

St Mark's Lutheran
December 24, 2022
A Christmas Eve Liturgy

Prelude

Announcements & explanation of service

You are invited to stand as you are able

Entrance Hymn: ELW# 283 - *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

Call to Worship:

P: Be still!

**C: We come to quiet ourselves in this haven of holiness,
on this most holy of days**

P: Be still and know...

C: We come to discern the Word made flesh this night, who will set us free

P: Be still and know that God is...

C: our Hope, our Help, our Refuge, and our Redeemer.

Opening Song: ELW# 289 – *Angels We Have Heard on High*

Opening Scripture: Luke 2: 1-20, CEV

Opening Litany:

A: Have you heard the story passed down for generations?

C: Yes Lord, we have heard

A: Of the baby born in Bethlehem?

C: Yes Lord, born in humility

A: Did you come to see what the shepherds saw?

C: Yes Lord, we came to see

A: And hear the song that the herald angels sing?

C: Yes Lord, to raise praises to the new-born King

A: Did you know this baby will one day save us all?

C: Yes Lord, we know of the prophecy

A: Battered and beaten, we hung him on a tree?

C: Yes Lord, the Lamb of Calvary.

A: But on this night we celebrate the coming of a Savior.

C: Yes Lord, on this Holy Night

A: Christ, The Savior is born!

C: Christ, the Savior is born!

Prayer of Preparation:

P: The Lord be with you...

C: and also with you

P: Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the one true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the rightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Emmanuel, the Word made flesh and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

(The congregation is invited to be seated)

The Prophecy: Isaiah 9: 2-7, CEV

P: Hear again, the words of the prophet Isaiah:

*² [a] 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.*

*³ You 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.*

*⁴ For 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.*

*⁵ For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.*

*⁶ For 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.
7 His 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.*

P: Word of Life, Word of Hope...

C: Amen

Message: The Living Nativity

Song following the Living Nativity: ELW# 279 – *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

Offering Offertory: ELW# 294 – *In the Bleak Midwinter* (Piano only)

Offertory Prayer

The congregation is invited to stand as they are able

P: Let us pray.

Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your Grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessings to others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

Prayers of the People

A: Siblings in Christ, even as we gather this night with friends and families, we pray for those who are not present with us, or who are without the comfort, warmth and security of this community, and the joy we share. Let us pray.

(Each petition ends with...)

A: Lord of love,

C: Hear our prayer

P: Into your hands Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your grace, mercy and peace, through your Son Jesus Christ.

C: Amen

Communion

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.

Eucharistic Prayer & Words of Institution

P: Let us pray.

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of Creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness and will.

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh, who this night comes to dwell among us.

On the night in which our Lord Jesus was betrayed, He took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to His disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, He took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

C: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

L: Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on Earth.

C: Come, Holy Spirit.

Lord's Prayer

L: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

C: 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, the Power and the Glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Invitation to the Table

P: This is Christ's table. It is a table of love and welcome. It is a table of fellowship with the poor; it is a table of communion with the earth. Come not because you must, but because you may. Come not merely because of your love for Christ, but because of Christ's boundless love for you! Come even when you are fearful to be made new in love, Come even when you are doubtful, to be made strong in faith. Come even when you are regretful, to be made whole. These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

Communion Distribution

Communion Music: ELW# 270 – *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

Table Blessing

(The congregation is invited to stand as they are able)

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and keep you in His grace.

C: Amen

Post Communion Prayer

P: God for whom we have waited, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us out to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and our Lord.

C: Amen

Benediction

A: For all that God can do within us,
for all that God can do without us.

C: Thanks be to God!

A: For all in whom Christ lived before us,
and for all in whom Christ lives beside us.

C: Thanks be to God!

A: For all the Spirit wants to bring us,
for where the Spirit wants to send us.

C: Thanks be to God!

A: The blessing of God, Parent, Son and Holy Spirit, be with you and on our way
together, now and forever.

C: AMEN

Sending Song: ELW# 281 - *Silent Night*

Sending

P: Go in peace. The living Word dwells in you.

C: Thanks be to God! We will.

Postlude

Special thanks to **Madeleine Varga and Elijah Hudson**
who helped us bring our Holy family to life for this service.

Deep appreciation to our musician: **Jenny Sustak**
And our storyteller: **Kellen Michalowski**

Finally, a word of love and respect for our assisting minister, **Maggie Perry**,
who embodies the incarnational Jesus in so many ways.

Merry Christmas! Remember, God loves you just as you are.