

Cross of Glory

Lutheran Church & School



Christmas Eve
December 24, 2022

623-224-8839 www.crossofglory.org

10111 W Jomax Road
Peoria, AZ 85383

Sunday 9am Worship

Rev. John Ehlers, Pastor
Mr. Andrew Aguilar, Principal

WELCOME to our worship center

Blessed to be a member of



God defines a church as people gathering around Word and Sacrament. As you join us in this gathering, we pray that Jesus' peace and power will fill you.

Growing in Faith — Living in Grace — Sharing His Glory

ABOUT US

The continuing purpose of this congregation, as a gathering of Christians, is to spread to all people in God's world the glory of the cross of Christ, by sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ on the basis of the Holy Scriptures.

Worship Focus

Our Christmas Eve worship is an adaptation of the *Lessons and Carols* service traditionally held at King's College, Cambridge, England, on December 24th every year. *Lessons and Carols* was first held on Christmas Eve, 1918.

The set of lessons taken from the Bible provides answer of the "WHY" of Christmas. Each lesson is followed by a song sung by the choir, ensemble or congregation that expresses the message of the lesson. The story begins in the Garden of Eden with humanity's fall into sin. In Genesis as humankind faced the consequences of sin, eternal death, God in his grace announced a plan of rescue. We then hear the voice of God's prophets who visualized for us the plan of rescue in the promise of the Messiah. The readings then transition to the fulfilment of God's plan of salvation in the birth of Jesus. We are finally reminded that the baby lying in a lowly manger stall is God in flesh who will become the sacrifice to pay for our sins— the embodiment of God's immeasurable love for the world.



**For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son,
that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)**

Behold the humble manger, where the baby rests his head.

It will soon become the altar, where his gentle heart is bled.

For the manger holds the lamb, on whose heart our sins are laid.

And the lamb becomes the sacrifice for the sheep who all have strayed. (Mary Dorn Lippert)

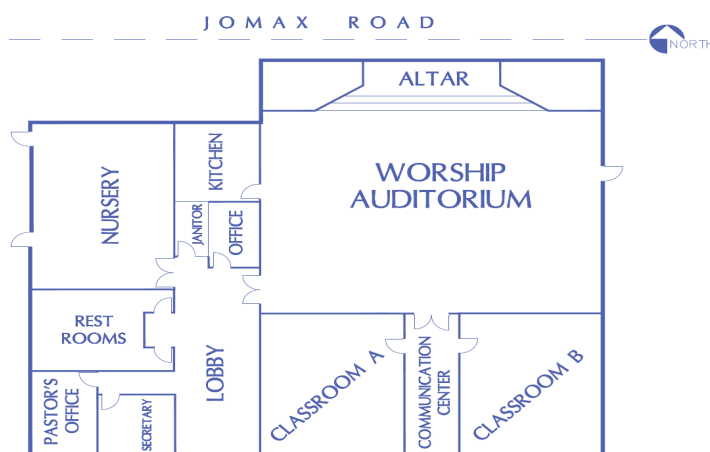
VISITOR INFORMATION

New to Cross of Glory? We are so glad you joined us today! We invite you to stay after the service to chat.

Would you like to learn more about us? We'd love to get to know you better as well. Connect with Cross of Glory by either:

- Using the **friendship register** at the end of each row to connect with us today.
- Emailing us at church.secretary@crossofglory.org

CHURCH MAP



FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

- Restrooms with changing tables located in lobby.
- Nursery for toddlers 2 years and younger accompanied by adult directly across the lobby.
- Children in Church Program: Worship is a family affair, something that children best learn from their parents. We encourage parents to guide their children through the service. Let's work together to bring up the next generation in the Word of the Lord!

