

Cross of Glory

Lutheran Church & School



Christmas Eve
December 24, 2023

623-224-8839 www.crossofglory.org

10111 W Jomax Road

Peoria, AZ 85383

Sunday 9am Worship

Pastor Paul Mueller

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 an answer to 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 fulfillment 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.

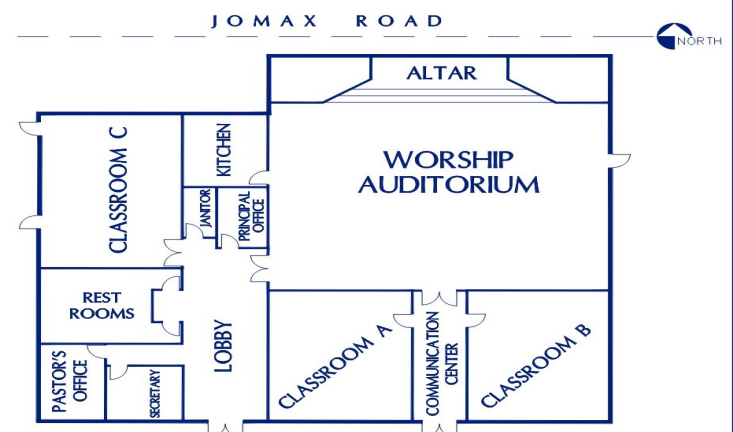
VISITOR INFORMATION

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.
- There is a nursery in Classroom A where children, accompanied by an adult, may be quieted if they become unsettled during the service

The Festival of the Nativity—Christmas Eve Lessons and Carols

A SAVIOR HAS BEEN BORN! “I bring you good news of great joy.... A Savior has been born.” Think of what the angel’s statement means. If you believe you are basically a decent person—not perfect, but good enough—you can still enjoy the carols and appreciate the pretty lights. You can still relish giving presents and gathering with family. But you will not have “great joy” this Christmas. For the angel said that the “good news of great joy” was the fact that “a Savior has been born.” One cannot truly celebrate Christmas unless one believes he needs salvation. Let us then use this night to acknowledge that we aren’t good enough people in God’s eyes. Sin lives in our hearts and permeates our lives. We need to be saved—from the guilt of that sin, from the power of the devil, and from eternal death. So, Jesus came to do just that—save us. So great was his love for us, he left the throne of heaven, crawled into a manger, and would not stop until he reached the cross. Oh, come let us adore him!



Ensemble

Savior of the Nations Come

Word and Music: Public Domain



*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.

Wondrous birth! O wondrous Child of the virgin undefiled,
though by all the world disowned, yet to be in heav’n enthroned!

He will come, he will come, he will come down to rescue us.
Jesus come, Jesus come. Jesus come down to rescue us.

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

Praise to God the Father sing, praise to God the Son, our King,
praise to God the Spirit be ever and eternally.*

This hymn was originally penned by Ambrose of Millan (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. The ancient church often began Christmas services with this hymn. “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)

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.



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.

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

(Spoken in Unison)

**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.**

Hymn: Once in Royal David's City

CWH 343

Soloist 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
God's right hand on high. Then like stars his chil - dren
crowned, all in white, his praise will sound.

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



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.



The hymn begins with the first promise following the fall into sin from the Genesis account. It then describes the fulfillment of this promise with the coming of Jesus. Finally, we look forward to the prophesied second Eden when all things will be restored to perfection.



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.

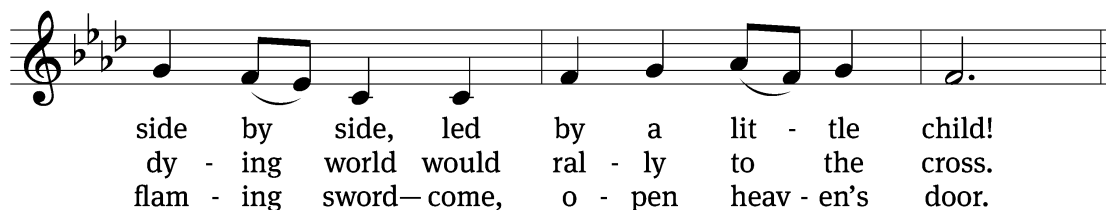
¹⁵And I will put enmity
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will crush your head,
and you will strike his heel."

