

AS WE GATHER

Throughout history, our gracious God has made outlandish promises. His spokesmen, the writers of biblical books, said that a descendant of David would come to sit on an eternal royal throne. More than that, His titles would include some reserved for God in heaven. He was and is a Wonderful Counselor, revealing God's love in His own life and death; the Mighty God, though hidden within fragile flesh and blood; the Everlasting Father, though trapped in time and space; and the Prince of Peace, ruling not by enforcement of divine law but by forgiving all who call to Him for grace and mercy. Today, we celebrate His birth among us in time, as promised long ago and in our hearts each day.

Gathering Song **Once in Royal David's City**

Welcome & Invocation

Pastor Aaron Boerst

Opening Hymn **O Come, All Ye Faithful** **LSB 379**



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, Joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
2 High - est, most ho - ly, Light of Light e - ter - nal,
3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, Sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
4 Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come — ye to Beth - le - hem;
Born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal He comes;
Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
Je - sus, to Thee — be — glo - ry giv'n!



Come and be - hold Him Born the king of an - gels:
Son of the Fa - ther Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
Glo - ry to God — In — the — high - est:
Word of the Fa - ther Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!

Refrain



O come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a - dore Him,



O come, let us a - dore Him, Christ the Lord!

Text and tune: Public domain

Call to Worship **Isaiah 9:2; LSB 361:1**

Pastor: The people who walked in darkness

People: have seen a great light;

Pastor: those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,

People: on them has light shined.

Pastor: O little town of Bethlehem,

People: How still we see thee lie!

Pastor: Above thy deep and dreamless sleep

People: The silent stars go by;

Pastor: Yet in thy dark streets shineth

People: The everlasting light.

Pastor: The hopes and fears of all the years

People: Are met in thee tonight.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Pastor: On the four Sundays in Advent, we light a new candle each week. We mark the four candles with these four words: hope, peace, joy, and love. The circular wreath of evergreen branches reminds us of the eternal nature of our Lord God, and that He gives the promise of eternal life for all who believe, just as a circle is unending, and an evergreen life through winter. The blue colors of the 3 candles remind us of the royalty of Jesus, and how He welcomes us into His Kingdom. The single pink candle reminds us to pause our lives and reorient ourselves to positivity and joy. The center white candle reminds us that Christ is the center of our lives and makes us pure.

Pastor: Jesus Christ is the hope of the nations.

People: We wait for the Lord, and in His Word we hope.

Pastor: Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace.

People: We wait for the Lord, and in His Word we rest.

Pastor: Jesus Christ is the source of all joy.

People: We wait for the Lord, and in His Word we rejoice.

Pastor: Jesus Christ is the Lord of love.

People: We wait for the Lord, and in His Word His love finds us.

Pastor: Jesus Christ is the center of our lives.

People: We wait for the Lord, and in His Word he forgives our sins.

Confession And Forgiveness

Pastor: If we say we have no sin, our hearts are far from the Manger, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us.

People: But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

(Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination)

Pastor: We do not live in those days, when Joseph and Mary had to return to ancestral homes for a census,

People: But we do complain and even question God's care when we must move our hearts to new things.

Pastor: We are not Mary, traveling to Bethlehem as she is about to give birth,

People: But sometimes we lead lives that send us on difficult journeys and place us in stressful situations.

Pastor: We are not responsible for the lack of space at the Bethlehem inn,

People: But we have allowed our Savior to be crowded out of our schedules, budgets, and priorities.

Pastor: Almighty God used Caesar so that our Lord would be born in Bethlehem, and He can use your circumstances to bring about good. In His mercy he has given his Son to die for you and for his sake forgives you all your sins. As a called servant of the Word, I therefore forgive you all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Prayer of the Day

Pastor: Almighty God, source of every good and perfect gift, we give You thanks for all of Your blessings of body and soul. Purify us by Your Word and Spirit that, receiving all You have to give, we may offer our lives in gratitude to You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 62:10–12

("Behold, your salvation comes.")

¹⁰Go through, go through the gates;
prepare the way for the people;
build up, build up the highway;
clear it of stones;
lift up a signal over the peoples.

¹¹Behold, the LORD has proclaimed
to the end of the earth:
Say to the daughter of Zion,
"Behold, your salvation comes;
behold, his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him."

¹²And they shall be called The Holy People,
The Redeemed of the LORD;
and you shall be called Sought Out,
A City Not Forsaken.

Pastor: This is the Word of our Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle Reading

Titus 3:4–7

("He saved us . . . according to His own mercy.")

⁴When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Pastor: This is the Word of our Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation

Go Tell It on the Mountain *LSB 388*

Refrain

Go tell it on the moun - tain, O-ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;

Go tell it on the moun - tain That Je - sus Christ is born!

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp). The first staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of a half note G, followed by a quarter note A, a quarter note B, a quarter note C, a quarter note D, a quarter note E, a quarter note F#, a quarter note G, a quarter note A, a quarter note B, a quarter note C, a quarter note D, a quarter note E, a quarter note F#, a quarter note G. The second staff is identical to the first, but ends with a double bar line.

1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing O'er si-lent flocks by night,
 2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled When lo, a-bove the earth
 3 Down in a lone-ly man-ger The hum-ble Christ was born;

Refrain
 Be - hold, through-out the heav-ens There shone a ho - ly light.
 Rang out the an-gel cho - rus That hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
 And God sent us sal - va - tion That bless - ed Christ-mas morn.