The Festival of the Nativity—Christmas Eve Lessons and Carols

A SAVIOR BORN TO CHANGE THE WORLD Families cherish their Christmas traditions. Year after year, they decorate the tree with the same ornaments, play the same music, bake the same Christmas cookies. Without asking, family members know when they will open presents. If you try to change your family's Christmas traditions, you just might pick a fight! When it comes to family Christmases, people generally don't like things to change. Because our celebration of Christmas is so steeped in unchanging traditions, it might be easy for us to miss that the Nativity of the Son of God meant radical change for the world. The birth of the Christ child meant that nothing in the world would ever be the same. We even divide history into the events that occurred "Before Christ" (BC) and after "Anno Domini" (AD), Latin for "Year of our Lord." Christmas traditions are wonderful. But make no mistake about it. Christmas is all about change. The Lord God came to change the world by becoming part of the world. Because we are part of the world, that means Christmas changes us too. This Christmas Eve, we see how.



Ensemble

O Come, Redeemer of the Earth



The service begins with an Advent anthem to call on the Savior who brings light and life to our world dark with sin.

*O come, Redeemer of the earth
and bring to us your holy birth.
Break through the shadows of the night
with heaven's pure and radiant light.
O come our long awaited King, as songs of adoration ring.
May voices join with every age
to tell the wonders of your grace.*

*O come Redeemer of the earth,
where sorrows weep and longings thirst.
Release us from the chains of sin,
that we may live in peace again.
Fulfill the ancient promises,
your words of life and righteousness.
Long loved by those who fear your name
and look towards Your endless reign.*

*O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!*

*O come, O Key of David, come, and open wide our heav'nly home;
make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!*



Psalm 96 is a joyful, majestic call to worship. The world is called to sing to the Lord because God has provided salvation for all people through Christ.

Call to Worship

Psalm 96—Selected Verses

M: Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

C: **Sing to the LORD, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.**

M: Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

C: **For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods.**

M: Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness; tremble before him, all the earth.

C: **Say among the nations, “The LORD reigns.” The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity.**

M: Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it.

C: **Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them; let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.**

M: Let all creation rejoice before the LORD, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth.

C: **He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his faithfulness.**

Choir

This is the Time to Be Joyful

This is the time to be joyful, let us be joyful as we celebrate the coming of the King.

This is the time to be joyful. For we have come to celebrate the coming of the King.

For we have come to celebrate the coming of the King.

This is the time to be joyful, let us be joyful as we celebrate the coming of the King.

This is the time to be joyful. For we have come to celebrate the coming of the King.

For we have come to celebrate the coming of the King.

*O Come, Emmanuel, O Come, God, be with us,
and let us know your presence in this place.*

For you will not forsake us, nor leave us in our struggle.

You will raise us up, you will raise us up to empower us to sing a joyful song.

This is the time to be joyful, let us be joyful as we celebrate the coming of the King.

This is the time to be joyful. For we have come to celebrate the coming of the King.

For we have come to celebrate the coming of the King.

This is the time to be joyful. We celebrate the coming of the King.

This is the time to be joyful, We celebrate the coming of the King.

Come and celebrate the coming, of the coming King.



This choir anthem expresses the joy of Psalm 96 in the coming of Christ the King.

Bidding Prayer

M: Dear people of God, in this Christmas season, it is our duty and delight to hear again the message of the angels and, in heart and mind, to go to Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us—the Christ Child lying in a manger.

Let us read and learn in Holy Scripture the story of the loving purposes of God from the first days after our fall into sin to the glorious redemption brought to us by this holy child.

But first, let us pray for people all over the world who would delight with us to know the good news of Jesus Christ and who would join with us in singing his praises. Let us pray for the people of Peoria, Arizona, and for all those in our own congregation.

And, because this would please our Lord, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who are sad, the lonely and the unloved, and the elderly and the little children. We especially remember all those who do not know the Lord Jesus, those who do not love him, and those who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

Finally, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us in heaven, who live in greater light than we, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, who died in faith, and who live before the throne of God and praise him each day in his temple. We confess that we are united with them as we are united with one another.

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**



The Bidding Prayer begins the Festival of Lessons and Carols. We pray for believers in Christ, those who are suffering and those who don't yet know the love of Jesus.



We join in the prayer that Jesus taught us.

(Matthew 6)



This carol is the processional hymn for the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols at King's College Chapel in Cambridge, England, a tradition since 1919. Traditionally the first verse is sung as a solo.

