pray for the people and places that do not have clean water or  
 their source of water is threatened. We thank you for water to play  
 in: pools, lakes, and sprinklers.

**For water that helps us to see beauty and creation: fountains,  
 waterfalls, and watercolor paints.**

**God, we thank you for all the water of the world, especially the waters that washed us clean and gave us new life in you.  
Amen.**

**CAROL**

**Once in Royal David's City**

**ELW 269**

Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,  
Where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed:  
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ, her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all,  
And his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall;  
With the poor and meek and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us Pray: Almighty God, you wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and yet more wonderfully restored it. **In your mercy, let us share the divine life of the one who comes to share our humanity, Jesus the Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

*Sit*

**LESSONS & CAROLS**

**Isaiah 9:2-7**

*God promises a king*

**CAROL 272**

**Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming**

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!  
Of Jesse's lineage coming as seers of old have sung,  
It came, a flow'r so bright,  
Amid the cold of winter, when half-spent was the night.

Isaiah had foretold it, the rose I have in mind;  
With Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind.  
To show God's love aright,  
She bore to us a Savior, when half-spent was the night.

**Micah 5: 2-5***The king will come from Bethlehem***CAROL 279****O Little Town of Bethlehem**

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.

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 Emmanuel!

**Luke 1: 26-35, 38***The announcement to Mary***CAROL 265****The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came**

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,  
 With wings as drifted snow, with eyes as flame:  
 "All hail to thee, O lowly maiden Mary,  
 Most highly favored lady." Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born  
 In Bethlehem all on a Christmas morn,  
 And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say:  
 "Most highly favored lady." Gloria!

**Luke 2: 8-16***The shepherds go to the stable***Carol 276 Infant Holy, Infant Lowly**

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!

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!

**Matthew 2: 1-11***The magi follow the star***Carol 302 As with Gladness Men of Old**

As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold;  
 As with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright;  
 So, most gracious Lord, may we evermore be led by thee.

As with joyful steps they sped, Savior, to thy lowly bed,  
 There to bend the knee before thee, whom heav'n and earth adore;  
 So may we with willing feet ever seek thy mercy seat.

As they offered gifts most rare at thy cradle, rude and bare,  
 So may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy,  
 All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav'nly king.

**John 1: 1-14***The mystery of the Incarnation***Carol 296 What Child Is This**

What child is this, who, laid to rest,  
 On Mary's lap is sleeping?  
 Whom angels greet with anthems sweet  
 While shepherd's 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!

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!

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!

## HOMILY

How did Luther celebrate Christmas? Of course, he enjoyed carols, trees, and gifts. But Luther knew that the true beauty and eternal joy of Christmas were found in only one place: the Infant Child in the manger.

Luther wanted to give his children memorable Christmas celebrations, so he would arrange to have a person show up at his house dressed as an angel, singing this hymn:

*“From heav’n above to earth I come  
To bear good news to ev’ry home!  
Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
To all the world, and gladly sing:”*

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

*“This is the Christ, God’s Son most high,  
Who hears your sad and bitter cry,  
Who will himself your Savior be  
And from all sin will set you free.”*

*Ah, dearest Jesus, holy child,  
Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled,  
A quiet chamber in my heart,  
That you and I may never part.*

*“Glory to God in highest heav’n,  
Who unto us the Son has giv’n.”  
With angels sing in pious mirth  
A glad new year to all the earth!*

*Martin Luther, 1539*

*Stand as you are able*

## **A CHRISTMAS CREED**

- I believe in Jesus Christ and in the power of the Gospel which began in Bethlehem.**
- I believe in the One whose spirit glorified a small village, of whose coming the shepherds saw the sign, and for whom there was no room in the inn.**
- I believe in the One whose life changed the course of history, against whom the kings of the earth had no power, and who was not understood by the proud.**
- I believe in the One to whom the poor, the oppressed, the discouraged, the afflicted, the sick, the blind and the leprous gave welcome and accepted as Savior.**
- I believe in the One who, with love, changed the hearts of the proud, and with his life, showed that it is more important to serve than to be served, and that the greatest joy is in giving your life for others.**
- I believe in peace, which means justice among all peoples and nations, and love among all.**
- I believe in reconciliation, forgiveness and the transforming power of the gospel.**
- I believe that Christmas is strength and power, and that this world can change if, with humility and faith, we kneel before the manger.**
- And, I believe that I must be the first to do so. Amen.**

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

Night and day, all creation praises you, O God. Strengthen your church across nations, denominations, and traditions. Fill us with wisdom and unify our proclamation of your forgiveness and mercy.  
**Your mercy is great.**

All creation is holy to you, O God. You cause the earth to bring forth its shoots and gardens to spring up. Protect hibernating animals and frozen lands that wait earnestly for longer days of awakening and growth. **Your mercy is great.**

The nations are upheld by your hand, O God. Cause righteousness and praise to spring forth, inspiring leaders to serve with compassion and integrity. Send your spirit of discernment upon legislators grappling with complex decisions for the sake of the common good. **Your mercy is great.**

Send the spirit of your Son into our hearts, O God. Come quickly to hearts that race with fear, hearts that break with grief, and hearts that long for wholeness (especially). Reveal your power to heal and to save. **Your mercy is great.**

Adopt us into your family, O God. Bless our elders with the peace and joy of Simeon and Anna. Strengthen those who have retired, those who work in older age, and those in need of income, food, company, or health care. Connect young and old across generations. **Your mercy is great.**

Let us depart in peace, O God, according to your word. For (John, apostle and evangelist, and) all your saints, we give you thanks. Prepare our salvation in the sight of all your witnesses of every time and place. Hear us, O God. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to you, in the name of Jesus.  
**Amen.**

*Stand as you are able*

## **SENDING PRAYERS**

Lastly, let us pray for all who have contracted coronavirus,  
**we pray for care and healing.**

For those who are particularly vulnerable,

**we pray for safety and protection.**

For all who experience fear or anxiety,

**we pray for peace of mind and spirit.**

For families who are facing difficult decisions between



putting food on the table or public safety,

**we pray for policies that recognize their plight.**

For those who do not have adequate health insurance,

**we pray that no family will face financial burdens alone.**

For those who are afraid to access care due to immigration status,

**we pray for recognition of the God-given dignity of all.**

For public officials and decisionmakers,

**we pray for wisdom and guidance.**

**May we, your Church, be a sign of hope, comfort, and love to all.**

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**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.**

## **BLESSING**

Let us bless our God.

**Praise and thanks to God.**

May the Word that Mary brought to birth

**carry us into new and abundant life.**

May the Word that Joseph cradled in his arms

**enfold us with love and strength.**

May the Word that angels proclaimed in song

**bring harmony to our world.**

**Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,**

**Bless us now and forever. Amen.**

**SENDING CAROL****In the Bleak Midwinter****ELW 294**

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,  
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;  
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
In the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;  
Heav'n and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign;  
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed  
The Lord God almighty, Jesus Christ.

What can I give him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb;  
If I were a wiseman I would do my part;  
Yet what I can I give him – give my heart.

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. God is with us.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

Masters in this Hall

James Biery