



**WORD OF GOD
COME DOWN TO US**

PROCLAMATION

The birth of Christ

Many ages after God created the heavens and the earth,
when man and woman were formed in God's own image;
long after the great flood, when God set the rainbow
in the clouds as a sign of the covenant;
twenty-one centuries from the time of Abraham and Sarah;
thirteen centuries after Moses led God's people to freedom;
eleven centuries from the time of Ruth and the judges;
a thousand years from the anointing of David as king;
in the sixty-fifth week as Daniel's prophecy takes note;
in the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad;
the seven hundred and fifty-second year
from the founding of the city of Rome;
the forty-second year of the reign of Octavian Augustus;
in the sixth age of the world, all earth being at peace,
Jesus Christ, eternal God, Son of the eternal Father,
willing to hallow the world by his coming in mercy,
was born of the virgin Mary in Bethlehem of Judea.
Today is the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, God made flesh.



Merry Christmas

May you and yours be filled 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.

We pray: May Almighty God bless your holy family,
Protect them with your mighty power,
and give them the gift of your peace
this Christmas, through this holy season, and in the year to come.
All this we ask through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Pastor, staff and congregation council of Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church



HOLY COMMUNION

NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

Christmas Eve
December 24, 2023 + 4:00 pm

The Holy Spirit calls us
together as the people of God

On God's throne we see the prince of peace

On a long winter evening we gather to proclaim the coming of the light. Isaiah announces that the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. In his letter to Titus Paul reminds us that the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all. In the familiar account of Christ's birth, the evening sky is bright with the heavenly host singing, "Glory to God in the highest." Amid our broken world we proclaim that the prince of peace is born among us. God comes to us in human flesh-- so that we may be bearers of divine light to all the world.

Gathering

PRELUDE

Fantasy on Christmas Carols

Jubilate Bells

arr. Stanley Saxton

On Christmas Night, Bring a Torch Jeanette Isabella

DIALOG

P Jesus Christ is the Light of the World.

C **The Light no darkness can overcome.**

A Alleluia! Christ is born for us.

C **Oh, come, let us adore him.**

P The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

C **The light shines in the darkness
and the darkness has not overcome it.**

A Those who dwell in a land of deep darkness, on them light has shined.

C **We have seen Christ's glory,
glory as of the only Son of the Father.**

P For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

C **In him was life, and the life was the light of all people.**

PROCESSIONAL CAROL

(hymn) ELW 283

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

1- all; 3-choir; 4 -all

Children are invited to join the procession.

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
 2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;

come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:
 Son of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
 Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

Refrain

Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,
 O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,

ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.
 O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

GREETING

P The true light that enlightens all has come into the world!
 Grace and peace of Christ Jesus be with you all.

C **And also with you.**

HYMN OF PRAISE

(hymn) ELW 270

“Hark the Herald Angels Sing”

1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, “Glo - ry to the new-born king;
 2 Christ, by high - est heav’n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
 3 Hail the heav’n - born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righ - teous - ness!

peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled.
 late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin’s womb.
 Light and life to all he brings, ris’n with heal - ing in his wings

Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

with an - gel - ic hosts pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!
 born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

Refrain
 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king!"

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.
 Almighty God,
 you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light.
 Grant that 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.

C **Amen.**
The presider continues with words of welcome.

God speaks to us in scripture,
 reading, preaching and song

Word

CHILDREN'S WORD

Children are invited to come forward; parents are welcome to come with their children.

FIRST READING

A child is born for us

Isaiah 9:2-7

This poem promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth of a royal child with a name full of promise. While Judah's king will practice justice and righteousness, the real basis for faith lies in God's passion for the people: The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this!

The 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.

Word of God come down to us.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM 98

paraphrase

(hymn) **ELW 822**

“O Sing to the Lord”

English stanzas 1, 2, 3, 5



1 Can - tad al Se - ñor un cán - ti - co nue - vo.
1 Oh, sing to the Lord, oh, sing God a new song.
2 For God is the Lord, and God has done won - ders.
3 So dance for our God and blow all the trum - pets.
4 Oh, shout to our God, who gave us the Spir - it.
5 For Je - sus is Lord! A - men! Al - le - lu - ia!



Can - tad al Se - ñor un cán - ti - co nue - vo.
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Oh, shout to our God, who gave us the Spir - it.
For Je - sus is Lord! A - men! Al - le - lu - ia!



¡Can - tad al Se - ñor, cán - tad al Se - ñor!
Oh, sing to our God, oh, sing to our God.
Oh, sing to our God, oh, sing to our God.
Oh, sing to our God, oh, sing to our God.
Oh, sing to our God, oh, sing to our God.