Hymn: Once in Royal David's City

CWH 343

Duet sings Vs. 1 & 3; Congregation sings Vs. 2 & 4

*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.*

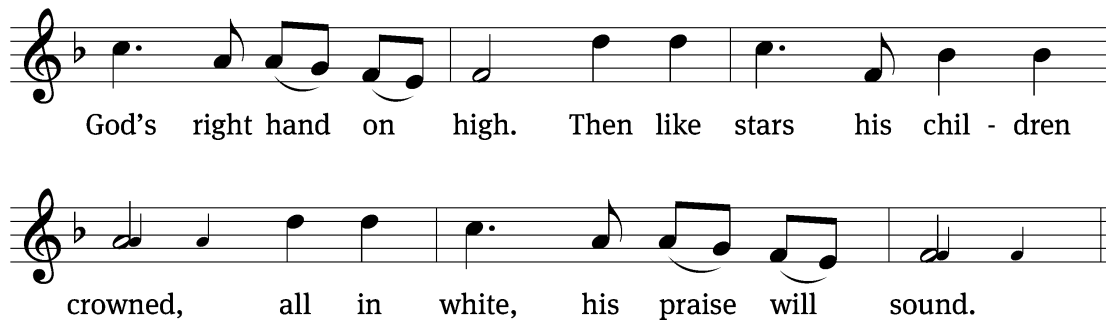
Congregation Sings:

2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and
Lord of all, and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his
cra - dle was a stall; with the poor and mean and
low - ly lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.

*And our eyes at last shall see him
through his own redeeming love,
for that child, so dear and gentle,
is our Lord in heav'n above,
and he leads his children on
to the place where he is gone.*

Congregation Sings:

4 Not in that poor, low - ly sta - ble with the ox - en
stand - ing by shall we see him, but in heav - en, set at



Text: Cecil F. Alexander, 1818–1895, abr., alt.
Tune: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805–1876
Text and tune: Public domain

Reading: Man's Fall into Sin

Genesis 3:8–15

⁸Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

¹⁰He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”

¹¹And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”

¹²The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

¹³Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?”

The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

¹⁴So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this,

“Cursed are you above all livestock
and all wild animals!

You will crawl on your belly
and you will eat dust
all the days of your life.

¹⁵And I will put enmity
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will crush your head,
and you will strike his heel.”



Humanity's separation from God dates to the beginning of time, to the fall into sin by the first humans, Adam and Eve. As tragic as this was, the account ends with God's promise of rescue—that the woman's offspring, Christ, would ultimately defeat Satan and the rebellion of sin.



This hymn was originally penned by Ambrose of Milan (ca. 340-397) and translated into German by Martin Luther. The hymn reinforces the fact that God's plan of salvation was for all people of the world. "I bring you good news that will cause great joy for **all the people.**" (Luke 2:10) and "For God so loved **the world** that he gave his one and only Son." (John 3:16)

Hymn: Savior of the Nations, Come

CWH 301

Ensemble sings Vs. 1, 2 & 4; Congregation joins for Vs. 3 & 5

*Savior of the nations, come; virgin's Son, make here your home.
Marvel now, O heav'n and earth, that the Lord chose such a birth.*

*Not by human flesh and blood, by the Spirit of our God
was the Word of God made flesh, woman's offspring, pure and fresh.*

Congregation Sings:

3 Won - drous birth! O won - drous Child of the
vir - gin un - de - filed, though by all the
world dis - owned, yet to be in heav'n en - throned!

*From the Father's throne he came and ascended to the same,
captive leading death and hell. High the song of triumph swell!*

Congregation Sings:

5 Praise to God the Fa - ther sing, praise to
God the Son, our King, praise to God the
Spir - it be ev - er and e - ter - nal - ly.

Text: tr. William M. Reynolds, 1812-1876, alt.; German version, Martin Luther, 1483-1546, abr.; Ambrose of Milan, 340-397, abr.
Tune: Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn, Wittenberg, 1524, ed. Johann Walter Text and tune: Public domain



Following Abraham's demonstration of faith in his willingness to sacrifice his son, God augmented the promise made in the Garden of Eden with the blessing to Abraham that the Messiah would be his descendent.

Hymn: Blessed Be the God of Israel

CWH 954



This hymn is based on Luke 1:68-79, the song of Zachariah, father of John the Baptist. Zachariah's prophetic song proclaims that the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham was imminent and that John would prepare the way for the Messiah.

