



**WELCOME TO WORSHIP**

**January 3, 2021**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Christmas**

**Pastor: Paula Geister-Jones    Lay Ministry Administrator: Jenny Hoffman**

**Organist/Pianist: Linda Kunz    Soloist: Kyla Betts**

**Lector: Jenny Hoffman**

**Ushers: Todd Skavlen, Eric Smedal (8:00 a.m.)**

We have a Car Battery Charger in the building. We will give your car a jump after worship if needed.

**Tune your radio to FM 87.9    Technical Support: Thomas Lehr**

Within the gospel reading's profound words lies the simple message that God is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes among us in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of new birth, and the bread and the wine. Through these ordinary gifts we receive the fullness of God's grace and truth.

**CALL TO WORSHIP: Grace Notes Anthem**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the minister begins.*

**P:** Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who was in the beginning, who makes a dwelling place among us, who covers us with justice and mercy.

**C: Amen.**

**P:** Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

**P:** God of goodness and lovingkindness,

**C:** **We confess that we have sinned against you and our neighbors. We have turned away from your invitation to new life. We have turned away from the lowly and downtrodden. In your abundant mercy, forgive us our sins, those we know and those known only to you, for the sake of the one who came to live among us, Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

**P:** Hear the good news of peace and salvation! God forgives us all our sins, not through our own work, but through + Jesus Christ, made known to all people. With all who come to the manger, rejoice in this amazing gift of grace.

**C: Amen.**

**HYMN: "As with Gladness Men of Old" #ELW 302 vss. 1-3**

**Vs. 1: As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold;  
as with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright;  
so, most gracious Lord, may we evermore be led by thee.**

**Vs. 2: As with joyful steps they sped, Savior, to thy lowly bed,  
there to bend the knee before thee, whom heav'n and earth adore;  
so may we with willing feet ever seek thy mercy seat.**

**Vs. 3: As they offered gifts most rare at thy cradle, rude and bare,  
so may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy,  
all our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav'nly king.**

## **GREETING**

**P:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

*Honk your horns to greet one another.*

## **LITANY**

**P:** In the beginning was the Word,

**C: and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

**P:** In the Word was life,

**C: and the life was the light of all people.**

**P:** The Word became flesh and lived among us,

**C: and we have seen his glory, full of grace and truth.**

**HYMN OF PRAISE: “Love Has Come” #292 ELW**

**Love has come—a light in the darkness!**

**Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.**

**See, all heaven has come to proclaim it;**

**hear how their song of joy arises:**

**Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!**

**Love! Love! Glory to God on high.**

**SALUTATION**

**P:** The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

*Honk your horns to greet one another.*

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P:** Let us pray.

**C: Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**ANTHEM: “From a Distant Land” Kyla Betts**

**FIRST READING: Jeremiah 31:7-14**

<sup>7</sup>Oh yes, GOD says so: “Shout for joy at the top of your lungs for Jacob! Announce the good news to the number-one nation! Raise cheers! Sing praises. Say, ‘GOD has saved his people, saved the core of Israel.’” <sup>8</sup>“Watch what comes next: “I’ll bring my people back from the north country And gather them up from the ends of the earth, gather those who’ve gone blind And those who are lame and limping, gather pregnant women, Even the mothers whose birth pangs have started, bring them all back, a huge crowd!” <sup>9</sup>“Watch them come! They’ll come weeping for joy as I take their hands and lead them, Lead them to fresh flowing

brooks, lead them along smooth, uncluttered paths. Yes, it's because I'm Israel's Father and Ephraim's my firstborn son! <sup>10-14</sup> "Hear this, nations! GOD's Message! Broadcast this all over the world! Tell them, 'The One who scattered Israel will gather them together again. From now on he'll keep a careful eye on them, like a shepherd with his flock.' I, GOD, will pay a stiff ransom price for Jacob; I'll free him from the grip of the Babylonian bully. The people will climb up Zion's slopes shouting with joy, their faces beaming because of GOD's bounty—Grain and wine and oil, flocks of sheep, herds of cattle. Their lives will be like a well-watered garden, never again left to dry up. Young women will dance and be happy, young men and old men will join in. I'll convert their weeping into laughter, lavishing comfort, invading their grief with joy. I'll make sure that their priests get three square meals a day and that my people have more than enough.'" GOD's Decree.