Hymn: What Hope! An Eden Prophesied

CWH 304

1 What hope! An E - den proph - e - sied where
3 As ban - ner of God's love un - furled, Christ
4 Come, Je - sus, come, Mes - si - ah Lord, lost

tame live with the wild, the lamb and li - on
came to suf - fer loss, that by his death a
Par - a - dise re - store; lead past the an - gel's



Text: Stephen P. Starke, b. 1955 Tune: Repository of Sacred Music, Part Second, Harrisburg, 1813, ed. John Wyeth
Text: © 1998 Stephen P. Starke, admin. Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 711716 Tune: Public domain



God's Promise to Faithful Abraham

Genesis 22:15–18

¹⁵The angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time ¹⁶and said, “I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, ¹⁸and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.”

Hymn: Now Bless the God of Israel

CWH 973

Ensemble sings Vs. 1 and congregation joins for Vs. 2-3

*Now bless the God of Israel, who comes in love and pow'r,
who raises from the royal house deliv'rance in this hour.
Through holy prophets God has sworn to free us from alarm,
to save us from the heavy hand of all who wish us harm.*

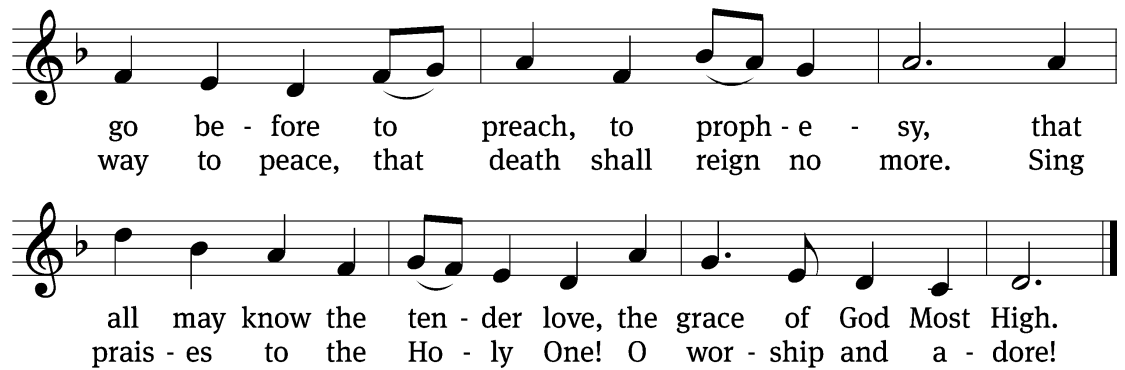
Congregation sings:



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.



This hymn is based on Luke 1:68-79, the song of Zechariah, father of John the Baptist. Zechariah'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.



Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947 Tune: Marty Haugen, b. 1950
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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.



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.



A prophesy from Isaiah
Chapter 40 foretelling
the coming of John the
Baptist, the one who
prepares the way for
the Messiah.

**A voice of one calling: "In the wilderness
prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.**

Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low;

And the glory of the LORD will be revealed." (Isaiah 40: 3-5a)

*Lift up your heads, O gates, and make the highway straight,
prepare to celebrate the coming of the Lord.*

*Your waiting soon will end, God's glory will descend,
rise up and welcome in the coming of the Lord,
the coming of the Lord!*

*Prepare the way for the coming of the Lord!
Prepare the way for the coming of the Lord!
The ancient words foretell, God with us, he will dwell,
Christ, our Emmanuel, and all will see the glory of the Lord!*

*Lift up your heads, O gates, and make the highway straight,
prepare to celebrate the coming of the Lord!*

*Your waiting soon will end, God's glory will descend,
rise up and welcome in the coming of the Lord, the coming of the Lord.*

*Prepare the way for the coming of the Lord!
Prepare the way for the coming of the Lord!*

*The ancient words foretell, God with us, he will dwell,
Christ our Emmanuel, and all will see the glory of the Lord!*

O come, O come Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel.