SECOND READING *The grace of God has appeared*

Titus 2:11-14

*The appearance of God's grace in Jesus
Christ brings salvation for all humanity.
Consequently, in the present we live wisely
and justly while also anticipating the hope of
our Savior's final appearance.*

Paul writes to Titus:

The 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.

Word of God come down to us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION PROCESSION

(hymn) ELW 253

“He Came Down that That We Might Have Love”

stanza 1 & 2

Please stand to face the gospel as it is proclaimed in the midst of the assembly.



1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;
2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;
3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace
4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;



he came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have light; hal-le - lu - jah for-ev - er - more.
he came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have joy;

GOSPEL

God with us

Luke 2:1-20

The holy gospel according to Luke.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

In 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.

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,

God’s greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the “good news of great joy” and proclaim God’s blessing of peace.



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.

The gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

GOSPEL PROCESSION *returns*

(*hymn*) ELW 253

“He Came Down that That We Might Have Love”

stanza 3 & 4

SERMON

silence follows for reflection

HYMN OF THE DAY

(*hymn*) ELW 289

“Angels We Have Heard on High”



1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
 2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;

and the moun - tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
 What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
 come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.

Refrain

Glo - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o; glo -



NICENE CREED

- A With the whole church, let us confess our faith.
C **We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

- A Rejoicing in the Word made flesh,
let us pray for the Church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

after each petition:

... in your mercy,

- C **Hear our prayer.**

Meal

God feeds us with the
presence of Jesus Christ

PEACE

- P Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.
And his name is Prince of Peace.

When bread and wine are broken and shared in the Lord's Supper an offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. Please leave your offerings in the baskets in the aisles or give online. During this time, the table is set. Please stand as the offering procession reaches the chancel. Thank you for your generosity.

The peace of Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

The assembly is invited to share God's peace with one another.

OFFERING

"On Christmas Night"

arr. Hal Hopson

The assembly stands as the procession reaches the chancel.

Offertory Prayer

A Let us pray together

**C God of time and eternity,
you have given your only Son,
born of Mary, to save and redeem us.**

**Bless us with all good things, that the works of our hands
through all the years of our lives may proclaim
the news of your redeeming love in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P ...and join their unending hymn:

(Hark the Herald Angels...)

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord! — God of hosts, by
all a-dored! Heav'n and earth can - not con - tain —
all the glo - ry of your name! Hail, ho-san-na, God most high! —
Blest is he who now draws nigh — in the name of God the King!
Ha - le - lu - jahs glad we sing: Hail! Ho-san - na!
Praise be due, ev - er - more Lord God to you!

The presider continues with the Great Thanksgiving, concluding:

Lord's Prayer (1789)

**C Our Father who art heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,**

All who come seeking Jesus are invited to receive these gifts of God. Children are welcome to receive communion or a blessing. Communion at this service is served standing by individual cups. Please follow the directions of the ushers to a communion station. White grape juice is available upon request.

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.

Breaking of the Bread and Invitation to the Table

P In this holy sacrament God makes a home with us.
The gifts of God for the people of God.

Communion

silence for reflection and candle-light Silent Night concludes the Communion

CANDLE LIGHTING

The ushers will bring lighted candles to each pew of worshipers. Worshipers are asked to light their candles from those of their neighbors. Following the lighting of the candles, the assembly remains seated and sings the carol.

Carol by the Assembly

(hymn) ELW 281

“Silent Night, Holy Night!”

Please raise your lighted candles ☩ for the final line of each stanza.

solo *Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht. Alles schläft; einsam wacht
Nur das traute hochheilige Paar.*

Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,

☩ *Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh! Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!*

C **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! 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!**

**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.**

Prayer

A Let us pray. Almighty God,
You made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true
Light. Grant that 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.

C **Amen.**

Bending

We are sent to be God's
bands in the world

BLESSING

Please remain seated for the blessing.

P May you be filled 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, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.

C Amen.

*Please extinguish your candle as the carol begins.
Sanctuary lighting is raised.*

RECESSIONAL CAROL

(hymn) 270

"Joy to the Word"

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re-
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav-ior reigns! Let all their
3 No more let sin and sor-row grow nor thorns in-
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the

ceive her king; let ev-'ry heart pre-pare him
songs em-ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless-ings
na-tions prove the glo-ries of his righ-teous-

room and heav'n and na-ture sing, and heav'n and na-ture
plains re-peat the sound-ing joy, re-peat the sound-ing
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
ness and won-ders of his love, and won-ders of his

and heav'n and na-ture sing, and

sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na-ture sing.
joy, re-peat, re-peat the sound-ing joy.
found, far as, far as the curse is found.
love, and won-ders, won-ders of his love.

heav'n and na-ture sing,

DISMISSAL

Please face the cross for the dismissal.