**L:** The word of the Lord.

**C:** **Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL CANTICLE: "O Come, All Ye Faithful" Refrain Only**

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

**P:** The Holy Gospel according to John the 1<sup>st</sup> Chapter.

**C:** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

**GOSPEL: John 1:10-18**

He was in the world, the world was there through him, and yet the world didn't even notice. He came to his own people, but they didn't want him. But whoever did want him, who believed he was who he claimed and would do what he said, He made to be their true selves, their child-of-God selves. These are the God-begotten, not blood-begotten, not flesh-begotten, not sex-begotten. <sup>14</sup> The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, Generous inside and out, true from start to finish. <sup>15</sup> John pointed him out and called, "This is the One! The One I told you was coming after me but in fact was ahead of me. He has always been ahead of me, has always had the first word." <sup>16-18</sup> We all live off his generous bounty, gift after gift after gift. We got the basics from Moses, and then this exuberant giving and receiving, This endless knowing and understanding—all this came through Jesus, the Messiah. No one has ever seen God, not so much as

a glimpse. This one-of-a-kind God-Expression, who exists at the very heart of the Father, has made him plain as day.

**P:** The gospel of the Lord.

**C:** Praise to you, O Christ.

## **SERMON**

**HYMN: "The First Noel" #300 ELW Vss. 1-3**

**Vs. 1: The first Noel the angel did say  
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,  
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.**

**Refrain: Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.**

**Vs. 2: They looked up and saw a star  
shining in the east beyond them far;  
and to the earth it gave great light,  
and so it continued both day and night. Refrain**

**Vs 3: And by the light of that same star  
three wise men came from country far;  
to seek for a king was their intent,  
and to follow the star wherever it went. Refrain**

## **APOSTLE'S CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.\* On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,**

**the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,**

**the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

### **PRAYERS OF INTERCESION**

**P:** Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

*Honk your horns three times after each petition.*

**P:** Redeeming God, you gather together your people from the farthest parts of the earth. Protect your church from stumbling. Let it not be overcome by sorrow, division, or despair. Make us radiant with goodness, that we might live always to the praise of your glory. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

**P:** You bring together heaven and earth. All creation testifies to your splendor. Hold the ecosystems of this earth in delicate balance, from coastlands to farmlands, forests to wetlands, deserts to rainforests. Show us new ways to live in harmony with the world around us. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

**P:** You overflow with grace upon grace. Expand the imaginations of those who serve in positions of authority. Open their hearts to the needs of their nations and communities. Protect all those in harm's way and those risking danger for the sake of others. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

**P:** You bring consolation to those who weep. Embrace those who feel far-off, excluded, or defeated. Accompany those living with chronic and invisible illness. Sustain the weak and weary. Refresh those who labor under the weight of pain or sickness (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

**P:** You come to us in the beauty of darkness and of light. Bring justice and reconciliation to communities divided by oppressions and misuse of power. Guide us to speak holy words of advocacy and truth. Help us to honor your image in one another. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

**P:** You turn our mourning into joy. We give thanks for those who have died in faith. With all the saints, give us our inheritance in Christ. In the fullness of time, gather us all together in your mercy. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

**P:** God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all

our prayers to you, in the name of Jesus.

**C: Amen.**

### **THE SHARING OF THE PEACE**

**P:** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

*Honk your horns to greet one another.*

### **OFFERING PRAYER**

**P:** Gracious God, you came to us as one unknown, bringing joy and salvation to the earth. Nourish us at your banquet table, that with all who welcome your birth we may proclaim your peace, reveled in Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**C: Amen**

### **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

#### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**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.**

#### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

**P:** Even as we watch and wait, Christ is here. Come, eat and drink. The body of Christ given for you. The blood of Christ shed for you.

**C: Amen.**

**COMMUNION: "Some Children See Him" by Burt**

#### **COMMUNION BLESSING**

**P:** The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace until life everlasting.

**C: Amen.**

#### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

**P:** Let us pray.

**C: We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us from your very self with the body and blood of Christ. Through this mystery, send us forth to proclaim your promise to a world in need, through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

## **ANOUNCEMENTS**

### **BENEDICTION**

**P: Almighty God who sent the Holy Spirit to Mary, proclaimed joy through the angels, sent the shepherd with good news, and led the magi by a star, Bless you this day through the Word made flesh.**

**C: Amen.**

**P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord!**

**C: Thanks be to God!**

### **SENDING HYMN: "We Three Kings"**

**Vs. 1: We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.**

**Refrain: Oh, star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright;  
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!**

**Vs. 2: Born a king on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown him again;  
king forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign. Refrain**

**Vs. 3: Frankincense to offer have I; incense owns a deity nigh;  
prayer and praising, gladly raising, worshiping God Most High. Refrain**

**Vs. 4: Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom;  
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb. Refrain**

**Vs. 5: Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice;  
heav'n sings alleluia: alleluia the earth replies. Refrain**

## **POSTLUDE**