*And then the deaf will hear, the blind will see him clear,
the mute will find their voice, the lame will leap for joy,
prepare the way of the coming of the Lord!
Prepare the way of the Lord!*

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, our God, will come to us.
Prepare the way for the coming of the Lord.*



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.



This anthem restates the Isaiah Chapter 11 reading: God's perfectly designed plan of salvation.



A Branch from the Stump of Jesse Will Bear Fruit

Isaiah 11:1–9

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.

Duet

A Shoot from Jesse's Stump Shall Spring

Text: © 2019 Stephen M. Fearing
Music: Sussex Carol, public domain.

*A shoot from Jesse's stump shall spring and give us happy songs to sing.
A precious child of flesh and bone for God has heard creation's groan.
Rise! Lift your voice amid the throng. God is our joyful justice song!*

*The spirit of the Lord shall rest with righteousness upon his breast.
He comes with wisdom, pow'r, and might; the fear of God his true delight.
He comes to set the captives free, and release us from enmity.*

*The wolf shall live beside the sheep; the leopard with the goat shall sleep;
the calf befriend the lion wild; all led by but a little child.
Armies shall lay their weapons down, and bow before God's righteous crown.*

*Come see this sign of God's design, a plan born 'fore the birth of time:
to save us from our wretched wrath and lead us on the heav'nward path.
Isaiah prophesied it true- the plan: the promised Savior for you.
The promised Savior for you.*



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.



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.

Hymn: Holy Is Your Name

CWH 956



1 My — soul is filled with joy as I
2 I am low - ly as a child, but I
5 In your love you now full - fill all you



sing to God, my Sav - ior. You have looked up - on your
know from this day for - ward that my name will be re -
prom - ised to your peo - ple. I will praise you, God, my



ser - vant, you have vis - it - ed your peo - ple.
mem - bered, and the world will call me bless - ed.
Sav - ior, ev - er - last - ing is your mer - cy.



And ho - ly is your name through all gen - er -



a - tions! Ev - er - last - ing is your mer - cy to the



peo - ple you have cho - sen, and ho - ly is your name!

Text: anonymous, alt. Tune: Scottish Text and tune: Public domain



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 beloved Christmas account.



Luke Tells of the Birth of Jesus

Luke 2:1-7

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.

Ensemble

What Child is This? (CWH344)

Text: William C. Dix (1837-1898)

Tune: English, 16th cent., public domain



Who is this child born
into such dire circum-
stances? The King of
Kings, the almighty
God, the Savior of the
world.

*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;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!*

*Why lies he in such mean estate where oxen now are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary!*

*So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby;
joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!*

...the babe, the son of Mary!

Christmas Message

Just What We Needed

Luke 2:1-8

Ensemble

The First Noel (Born is the King)

Words and Music : Lacy Hudson and Marc Willerton

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Congregation joins for Vs. 2



This is a reminder that
the helpless babe in a
manger is also true
God. The almighty God
became true man to
stand in our place for
the punishment for our
sin. He was victorious
over sin and now lives
in glory in the eternal
home he's made for us.

*The first noel, earth and heaven embraced,
as a virgin beheld her new born babe.*

*From realms on high to a manger on earth,
salvation had dawned in a lowly birth.*

Refrain: Noel, noel, noel, noel. Born is the King of Israel.

Congregation sing:

The Son of God, in kind - ness he
came as a friend to the hope - less, the
lost, and the lame. Our sins he
bore yet his name we des - pised. And the
hands that brought heal - ing were pierced as he
died. No - el, no - el, no - el, no -
el, Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

*The Author of Life, there lifeless he lay,
as the grave cast its shadow and darkness reigned.
Then out of death broke forth a great light as he rose up in victory,
the glorious Christ. (Refrain)*

*Now let us all with one accord bring praises to our King.
All glory, power, and honor be forever unto him.
Now let us all with one accord bring praises to our King.*



The Angels Bring the Good News to the Shepherds

Luke 2:8-14

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

The Shepherd’s Song

Words and Music by Pepper Choplin (b. 1957)