A Go in peace. Your light has come.

C **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE

“Jubilate Deo”

arr. G. F. Handel

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Serving Today

Pastor Foy Christopherson, *presiding*

Sinéad Carolan, *assisting minister*

Diane Langer, *reader*

Ruth Bills, *organist/director of music & worship*

Chancel Choir

Jubilate Bells

..., *crucifer*

..., *bell tree*

families of Central, *entrance procession*

Dave & Julie Larson, *sound operators*

..., *greeters*

..., *lead ushers for December*

Janell Partyka, *sacristan*

This service is being streamed live on the internet.

*BeFrienders are invited to bring a poinsettia from our Christmas décor
to our homebound following next Sunday's worship.*



Large print bulletins,
assisted listening devices, and
access seating are available to aid
your participation in worship.
Please inquire with an usher.





Welcome!

Everyone is welcome. We are a faith community participating in the life of God, a life that is a gift to us and in which we are actively engaged. That gift compels us to be actively engaged in the neighborhoods of Northeast Minneapolis as well. We are a multigenerational community that proudly celebrates our history while joining together with younger generations to follow where God is leading. We build our community through faith practices like prayer, dwelling in the Word and hospitality.

Guests are welcome. We are pleased you are worshiping with us today. If you would like more information about Mt. Carmel, please contact us at 612-781-2796, or email pastor@mountcarmelmpls.org

Children are welcome at all services. Worship bulletins for children and activity bags are available outside the sanctuary.

Welcome to the Lord's Table. All who come seeking Jesus are welcome at the Lord's Table. Please follow the guidance of the ushers and instructions in the order of service. During communion, ministers will bring bread and wine to you where you are seated if you require accessibility accommodation. Please inform the ushers. Communion may be received in one kind (only bread or only wine) from any station if wheat bread or alcohol presents a health concern. White grape juice is available by request at most liturgies from most communion stations.

Welcome to the Holy Baptism. All who come seeking Jesus are welcome to receive Holy Baptism. Please visit with any worship leader, staff member, hospitality volunteer, contact the church office, or complete an information card, indicating that you wish to be baptized. Our pastor will contact you.

Friends of Mt. Carmel...Stay connected

Across the country and beyond there are many people who have a soft spot in their heart for Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church – people who feel a connection both to the



history and the ongoing mission of this congregation. If you're one of them, we invite you to join a new network of Friends of Mt. Carmel. Email pastor@mountcarmelmpls.org for more information or to join.

Digital giving is available at Mt. Carmel. You can easily donate online through our website at mountcarmelmpls.org and click on **Give**. Mt. Carmel Lutheran is supported by generous people like you. Questions? Contact the church office at 612-781-2796.



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.



WORSHIP LIFE

The Twelve Days of Christmas

The Twelve Days of Christmas names each day in the festival of Christmas which concludes with the festival of Epiphany. The gift given on each day represents a key Christian teaching.

One partridge	Christ, God's greatest gift, who longs to gather us under his wings
Two turtledoves	The sacrifice Mary and Joseph offered when they presented Jesus in the temple; or the Old and New Testaments
Three French hens	Several possibilities - the gifts of the magi; the virtues of faith, hope and charity; the Trinity
Four calling birds	The four evangelists who announce the Good News
Five golden rings	The five books of the Pentateuch - Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy
Six geese	The six workdays of the week
Seven swans	The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit
Eight maids	The eight beatitudes; or Noah and his companions
Nine ladies	The nine fruits of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22) or the nine ranks of angels: seraphim, cherubim, thrones, dominions, virtues, powers, principalities, archangels, and angels
Ten lords	The Ten Commandments
Eleven pipers	Eleven faithful apostles
Twelve drummers	Twelve tribes of Israel, twelve statements in the creed

Some believe the song was composed by English Catholics as a way of passing on their faith during the suppression of Catholicism in England (mid-1500's to mid-1600's).



The Twelve Days of Christmas

JOIN US for Christmas Worship

Sunday, December 31 observing Epiphany of Our Lord
Holy Communion 9:30 am

Sunday, January 7 Baptism of Our Lord
Holy Communion 9:30 am

Mt Carmel Lutheran Church ELCA

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www.mtcarmel.net



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