Tune and text: Public domain

Gospel Reading

Luke 2:1-20

(The birth of Jesus is announced to the shepherds.)

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.

⁸And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. ¹⁰And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³And 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!"

¹⁵When 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." ¹⁶And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And 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 the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

Children's Message

Song of the Day

O Little Town of Bethlehem LSB 361



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!
2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, And, gath - ered all a - bove
3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly The won - drous gift is giv'n!
4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, De - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by;
While mor-tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won-d'ring love.
So God im - parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of His heav'n.
Cast out our sin, and en - ter in, Be born in us to - day.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing light.
O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
No ear may hear His com - ing; But in this world of sin,
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad tid - ings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.
And prais - es sing to God the king And peace to all the earth!
Where meek souls will re - ceive Him, still The dear Christ en - ters in.
O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Im - man - u - el!

Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon

The Jesse Tree: Jesus

Pastor Aaron Boerst

Creed – APOSTLE’S CREED

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was
buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He
ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From
thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the
forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life † everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of the Church [Isaiah 9:6]

Pastor: This Christmas Day, we come before our Lord in prayer rejoicing that “for to us a child is born, to us a son is given.” Lord, as we hear the angels’ words, “Fear not,” let us take their admonishment to heart. In the face of fears and anxiety, grant us peace in the Savior born for us. O come, let us adore Him,

People: Christ the Lord!

Pastor: To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given! Lord, during this season of celebration, cheer those who are lonely or mark this season with a painful grief. Give them the true joy that comes from the Savior born for us. O come, let us adore Him,

People: Christ the Lord!

Pastor: To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given! Lord, You chose Mary and Joseph to care for Your Son. Bless all those with whom You have given the vocation of mother or father, grandmother or

grandfather that they care for the children entrusted into their care, sharing with them the Savior born for us. O come, let us adore Him,

People: Christ the Lord!

Pastor: To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given! Lord, continue to watch over those who suffer in body and spirit. Grant them healing and restoration from their afflictions according to Your gracious will. Give them peace in their affliction through the Savior born for us. O come, let us adore Him,

People: Christ the Lord!

Pastor: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

People: Amen.

Pastor: O Lord, Hear us on behalf of those in our congregation and all who stand in need:

Local concerns may be added by congregational elder here.

Pastor: Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Amen.

Sharing the Peace

Offering **God Loves Me Dearly LSB 392**



1 God loves me dear - ly, Grants me sal -
2 I was in slav - 'ry, Sin, death, and
3 He sent forth Je - sus, My dear Re -
4 Je - sus, my Sav - ior, Him - self did
5 Now I will praise You, O Love E -



va - tion, God loves me dear - ly, Loves e - ven me.
dark - ness; God's love was work - ing To make me free.
deem - er, He sent forth Je - sus And set me free.
of - fer; Je - sus, my Sav - ior, Paid all I owed.
ter - nal; Now I will praise You All my life long.



Refrain
There - fore I'll say a - gain: God loves me



dear - ly, God loves me dear - ly, Loves e - ven me.

Tune and text: Public domain

Presentation of Gifts

Pastor: Heavenly Father, You are the giver of all good things, and Your Word makes clear that every good and perfect gift comes from You. We ask that You accept these gifts back unto Yourself and use them to Your glory. [Psalm 145:15, James 1:17]

People: Amen.

Holy Communion

Preface

Pastor: The Lord be with you. [2 Timothy 4:22]

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts. [Colossians 3:1]

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. [Psalm 136]

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

The Words of Our Lord [Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25]

Proclamation of Christ

Pastor: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.
[1 Cor.11:26]

People: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. [Revelation 22:20]

Lord's Prayer [Matthew 6:9–13]

Pastor: Lord Jesus Christ, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

People: 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.

Distribution

What Child Is This

From Heaven Above to Earth I Come LSB 358 1-5



1 "From heav'n a - bove to earth I come To bear good
2 "To you this night is born a child Of Mar - y,
3 "This is the Christ, our God Most High, Who hears your
4 "He will on you the gifts be - stow Pre - pared by



news to ev - 'ry home; Glad tid - ings of great
cho - sen vir - gin mild; This lit - tle child of
sad and bit - ter cry; He will Him - self your
God for all be - low, That in His king - dom,



joy I bring, Where - of I now will say and sing:
low - ly birth Shall be the joy of all the earth.
Sav - ior be From all your sins to set you free.
bright and fair, You may with us His glo - ry share.

5 "These are the signs that you shall mark:
The swaddling clothes and manger dark.
There you will find the infant laid
By whom the heav'ns and earth were made."

Text and tune: Public domain

Benediction [Numbers 6:24-26]

Pastor: The LORD bless you and keep you.

The LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The LORD look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

People: Amen.

Announcements

Sending Song Joy to the World LSB 387



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive her
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their songs em -
3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow Nor thorns in - fest the
4 He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the na - tions



King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare Him
joy, While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
ground; He comes to make His bless - ings
prove The glo - ries of His righ - teous -



room And heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture
plains Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing
flow Far as the curse is found, Far as the curse is
ness And won - ders of His love, And won - ders of His



sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, Far as, far as the curse is found.
love, And won - ders, won - ders of His love.

Text and tune: Public domain