**CHRISTMAS DAY DECEMBER 25, 2020**

**WELCOME:** *As on the first day of creation, on this Christmas Day the Word illumines the world, shining forth to bring all things into being. Today we celebrate the incarnate Word, God becoming flesh to live among us in the person of Jesus Christ then and now. Emboldened by the good news of Christ’s birth, along with the shepherds, Mary and Joseph, and all witnesses to the light of Christ, we declare to the world that we have indeed seen and been transformed by the arrival of “the salvation of our God.” O come, let us adore!*

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

P: I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

**C: Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!**

HYMN #45 (Green) *Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful*

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!

Oh come, ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;

Come and behold him born the king of angels.

**REFRAIN: Oh, come, let us adore him.**

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

**Oh, come, let us adore him. Christ the Lord!**

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**

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation.

Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God 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**

**LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS CANDLE**

Throughout the weeks of Advent we have prepared in hope, love, joy, and peace. Now we have come to Christmas Day: 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. *Isaiah 9:2* The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. *John 1:9*

*(The Christ Candle is lit)*

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. *John 1:14*

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

L: O Lord,

**C:** the coming of your light into our world has brightened weary hearts with peace. Call us out of darkness, and empower us to proclaim the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

**THE WORD**

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7** 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.

## **SECOND READING:** Titus 3:4-7 4But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 5he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. 6This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

**GOSPEL: JOHN 1:1-14** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2He was in the beginning with God. 3All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being 4in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. 5The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

6There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. 8He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. 9The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. 10He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. 11He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. 12But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, 13who 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.

**CHRISTMAS MESSAGE** Intern Tamara Siburg

**HYMN** #55 (Green) ***Good Christian Friends, Rejoice***

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice.

Give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today.

Ox and ass before him bow, and he is in the manger now.

Christ is born to day! Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends rejoice with heart and soul and voice.

Now ye hear of endless bliss; Jesus Christ was born for this!

He has opened heaven’s door, and we are blest forevermore.

Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice.

Now ye need not fear the grave; Jesus Christ was born to save!

Calls you one and calls you all to gain his everlasting hall.

Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

**AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH FOR CHRISTMAS DAY**

We believe in God, the creator and giver of life, who brought all creation to birth, protecting, nurturing, and cherishing us.

We believe in Jesus Christ: God born among us as a fragile baby, embodying both love and the need for love, and calling us to rest in God as trustingly as a tiny child.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, breathed into us at our birth, always drawing us on to be born again, encouraging, exhorting, comforting, nourishing our growth and inspiring our living.

We believe in the reconciliation of the world to God, through Christ. Christ entered our fearful darkness so that we might enter his glorious light and share the life of his resurrection.

And we believe that each new child is a glimpse of the face of God, a sign of the life to come, and a call to live in peace and celebrate living together. Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth. Amen.

c

**HYMN** #50 (Green) ***Angels from the Realms of Glory***

Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o’er all the earth.

Once you sang creation’s story; now proclaim Messiah’s birth:

**REFRAIN: Come and worship, come and worship. Worship Christ, the newborn King!**

Shepherds, in the fields abiding, watching o’er your flocks by night,

God with us is now residing, yonder shines the infant light. **REFRAIN**

Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar.

Seek the great desire of nations; you have seen his natal star. **REFRAIN**

All creation, join in praising God, the Father, Spirit, Son;

Evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One. **REFRAIN**

**OFFERTORY PRAYER**: Lord God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. Bless the gifts we offer this day, and let them be blessings for others. We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

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

*A brief silence.*

P: God of glory, you bring your word to birth among us. As you spoke through prophets and ancestors, empower your church to proclaim your name with boldness and tenderness, that your salvation is revealed to all the ends of the earth. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: Bless all those who are celebrating your birth this day. Let your presence be known especially among those who aren’t able to gather with loved ones this season. Remind us that your presence will strengthen and sustain us until we can gather again. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: You send messengers to announce peace. Build trust among nations. Strengthen relationships that reach beyond borders. Grant safety to ambassadors, relief workers, military personnel, and health care providers who travel across the world. Reveal your redemption through their work. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: You bring hope to all people. Bring wholeness to all who long for your comfort and companionship. Revive aching spirits and restore tired bodies. Bring healing and wholeness to all who long for mercy (especially). Lord, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: You are the fullness of grace and truth. Bless ministries of generosity in this congregation and community. Open our doors in welcome, extend our tables to guests, and send us out with provisions for those who lack food, water, shelter, clothing, or companionship. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: Your throne, O God, is forever and ever. Claim us as your children in this life and in the next. Encourage us by the witness of the saints across the ages who have testified to your light and life. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: 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.

**C: Amen.**

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. 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.

**SENDING**

**BENEDICTION**

L: May the God of the angels, who heralded Christ's birth, bring joy to your hearts this day and always. May the God of love, who gave his only Son to be born for you, fill your life with love and peace. May Immanuel, God with us, be with you in all your gatherings and all your celebrations, until he brings you into his eternal kingdom. And may almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

**C: Amen**

**HYMN** #39 (Green) ***Joy to the World***

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king.

Let ev’ry heart prepare him room and heav’n and nature sing,

And heav’n and nature sing, and heav’n and heav’n and nature sing!

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ.

While fields and flood, rocks, hills and plains

Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,

Repeat, repeat the sounding joy!

No more let sin and sorrow grow nor thorns infest the ground.

He comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found,

Far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found/

He rules the world with truth and grace and

Make the nations prove the glories of his righteousness

And wonders of his love, and wonders of his love

And wonders and wonders of his love.