

Music Today

Keri Bash

AS WE GATHER

Today we consider Jesse's tree, that is, his family tree. His son David kept faithful to God, but succeeding generations wandered away, until only a stump remained. From that stump, a Branch would come: our Lord Jesus, who fulfills all ancient promises. Each week, we hear the story of several ancestors of Jesus - Each story showing God's plan of salvation and how He guided humanity to prepare for His coming. The tradition of the Jesse Tree dates back to the Middle Ages, and derives its name from Isaiah 11:1, "Then a shoot will spring from the stump of Jesse, and a Branch from his roots will bear fruit." Jesse is the father of King David, and from the family line of David, our Savior came. Today, come and see YOUR place in God's family tree!

Gathering Song **O Jesus Christ, Thy Manger Is LSB 372**

Welcome & Invocation

Rev. Dr. Neil Rand

Opening Song **Gentle Mary Laid Her Child LSB 374**



1 Gen - tle Mar - y laid her child Low - ly in a man - ger;  
2 An - gels sang a - bout His birth, Wise Men sought and found Him;  
3 Gen - tle Mar - y laid her child Low - ly in a man - ger;



There He lay, the Un - de - filed, To the world a strang - er.  
Heav - en's star shone bright - ly forth Glo - ry all a - round Him.  
He is still the Un - de - filed But no more a strang - er.



Such a babe in such a place, Can He be the Sav - ior?  
Shep - herds saw the won - drous sight, Heard the an - gels sing - ing;  
Son of God of hum - ble birth, Beau - ti - ful the sto - ry;



Ask the saved of all the race Who have found His fa - vor.  
All the plains were lit that night, All the hills were ring - ing.  
Praise His name in all the earth; Hail the King of glo - ry!

Tune and text: Public domain

**Confession and Forgiveness** (Psalm 80:19; Isaiah 61:1)

Pastor: As God's people today, we confess our brokenness and ask to be restored into a right relationship into our Lord's family.

People: **Heavenly Father, we confess that we are bound to sin and cannot free ourselves. Like Adam in the beginning, we have "eaten forbidden fruit" in our thoughts, words, and deeds. We have not produced spiritual fruit in living the new life of faith You have won for us. We have acted as if we are not part of your family. For the sake of Jesus' sacrifice on the tree of the cross, grant us Your mercy.**

Pastor: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us and given to us His only Son to suffer and die for our salvation. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, 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: O almighty God, we come before you today, remembering your ancient words: *A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse. And from His roots a Branch will bear fruit.*

Long before Jesus was born you gave life to a man named Jesse, whose son came Your promised King, David. And from David, you fulfilled your promise of a Savior, your Son Jesus Christ. Dear God, as members of your family today, we thank you that you have a plan for each of us in these last days. Help us to be patient as we wait for Jesus again.

**People: Amen.**

**Reader**

*Judy Baggenstoss*

**First Reading**

*Micah 5: 2-5*

<sup>2</sup> But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,  
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for me  
one who is to be ruler in Israel,  
whose origin is from of old,  
from ancient days.

<sup>3</sup> Therefore he shall give them up until the time  
when she who is in labor has given birth;  
then the rest of his brothers shall return  
to the people of Israel.

<sup>4</sup> And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD,  
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.  
And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great  
to the ends of the earth.

<sup>5</sup> And he shall be their peace.

Reader: This is the Word of our Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**Second Reading**

*Philippians 2: 1-11*

<sup>1</sup> So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, <sup>2</sup> complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. <sup>3</sup> Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. <sup>4</sup> Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. <sup>5</sup> Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup> Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Reader: This is the Word of our Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**Third Reading**

*Luke 2: 1-16*

<sup>1</sup> In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup> This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup> And all went to be registered, each to his own

town. <sup>4</sup>And 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, <sup>5</sup>to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. <sup>6</sup>And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. <sup>7</sup>And 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.

<sup>8</sup>And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. <sup>10</sup>And 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. <sup>11</sup>For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup>And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

<sup>15</sup>When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup>And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.

Pastor: This is the Word of our Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

### Children's Message

#### Song of the Day **Away in a Manger LSB 364**

1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed,  
 2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,  
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask Thee to stay

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down His sweet head.  
 But lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing He makes.  
 Close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.

The stars in the sky \_\_\_\_\_ looked down where He lay,  
 I love Thee, Lord Je - sus! Look down from the sky,  
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in Thy ten - der care,

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.  
 And stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.  
 And take us to heav - en to live with Thee there.

Tune and text: Public domain

### Sermon

#### Angels, Sheep and a Manger

Rev. Dr. Neil Rand

### Creed – Nicene Creed

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one**

**substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father.**

**And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life ☩ of the world to come. Amen.**

### **Prayers of the Church**

**Pastor:** Lord God, as we celebrate our Savior's birth we thank and praise you for coming into the world of our dark sin. But Lord, we continue to ask that you may come into our world once more.

**People:** **O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin, and enter in, Be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!**

**Pastor:** Father, on this day we recall how great is Your infinite love for us, sending Your Son into our world wrapped in our flesh as a tiny child to forgive our sins. Thank You, Lord, for this Christmas gift.

**People:** **Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay  
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,  
And take us to heaven to live with Thee there.**

**Pastor:** Jesus, on this day we recall how great is Your infinite love for us. You gave up heaven to live on earth as one of us, and one with us, to forgive our sin. Thank You, Lord, for this Christmas gift.

**People:** **Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,  
Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled,  
A quiet chamber set apart  
For You to dwell within my heart.**

**Pastor:** Holy Spirit, on this day we recall how great is Your infinite love for us, gathering us together through the waters of Baptism and nourishing our faith through the Word and the body and blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of our sin.

**People:** **Thank You, Lord, for this Christmas gift given, received in faith, and kept unto life eternal.**

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

*Local concerns are 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

#### Where Shepherds Lately Knelt LSB 369



1 Where shep-herds late - ly knelt and kept the an - gel's word,  
2 In that un - like - ly place I find Him as they said:  
3 How should I not have known I - sa - iah would be there,  
4 Can I, will I for - get how Love was born, and burned



I come in half - be - lief, a pil - grim strange - ly stirred;  
Sweet new - born babe, how frail! And in a man - ger bed:  
His proph - e - cies ful - filled? With pound - ing heart I stare:  
Its way in - to my heart— un - asked, un - forced, un - earned,



But there is room and wel - come there for me,  
A still, small voice to cry one day for me,  
A child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me,  
To die, to live, and not a - lone for me,



But there is room and wel - come there for me.  
A still, small voice to cry one day for me.  
A child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me.  
To die, to live, and not a - lone for me?

Tune: © 1986 GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110005858

Text: © 1986 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110005858

#### 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  
play, 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