1 Blessed be the God of Is - ra - el, who
 2 With prom - ised mer - cy will God still the
 3 My child, as proph - et of the Lord, you

comes to set us free and rais - es up new
 cov - e - nant re - call, the oath once sworn to
 will pre - pare the way, to tell God's peo - ple

hope for us: a Branch from Da - vid's tree.
 A - bra - ham, from foes to save us all,
 they are saved from sin's e - ter - nal sway.

So have the proph - ets long de - clared that
 that we might wor - ship with - out fear and
 Then shall God's mer - cy from on high shine

with a might - y arm God would turn back our
 of - fer lives of praise, in ho - li - ness and
 forth and nev - er cease to drive a - way the

en - e - mies and all who wish us harm.
 right - eous - ness to serve God all our days.
 gloom of death and lead us in - to peace.

Text: Carl P. Daw, Jr., b. 1944

Tune: English Text: © 1989 Hope Publishing Co. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 711716 Tune: Public domain



In love, God promised a
rescue to the world in
the Garden of Eden.
Through the prophets
he repeated
that promise many
times over centuries
before the birth of
Jesus.

Reading: The Prophet Foretells the Coming of the Savior

Isaiah 9:2, 6, 7

²The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness
a light has dawned.

⁶For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the LORD Almighty
will accomplish this.



This anthem calls on
the promised Messiah
with the names listed in
Isaiah, Chapter 9.

Ensemble

Come to Us, O Promised One

*Come to us, O Promised one. Fill our emptiness with love.
Whisper to our longing hearts your words of hope from up above.
Come, as the prophets did foretell: God with us, Emmanuel.*

*Come to us, O Counselor Bind each battered, broken heart.
Steady ev'ry stumbling step; heal each life that's torn apart.
Come, as the prophets did foretell: God with us, Emmanuel.*

*Come to us, O Prince of Peace. Save us from our endless strife.
Teach us how to walk in love; lead us to abundant life.
Come to us, O mighty God. Come in love to save us all.
Wrap your strength in tenderness; lift us up each time we fall.*

*Come, as the prophets did foretell: God with us Emmanuel.
Come to us, O Promised One. Come to us, O Prince of Peace.
Come to us, O Mighty God, God with us, Emmanuel.*



David's dynasty died in 586 B.C. The Babylonians served as the ax of God that cut off the line of Jesse and made David's family tree nothing but a stump. But behold, a branch is growing! A new shoot sprouts from Jesse's stump. God would renew the stump of David's kingdom through the coming Messiah whose kingdom would be spiritual and last forever.

¹A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

²The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and of might,
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—

³and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.

He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,
or decide by what he hears with his ears;

⁴but with righteousness he will judge the needy,
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.

He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

⁵Righteousness will be his belt
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

⁶The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the yearling together;
and a little child will lead them.

⁷The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

⁸The infant will play near the cobra's den,
and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.

⁹They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

Choir

I Hear the Prophet Callin'

*I hear the prophet callin', "Prepare the way of the Lord."
I hear the prophet callin', "Prepare the way of the Lord."
I hear the prophet callin', "Prepare the way of the Lord."
I hear the prophet callin', "Prepare the way of the Lord."*

*Come, and make straight the way in the desert, a highway for our God.
Come, and make straight the way in the desert.
Prepare the way of the Lord. Prepare the way of the Lord.*



Another prophesy from Isaiah 35 foretelling the coming of John the Baptist, the one who prepares the way for the Messiah, are the words of this choir anthem.



God could have initiated the climax of his plan in some stunning manner. But he chooses a humble virgin. Along with Mary we might say, "Why?" And along with Mary we humbly accept God's plan and marvel at it.