*While shepherds watched their flocks by night, all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came near and glory shone around.*

*He said, “Fear not for I bring good news, it shall be for all people.
For unto you is born this day a Savior, Christ the Lord.*

*Gloria, gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, gloria in excelsis Deo!
In excelsis Deo!*

*For unto you is born this day, there in Bethlehem,
a Savior, who is Christ the Lord,
and this shall be your sign: this shall be the sign to you:
for you shall find the baby, there, all wrapped in swaddling clothes,
lying in a manger.*

*Gloria, gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, gloria in excelsis Deo!
In excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!*



The angels couldn’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.



The lowly shepherds in the hills outside Bethlehem were the first to hear the Good News of a Savior and the message was gloriously delivered by a legion of angels filling the night sky.

*The angel then was surrounded by a great and glorious throng,
and while the shepherds watched by night, the angels raise their song:*

*Gloria, gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria, gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria, gloria, gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, gloria, gloria in excelsis Deo!*



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.



We rejoice in the mystery that God would love the wretched sinners of the world so much that he sacrificed his only Son.



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.**

Chorus

Come, Behold the Wondrous Mystery (CWH535)

Text: Michael Bleeker, b. 1977; Matt Papa, b. 1983; Matt Boswell, b. 1979

Text: © 2013 The Village Church, used by permission:

*Come, behold the wondrous myst’ry, in the dawning of the King,
he the theme of heaven’s praises, robed in frail humanity.
In our longing, in our darkness, now the light of life has come.
Look to Christ, who condescended, took on flesh to ransom us.*

*Come, behold the wondrous myst’ry, he the perfect Son of Man;
in his living, in his suffering never trace nor stain of sin.
See the true and better Adam, come to save the hellbound man.
Christ the great and sure fulfillment of the law; in him we stand.*

*Come, behold the wondrous myst’ry, slain by death the God of life;
but no grave could e’er restrain him; praise the Lord; he is alive!
What a foretaste of deliv’rance; how unwavering our hope.
Christ in power resurrected as will we be when he comes.*



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.



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

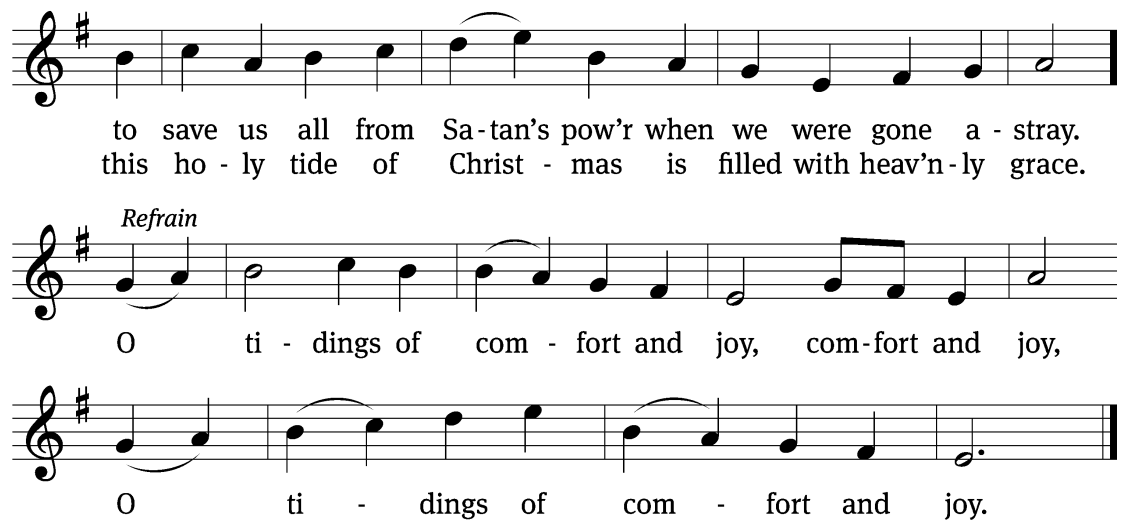
Hymn: God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen

CWH 356

1 God rest you mer - ry, gen - tle - men, let noth - ing you dis - may;
4 Now to the Lord sing prais - es, all you with - in this place,
re - mem - ber Christ, our Sav - ior, was born on Christ - mas Day
and in true love and fel - low - ship each oth - er now em - brace;



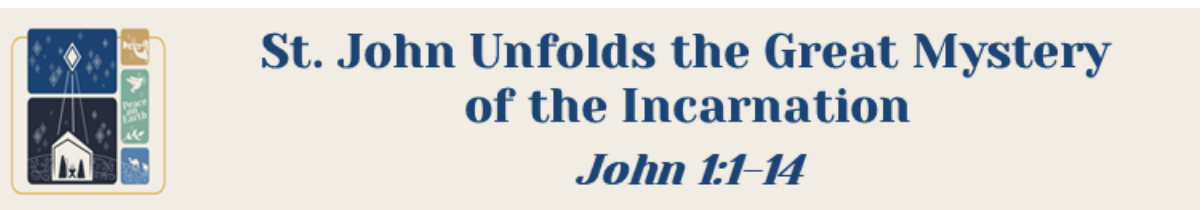
For the shepherds, the Magi, and for all believers, the Good News that the Savior has been born provides immeasurable comfort and joy.



Text: English, 18th cent. Tune: English Text and tune: Public domain



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

Christ Is Born, Nowell!

Words and Music by
Pepper Choplin (b. 1957)

Congregation joins in singing Vs. 3 of Hark the Herald Angels Sing

*Hark! The herald angels sing, angels we have heard on high,
"Glory to the newborn King." sweetly singing o'er the plains,
Hark! The herald angels sing: "Glory to the newborn King."*



This anthem quotes the well known Christmas carols about the angels' songs to the shepherds. Now that Christ is born, all is well.

*Hark! The herald angels sing: "Glory to the newborn King."
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell!
Heaven's angels come to tell, "Christ is born, Nowell!"*

*Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell!
Heaven's angels come to tell, "Christ is born, Nowell!"*

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell!
Joyous news we come to tell, "Now Christ is born! Now all is well!"*

Congregation joins:

**Hail the heav'nborn Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun 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 them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"**

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell!
Heaven's angels come to tell, "Christ is born, Nowell!"*

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell!
Now Christ is born! Sing Nowell!*

Candle Lighting

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.





"Of the Father's Love Begotten" poignantly expresses the eternality of the Son of God and his divinity and co-equality with the Father and the Spirit distilling the message of John Chapter 1. We then sing the beloved carol which was first heard at St. Nicholas Church in Oberndorf, Germany on Christmas Eve, 1818. The anthem reminds of the immeasurable love God has for us.

