

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24, 2023 – 7:00 pm Candlelight

The Old Story ...The Child, the Mother, the Shepherds, the Stars, the Angels...Once more shall I remember them as remembering of a forgotten thing or a song whose words have become faint. The hills which stood ready in silent obedience from the moment of their creation. The manger which was to become the haunt of the world's devotion. The cry of the Child, the beginning of the last plea for a guilty race. This is the story. (O.P. Kretzman)

Prelude: "Silent Night" *Hand Bells*

Welcome: Pastor Dave and Pastor Miguel

Opening Hymn #387 "Joy to the World" *Verses 1 & 2*

Call to Worship *(please rise)*

P: Glory to the newborn King, the Word made flesh to dwell among us; glory to the Father, sender of the Word; glory to the Spirit, among us in our hearts.

C: **We rejoice in that glory.**

P: We lift our hearts, our voices, and our souls; all in praise of our Savior as we celebrate his birth.

C: **We rejoice in that glory.** *(Please be seated)*

Hymn: "Joy to the world" *Verses 3 & 4*

Confession and Forgiveness

Pastor: Jesus our Immanuel, You dwell with us, but how can we abide Your dwelling?

All: **For we are sinful people, unworthy of Your presence, unready for Your coming, undeserving of Your mercy.**

Pastor: We are all guilty of sin by our thoughts words, and actions and deserve only death and misery.

All: Tonight Lord, we seek forgiveness of Your love shown to us in Jesus Christ. In humble repentance we ask You to dwell among us with Your grace, love and forgiveness.

Pastor: Dear friends, God indeed shows His love for us that while we were yet sinners. Christ was born in Bethlehem. Christ lived under the Law and went under judgement for us. Christ died for you and for me and so in the name of Jesus; whose birth we celebrate tonight, I say to you, "You are forgiven!"

Special Music: "Sleep Little Holy Child" *Choir*

The Christmas Gospel Part One: Luke 2:1-7

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.

²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria.

³And all went to be registered, each to his own town.

⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.

⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth.

⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

P: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

C: Thanks be to God

Special Music: "The Jesus Lullaby" *Solo - Pastor Kent Fuqua*

The Christmas Gospel Part Two: Luke 2:8-14

⁸ And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear.

¹⁰ And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”

¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

Pastor: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

People: Thanks be to God

Special Music: “Breath of Heaven” *Solo – Katie Wilcox*

The Christmas Gospel Part Three: Luke 2:15-20 *(Please rise)*

¹⁵ When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.”

¹⁶ And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.

¹⁷ And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child.

¹⁸ And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.

¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart.

²⁰ And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

People: Thanks be to God

Hymn: #366 “It Came upon the Midnight Clear.

Homily: “Good News” *Pastor Dave*

A Statement of Our Faith

All: WE BELIEVE in God the Father almighty, for He made the heavens and the earth and created all that we have and all that we are.

WE BELIEVE in Jesus Christ, the Father’s only Son, sent from Him to be our Savior. By His death and resurrection, we have forgiveness of sins and will have eternal life when He returns to take all believers home to heaven.

WE BELIEVE in the Holy Spirit, the power of God at work in the church today. By Him we can say, “Abba Father’, for He calls us to be God’s children.

WE BELIEVE in the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, ONE Lord for our lives and the power for living today and for all our days onto eternity.

Our Christmas Gifts and Offerings

Special Video: Children’s Sunday School Video

A Christmas Prayer & Lord’s Prayer

THE LORD’S PRAYER

All: 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.

The Candle Lighting Ceremony

As individual candles are lit, be careful not to tip a lighted candle, lest hot wax spill over. Tip only unlit candles to receive the flame from those already lit.

Hymn: “Silent Night, Holy Night” Verses 1 & 2

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!

Pastor: Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

All: See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the people.

Pastor: But the Lord rises upon you and His glory appears over you.

All: Nations will come to the Light and kings to the brightness of the dawn. Amen.

“Silent Night, Holy Night” Verse 3

Silent Night, Holy night!

Son of God, love's pure light

Radiant beams from Thy holy face

With the dawn of redeeming grace,

Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,

Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

The candles are extinguished

Pastor: Go in peace and share the Good News—the mystery of the life from a baby, the baby Jesus our Savior and King! Merry Christ to all! Let us go in peace and

All: Serve the Lord!

CLOSING HYMN – #388 “Go Tell it on the Mountain”

Please join us tomorrow morning at 10am for our Christmas Day Service.

Holiday Service Schedule

Christmas Day

10am service —Communion

Sunday, December 31st

8am, 10:15am, 11:30am

No Bible Study or Sunday School

PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

O Almighty God, you have made this night to shine with the brightness of the true Light, Jesus Christ, your only Son. Give us great joy in the angels' message of peace on earth and lead each of us to receive Jesus as God-with-us, our Emmanuel. This we ask for his love's sake. Amen