These are the words that Mary spoke in response to the message of Gabriel. (Luke 1:46-66)

*I hear Isaiah call'in, "Fear not, your God has come."
I hear Isaiah call'in, "Fear not, your God will come."
Then will the eyes of the blind be opened.
The ears of the deaf will hear. And then the mute
will shout for joy. The mute will shout for joy, shout for joy.*

*They'll be shouting for joy. They'll be shouting for joy.
And the desert will be joyful and blossom as a rose.
And the desert will be joyful and blossom as a rose.
We shall rejoice with joy and singing and see the glory of God.
We shall rejoice with joy and singing and see the glory of God,
and see the glory of God.*

*I hear the prophet callin', "Prepare the way of the Lord."
I hear the prophet callin', "Prepare the way of the Lord,
prepare ye the way of the Lord."*

Reading: *The Angel Gabriel Announces to Mary the Birth of a Son* Luke 1:26–35, 38

²⁶In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

²⁹Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

³⁴"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

³⁵The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

³⁸"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

Duet

Magnificat

*My soul will magnify the Lord I rejoice in God my Savior
In the wonder of this favor.
For he has done great things for me; He was mindful of his servant
Every age shall call me blessed.*

The hope of Abraham come in the giving of a Son;

*For He who promised is mighty in remembering His mercy.
My soul will magnify the Lord for his grace
to those who fear Him through every generation.*

*The grace to those who fear Him through every generation.
The proud He scatters to the wind as the ruler's strength is broken
and the rich are left with nothing.
The humble lifted high and the hungry satisfied;
Our Portion and our Treasure our Hope and Help forever.

Glory to God the Father, Glory to God the Son,
Glory to God the Holy Spirit Now and forever, forever more, Amen.*

Reading: Luke tells of the birth of Jesus

Luke 2:1-7
(Read Responsively)

M: In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.)

C: And everyone went to their own town to register.

M: So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.

C: He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

M: While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son.

C: She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

Duet

Child of the Poor & 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 shepherds watch are keeping.*

*Helpless and hungry, lowly, afraid wrapped in the chill of midwinter;
comes now, among us, born into poverty's embrace, new life for the world.*

*Who is this, who lives with the lowly?
Sharing their sorrows, knowing their hunger?
This is the Christ revealed to the world in the eyes of a child, a child of the poor.*

*What child is this who laid to rest on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping.
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing.*



*God's promises and
love proved faithful. He
sent his Son into this
world just as he said he
would, to do
the work that only he
could do. We now read
the familiar and be-
loved Christmas ac-
count.*



*This anthem looks upon
the baby born in a low-
ly manger as a child
who is much more than
seen on the surface.
This child of the poor is
Christ, the King.*

Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the Son of Mary.

*So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh, come peasant, king to own him;
the King of Kings salvation bring, let loving hearts enthrone him.*

*Bring the thirsty, who seek peace those with nothing to offer;
strengthen the feeble, say to the frightened heart fear not, fear not.*

*This, this is Christ the King whom shepherds guard and angels sing.
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the Son of Mary;
the babe, the Son of Mary.*

Reading: The Angels bring the Good News to the Shepherds

Luke 2:8–14
(Read Responsively)



The angels can't help but celebrate God's gift. The shepherds eagerly spread the word of this gift as announced by the angels.

We join them, glorifying and praising God for all that we have come to know about God's great gift.

M: And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.

C: **An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.**

M: But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

C: **"Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."**

M: Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

C: **"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."**

Choir

Hark the Herald Angels Sing



This well-known carol poetically announces the words of Luke 2: 8-14. In addition, it includes other truths about the Messiah: "God and sinner reconciled" from 2 Corinthians 5:18, Verse 2 addresses John, chapter 1, and Verse 3 quotes Isaiah 9.

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."

Joyful, all ye nations, rise. Join the triumph of the skies.

With th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain:

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

Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord!

Late in time, behold him come, offspring of the virgin's womb.

Veiled in flesh the Godhead see. Hail th'incarnate Deity.

Pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel. (Refrain)
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia!
Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that man no more may die.
Born to raise the sons of earth. Born to give us second birth. (Refrain)

Reading: The Shepherds go to the Manger

Luke 2:15–20

M: When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

C: **So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.**

M: When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

C: **But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.**



The shepherds rushed to see the gift as announced by the angels. Like the shepherds, we bow to our knees and worship Jesus, God’s great gift.