Choir

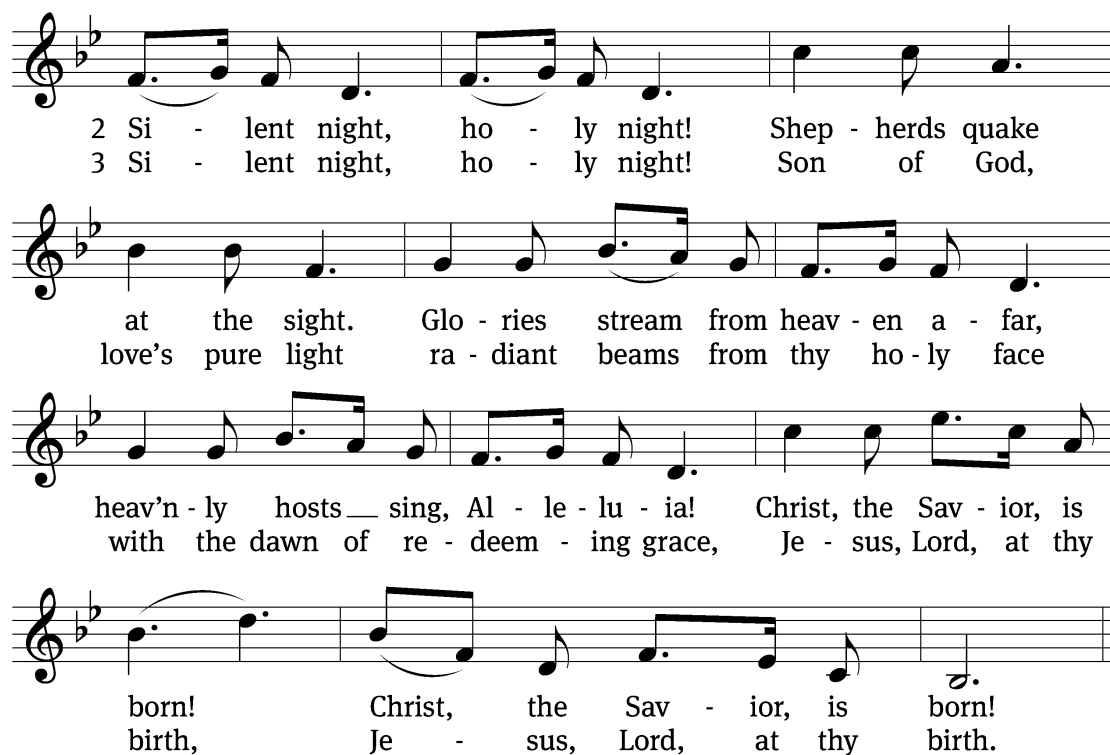
Night of the Father's Love

Words and Music by
Pepper Choplin (b. 1957)

Congregation joins singing Vs. 2-3 of Silent Night

*Of the Father's love begotten, ere the worlds began to be,
he is Alpha and Omega, he the source, the ending, he.
Of the things that are, that have been and the future years shall see,
evermore and evermore.
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.*

Congregation sings:



2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,
at the sight. Glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
love's pure light ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face
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
born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
birth, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.

Sleep in heavenly, peace...evermore and evermore.



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

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 French carol was first named *Cantique de Noël* in 1847 and expresses the joy that God descended to us to erase the stain of sin. The second verse written by a modern hymnist includes the gospel message of the original French lyrics.

*O holy night, the stars are brightly shining,
it is the night of our dear Savior's birth.
Long lay the world, in sin and error pining,
till he appeared, and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.
Fall on your knees! Oh, hear the angel voices.
O night divine, O night when Christ was born.
O night divine, O night, O night divine!*

*Humbly he lay, Creator come as Savior,
born on the floor of a hay-scattered stall.
True Son of God, yet bearing human feature,
he entered earth to reverse Adam's fall.
In towering grace, he laid aside his glory,
and in our place, was sacrificed for sin.
Fall on your knees! O hear the gospel story!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born!
O night divine, O night, O night divine!*

Acknowledgments

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MERRY CHRISTMAS!

From all the faculty and staff at Cross of Glory

Worship Volunteers	December 24	December 25	December 31
Counters	Nancy Murphy/Harry Novak		Judy Sasse/Susie Cornell
Communion			
Church Cleaners	Martins/Pappenfuss/Cape		Coates/Simkauskas
Ushers	9:00am Verl Naber/Joel Ditter 6:00pm Chris Patterson/Isaac Patterson/Titus Patterson/Grant Stern	Pedro Contreras Tanner Plizuweit	Len Collyard/Nick Nickolai/Steve Semmann/Sharon Wilson
Refreshments	Ally Kelly/Sharon Wilson		Mary Berggren/Shannon Gullerud
A/V	9:00am Hailey Ditter/Joel Ditter 6:00pm Titus Patterson/Isaac Patterson	Rene Koutia Gus Koutia	Stacy Cornell/Pedro Contreras

Monthly Newsletter QR Code

Please check your email or use this QR code for the monthly newsletter



Prayer Highlights for members and friends with noteworthy blessings, difficulties or health issues. Today we especially remember in our prayers...

***Diane Lawrence** who recently broke all three of the bones in her left ankle.*

***Norm Voigt**, as he continues treatments*

***Velta Larson**, as she recovers from eye surgery*

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. **Ben Weyer**, serving in the military, at El Paso, TX



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.