

# Lessons & Carols

Sunday Worship  
Together on-line as a community of Christ  
Big Spring United Lutheran Church with  
Zion Lutheran Church, Newville  
**December 27, 2020**

MOLLY HAGGERTY, Pastor



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

The *congregation*, or participants, *respond* with the lines in *bold type*.

## PRELUDE

### INTRODUCTION

Today we celebrate the Christmas story together through the gospel of Luke. It is a story we are familiar with and yet we may not realize the inspiration this biblical story has had to create our Christmas hymns around it. Today we will sing these hymns together and hear what inspired the lyrics and help us remember the miracle of Christ's light on earth.

It is encouraged that you take time to look up the Bible verses next to the hymns to get an even deeper meaning of the Word becoming flesh; Emmanuel, God with Us.

### INVOCATION

**P** In the name of the ✠ triune God in whose presence we rejoice in,  
the Holy Parent, fulfilling the promise,  
the Holy Child, born as light to the world,  
the Holy Spirit, illumining the way.

**C** Amen.

### OPENING DIALOGUE

**P** In a world of uncertainty,

**C** we seek illumination.

**P** As we give praise for the Christ child,

**C** we sing to the heavens.

**P** Surrounded by fear,

**C** we hold fast to God's promise.

**P** We wait with hope for Christ's return,

**C** for the dawn of peace and justice. Amen.

## A Reading from Luke 2:8-20 (NRSV)

### **The Shepherds and the Angels**

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah,<sup>[a]</sup> the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host,<sup>[b]</sup> praising God and saying,  
<sup>14</sup>“Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”<sup>[c]</sup>

<sup>15</sup>When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Hear ends the reading

## **THE STORY THROUGH HYMNS #1**

### **O Come All Ye Faithful: (Luke 2:8-12)**

The first verse is based on Luke 2:8-20. In this passage, an angel of the Lord appeared to shepherds in a field, proclaiming to them “good news of great joy that will be for all the people” (Lk 2:10). This good news was the birth of “a Savior, who is Christ the Lord;” and this birth occurred in “the city of David,” otherwise known as Bethlehem. This certainly was amazing news and a great cause for joy. It’s important to remember that shepherds were of extremely low social and economic standing, yet it is to them that the angels appeared.

The angels then told the shepherds that there was a sign for them: “A baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger” (Lk 2:12). With great anticipation, the shepherds went to Bethlehem to “see this thing that had happened, which the Lord has made known to us” (Lk 2:15). Indeed, these shepherds were faithful to see what the Lord had done, joyful over the birth of the Savior, and triumphant in the mighty work of God

# O, Come, All Ye Faithful



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O  
 2 The 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!

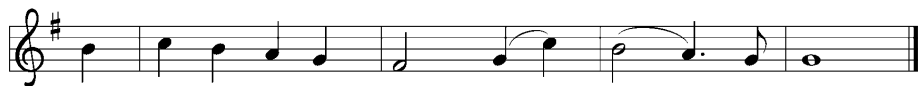


come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:  
 Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!  
 Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:  
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

## Refrain



Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,  
 O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.  
 O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711–1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–1880, sts. 1, 3–4; tr. unknown, st. 2  
 Music: ADESTE FIDELES, attr. John Francis Wade

## **THE STORY THROUGH HYMNS #2**

-Hark the Herald Angels Sing (Luke 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-2)

One of the deepest and richest Christmas carols of all was written by Charles Wesley in 1739 — "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing."

This hymn alone has over 50 biblical references. Charles Wesley and his brother used the hymn as a bible study to help people understand Christ being formed in us and the churches understanding of what that means in our faith lives. For a complete bible reference, please go to the website listed below.

<http://www.joyfulheart.com/christmas/hark-herald-angels-sing.htm>

# Hark! The Herald Angels Sing



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king;  
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,  
3 Hail the heav'n - born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righ - teous - ness!



peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled."  
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.  
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;  
Veiled in flesh the God - head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!  
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with an - gel - ic hosts pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"  
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!  
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.



Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.

Music: MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–1847; arr. William H. Cummings, 1831–1915

## **THE STORY THROUGH HYMNS #3**

**What Child is this:** (Matthew 2:11, Luke 2:11-20)

The narrative of Christ's incarnation, God coming to us in human form, is told in this song: stanza 1 begins with a child sleeping on Mary's lap, a child who is the Word made flesh. God comes to us in the form of a child and the stories told in the sacred scriptures are revealed to us in this.

In stanza 2, this child is called to bear the cross and yet is proclaimed as the King of kings who brings salvation. Our World Belongs to God, paragraph 23 teaches that "God joined our humanity in Jesus Christ—the eternal Word made flesh. He is the long-awaited Messiah, one with us and one with God, fully human and fully divine, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary."

<https://hymnary.org/hymn/LUYH2013/95>



## What Child Is This



1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar - y's lap is sleep - ing?  
2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?  
3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas - ant, king, to own him.



Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?  
Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.  
The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.



This, this is Christ the king, whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;  
Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;  
Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837–1898

Music: GREENSLEEVES, English ballad, 16th cent.

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

**P** God of light and darkness, in this season of short days and long nights, help us remember that you are always with us. Give us strength to work for your kingdom, living in hope as we wait for Christ to come again. In the name of your Son, Jesus,.

**C** Amen.

**P** That you lead us out of grief and into joy of your presence,

**C** O Come, O Come Emmanuel.

**P** That we remember your promises and live into hope,

**C** O Come, O Come Emmanuel

**P** That we work while we hold on to grace,

**C** O Come, O Come Emmanuel

**P** That we rely on faith to seek your justice and truth,

**C** O Come, O Come Emmanuel

**P** We lift our prayers to you, O Lord.

**C** Amen.

**WE CONTINUE WITH  
THE STORY THROUGH HYMNS**

## **THE STORY THROUGH HYMNS #4**

### **Angels we have heard on high (Luke 2:9-15)**

*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased! (Luke 2:14)*

It may be the greatest choral presentation in the history of the world.

One nameless angel had the honor of playing the lead, with a veritable angelic multitude behind him. But no tickets were sold, and the show was not announced ahead of time. You might call it the first ever flash mob, and the audience was simply a flock of unresponsive sheep and a lowly band of unsuspecting shepherds. But it was too good to keep quiet about. All who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them (Luke 2:18). Word got out, and the Gospel of Luke records to the story.

God changes the way we have access to God's love through this incredible Christmas story. The shepherds were the first ones to receive an invitation to the birthday party in the stable. God chose those who were isolated and outcast to be the first to witness a new promise with the world – God comes to us in human form, Christ, who is fully human and fully divine – and changes everything for every single person.

And the angels are the messengers – giving a voice through song to help the simple shepherds understand how incredible God's love is for this world.

<https://theworshipinitiative.com/songs/angels-we-have-heard-on-high/instrument/introduction>

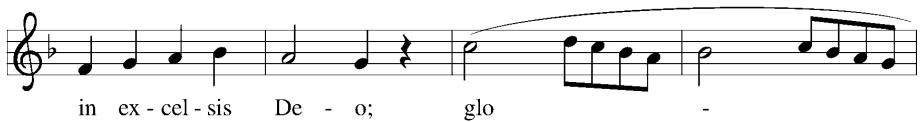
## Angels We Have Heard on High



1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,  
 2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?  
 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;



and the moun-tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.  
 What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?  
 come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.



Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864  
 Music: GLORIA, French carol

## **THE STORY THROUGH HYMNS #5**

### **Joy to the World (Luke 2: 10-11; Psalm 98)**

Joy to the world was written by Isaac Wyatts in 1719. Psalm 98 inspired this song especially verse 4 which reads “Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth, burst into jubilant song with music.”

There is so much to be joyful for as a people of God. God loves us so much that a new promise was born through Christ. When we experience this radical love, we can only respond in joy. The angels sing, the shepherds are in awe and the holy family guides us in a new way of heaven on earth. This joy was felt through the people of Israel as they sang this through Psalm 98. Making music as a way of thanking and praising God for all creation.

<http://www.rayfowler.org/sermons/joy-to-the-world-psalm-98/>

# Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their  
 3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him  
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings  
 na - tions 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: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

Let us say Psalm 98 responsively by whole verse.

Psalm 98 Common English Bible

- <sup>1</sup> Sing to the LORD a new song  
because he has done wonderful things!  
God's own strong hand and own holy arm  
have won the victory!
- <sup>2</sup> **The LORD has made salvation widely known;  
God has revealed righteousness  
in the eyes of all the nations.**
- <sup>3</sup> God has remembered loyal love  
and faithfulness to the house of Israel;  
every corner of the earth has seen our God's salvation.
- <sup>4</sup> **Shout triumphantly to the LORD, all the earth!  
Be happy!  
Rejoice out loud!  
Sing your praises!**
- <sup>5</sup> Sing your praises to the LORD with the lyre—  
with the lyre and the sound of music.
- <sup>6</sup> **With trumpets and a horn blast,  
shout triumphantly before the LORD, the king!**
- <sup>7</sup> Let the sea and everything in it roar;  
the world and all its inhabitants too.
- <sup>8</sup> **Let all the rivers clap their hands;  
let the mountains rejoice out loud altogether**
- <sup>9</sup> before the LORD  
because he is coming to establish justice on the earth!  
God will establish justice in the world rightly;  
God will establish justice among all people fairly.



## **BLESSING**

**P** God, covenant calls you to act,  
Christ, whose love leads you by grace,  
the Holy Spirit, whose wisdom points you toward hope,  
✠ bless and keep you always.

**C** Amen.

## **DISMISSAL**

**P** Go in peace. Sing a joyful noise! See all God's  
goodness!

**C** Thanks be to God. We will!

If you have any prayer needs, please reach out to us on our Facebook page or websites.

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