Ensemble

Sing We the Song of Emmanuel

Sing we the song of Emmanuel; this the Christ who was long foretold.
Lo in the shadows of Bethlehem, promise of dawn now our eyes behold.
God most high in a manger laid; lift your voices and now proclaim;
Great and glorious, Love has come to us; join now with the hosts of heaven.

Come we to welcome Emmanuel; King who came with no crown or throne.
Helpless He lay, the invincible, Maker of Mary, now Mary’s son.
O what wisdom to save us all, shepherds, sages, before Him fall.
Grace and majesty, what humility; come on bended knee, adore Him.

Go spread the news of Emmanuel; joy and peace for the weary heart.
Lift up your heads, for your King has come; sing for the light overwhelms the dark.
Glory shining for all to see, hope alive, let the gospel ring.
God has made a way, He will have the praise; tell the world His name is Jesus.



This anthem describes the excitement of the shepherds, having heard the marvelous song of the angels. The dichotomy of the almighty God lying as a helpless baby must have bewildered them, but in faith, they worshiped the infant Savior and then ran to spread the good news.



Magi from the east
were the first in a long
line of Gentiles who
would join Israel in
worshiping Jesus as
King.

Reading: The Magi are led by the star to Jesus

Matthew 2:1–12

¹After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ²and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

³When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵“In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶“ ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.’”

⁷Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

⁹After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.



We cannot leave the
baby lying in a manger
without remembering
why God’s Son had
come into this world. It
was all part of the plan
God first shared in the
Garden of Eden to save
us. The manger holds
the Lamb of God who
takes away the sin of
the world.

Ensemble

The Manger Holds the Lamb

*Behold the humble manger, where the baby rests his head;
It will soon become the altar, where his gentle heart is bled.
For the manger holds the lamb, on whose heart our sins are laid,
And the lamb becomes the sacrifice for the sheep who all have strayed.*

*Though the baby now is sleeping in the comfort of his bed,
Soon his eyelids will be closing on the cross of death, instead.
For the manger holds the lamb, on whose heart our sins are laid,
And the lamb becomes the sacrifice for the sheep who all have strayed.*

*Do not weep, and do not mourn the loss of your sins that caused him pain,
For beyond the manger and the cross, he has risen up to reign!
Greater truth was never told, nor achievement ever won,
Greater love was never shown to us, than this deed that God has done!*



*The Word became flesh
and made his dwelling
among us.*

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

⁹The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹²Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Choir

A Classic Christmas

*The Congregation is invited to rise
and join in singing the Hallelujah Chorus*



*This medley of Vivaldi's
Gloria, J.S. Bach's set-
ting of "From Heaven
Above" and G.F. Han-
del's Hallelujah Chorus
is a majestic, joyous
celebration of our Sav-
ior's birth.*

Gloria, gloria, gloria, gloria in excelsis Deo in excelsis Deo...

From heav'n above to earth I come to bring good news to every home.

Glad tidings of great joy I bring, whereof I now will say and sing:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given...

And the government will be upon his shoulder...

and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counselor,

the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

And he shall reign forever and ever, King of Kings and Lord of Lords,

Hallelujah, hallelujah, and he shall reign forever, forever, and ever.

King of Kings and Lord of lords, King of Kings, and Lord of lords,

and he shall reign for ever and ever. King of Kings and Lord of lords,

hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!

Offering and Offering Prayer

(Prayed by Minister)



*The gifts of God's peo-
ple are a response to
God's blessings.*



Candle Lighting

Following the offering, candles will be lit during this time. The minister will light his candle from the Christ Candle and light the candles of the ushers who will then light the candles of those seated on the end of each aisle. Each individual in each row will light the candle of the person next to them. The unlit candle should be tipped towards the vertical lit candle to avoid dripping wax.



This beloved carol was first heard at St. Nicholas Church in Oberndorf, Germany on Christmas Eve, 1818. The simple melody and lyrics remind us of the true peace Jesus brings.

Hymn: Silent Night, Holy Night

CWH 337

1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,

all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
at the sight. Glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
love's pure light ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face

Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
heav'n - ly hosts — sing, Al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at thy

peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
birth, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.

