

Christmas Eve Worship

December 24, 2018 at 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

On a long winter evening we gather to proclaim the coming of the light. Isaiah announces the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. In the familiar account of Christ's birth, the evening sky is bright with the heavenly host singing, "Glory to God in the highest." Amid our broken world we proclaim that the prince of peace is born among us. God comes to us in human flesh—in Christ's body and blood—so that we may be bearers of divine light to all the world.

- Gathering -

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Welcome and Announcements

** Indicates an invitation to stand as you are able*

*Call to Worship

On this holiest of nights on the edge of mysterious badlands, **we come, joining the shepherds who are stunned by wonder.**

On this most silent night carrying our unique hopes for this Christmas, **we come, our dreams joining those of Mary and Joseph.**

On this night of carols and candlelight, **we come with traditions and memories, our glad songs joining the choirs of angels.**

Gathering Hymn – #289 Angels We Have Heard on High

Candle Lighting Litany

There is good news of great joy as the circle of candles on the Advent Wreath is complete. We celebrate the *hope* of Christ that illuminates the darkness.

We light the candle of hope.

We celebrate the *love* of Christ that melts embittered and fearful hearts.

We light the candle of love.

We celebrate the *joy* of Christ that sings a new song into an old world.

We light the candle of joy.

We celebrate the *peace* of Christ that shakes up division with the promise of unity.

We light the candle of peace.

We celebrate Jesus Christ, *light of the world*, bringer of hope, love, joy and peace.

May your light shine through the hope, love, joy and peace we share in the world.

- Word -

God speaks to us in Scripture, reading, preaching and song.

First Reading – Isaiah 9:2–7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness — **on them light has shined.**

You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; **they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.**

For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, **the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.**

For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood, **shall be burned as fuel for the fire.**

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; **and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. **He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.**

*Gospel Acclamation – #282 (V. 1 and 4) It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

Gospel – Luke 2:1-20 (*before reading: Glory to you, O Lord. after: Praise to you, O Christ!*)

Sermon

Hymn of the Day – #300 The First Noel

V. 1 – Altogether, V. 2 – Children and Youth, V. 3 – Women, V. 4 – Men, V. 5 – Altogether

Christmas Prayers of the People

As heaven and earth rejoice, let us pray for the needs of the church and the world. Jesus Christ, born in a stable, be with the poor and homeless tonight. **Let your mercy increase our joy and our generosity.**

Jesus Christ, born of Mary, be with young mothers tonight. **Let us journey with all people who might otherwise journey alone.**

Jesus Christ, visited by shepherds, be with those who have to work this Christmas. **Bless each table where someone is missing.**

Jesus Christ, who became a refugee, be with those who fear for their lives, and those who have left homes and families. **Guide national leaders to work together for the sake of mercy.**

Let us rejoice, once again, at the birth of the child who disrupts the ways of the world with hope, love, joy and peace. **Amen.**

*Sharing the Peace (*Response: And also with you.*)

- Meal -

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Offering

Offertory Hymn – #283 (V. 1) O Come, All Ye Faithful

Offering Prayer, Great Thanksgiving and Holy, Holy, Holy – Page 144

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. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Distribution of Bread and Wine

All who believe in the redeeming power of Christ's love are welcome at the Lord's Table.

You will be directed to a Communion Station where the bread and wine are served by intinction (dipping wafer into wine). Grape juice and gluten-free wafers are offered at the front of the sanctuary nearest the piano. All ages are welcome to commune. If you prefer not to receive Communion, you are welcome to come and receive a blessing.

Lamb of God – Sung to the tune of **#276 Infant Holy, Infant Lowly**

Lamb of God, you take a-way, the sin of the world. (repeat)

Lamb of God, have mer-cy on us. (repeat)

Lamb of God, oh grant us peace. (repeat)

Hymns – #277, #279, #281

*Blessing and Post-Communion Prayer

- Sending -

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

Hymn – #267 Joy to the World

Dismissal

Go in peace. Share the joy of Christ. **Thanks be to God.**

Presiding MinisterPastor Joe Natwick

Preaching MinisterPastor Lisa Lewton

Assisting Minister.....Marcy Decker (3 p.m.) and Abigail Moberg (5 p.m.)

Deacon.....Dan Pender(3 p.m.) and Susan Moberg5 p.m.)

Organist.....Barb Arneson (3 p.m. & 5 p.m.)

ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Dickinson, North Dakota

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Mission Statement: "Living in Service to Christ"