Text: tr. John F. Young, 1820–1885; Franz Joseph Mohr, 1792–1848
Tune: Franz Xaver Gruber, 1787–1863 Text and tune: Public domain

Closing Prayer

(Spoken by Minister)

M: O God, who makes us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of your only Son, Jesus Christ, grant that as we joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him when he shall come to be our judge, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Blessing

(Spoken by Minister)

M: May he who by his incarnation gathered things earthly and heavenly into one, fill us with such joy that comes with the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life. And the blessing of God Almighty—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—be upon you and remain with you always.

C: Amen.



This blessing embodies the Christmas joy we experience knowing the fulfillment of God's promise of salvation through Christ who dwelt among us.

Ensemble

We Crown You Lord of All

*You are God's glory; his only Son
the brightest morning; the Holy One;
Alpha and Omega, ancient of days;
We cry, "Worthy, worthy is your name";
and I tremble just to think you know my name,
overwhelmed by your presence I proclaim:*

*Glory to the Son of God, who was and is, and now has come;
Glory to the King, who knows no end.
We crown you Lord of all; we crown you Lord of all.*

*Christ is the Lord, oh, praise his name forever!
His pow'r and glory, evermore proclaim!
His pow'r and glory, evermore proclaim!*

*Glory to the Son of God, who was and is, and now has come;
Glory to the King, who knows no end.
We crown you Lord of all; we crown you Lord of all.*

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



We end the service with a modern setting of the message of Handel's Messiah.

Acknowledgments

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PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

For members and friends with noteworthy blessings, difficulties or health issues. Today we especially remember in our prayers and ask God to give strength, comfort and courage to them and their families.

Velta Larson, as she regains her strength

Gerry Ehlers, the brother of Pastor Ehlers, who was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer and is undergoing treatments. The cancer is spreading, and he began intense treatments in May.

Pat Powell, as she recovers from back issues.

For the family of Gus Koutia in Lebanon, as they face a food shortage due to the interruption of imports from Ukraine.

MILITARY

E4 Specialist Alice Henderson, granddaughter of Larry and Faye Kennedy, at San Antonio, TX Ft. Sam Houston Army base in Medical Institute of Surgery Research: Burn Unit.

E6 Specialist Staff Sgt. Austin Seignious, grandson-to-be of Larry and Faye Kennedy, at El Paso, TX Ft. Bliss Army Base.

Major JD Larson,
son of John & Chi Larson,
based at Kirkland AFB in New Mexico.

Sara (Dan) McArdle,
daughter of Martha (Scott) Wofford,
Air Force Pilot, based in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Sgt. Blake Andrew Nelsen,
son of Rick & Karyn Nelsen and
brother of Seri & Lilli, USMC.

Ben Weyer, serving in the military, Currently deployed to the Persian Gulf. Please pray that our Heavenly Father keeps him safe in his journey.



Cross of Glory was planted by the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) in March 1998 so that with the Gospel of Jesus she can strengthen the faith of her members and reach out into the community with the free gift of salvation. First worship services began at Easter 1999; the dedication of our Ministry Center at Easter, 2005. Our synod's name reflects that her founders began in the state of Wisconsin. As a WELS church we still hold to the teachings of the Bible restored in the Reformation era. We are...

- a Christ-preaching church. We preach that Jesus is true God, the Son of God who became man, so that through his perfect life and innocent death, He is the prophesied "Lamb of God" who has taken away the sin of the world.
- a Bible-believing church. We teach that the Bible is the verbally inspired, inerrant Word of God, the only authority for Christian faith and life. We aim to teach God's Word in all its truth and simplicity.
- an evangelical church. We trust the Bible's claim that God saves people through the power of the Gospel in the Word and Sacraments. The Gospel is the Good News (the Evangel) about Jesus' saving work. The WELS has congregations throughout the USA and around the world to share the Evangel, the Bible's primary message, with all people.
- a people-caring church. That we're all sinners equally saved by Jesus' substitutionary work strips away human judgments and egos. This truth also empowers us to live Jesus' love for all people by offering friendship, support, and Biblical counseling. Our church family cares about other people-- including you.

Our Preschool & Elementary School exists to help parents in their God-given duty of teaching the Faith to their children: an important aspect of our Church's plan to grow a comprehensive womb-to tomb ministry that serves souls for eternity.