

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Missionaries: The Rev. Dr. Jonathan and Deaconess Cheryl Naumann

Sunday bulletins, news, puzzles, and sermons are available on our website listed above. Video recordings of our weekly services can be viewed on our You Tube channel, *Christ Lutheran Forest Hills Pa.*

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Christmas

December 25, 2020

TO OUR GUESTS

A special welcome to our visitors – please sign our guest book. If you do not have a regular place to share in the blessing of God, we'd like you to know that there is a special place here for you.

AS WE GATHER

On this most holy day, we gather in quiet anticipation of celebrating the greatest mystery, the anniversary of the moment when the almighty God Himself brought all His promises and predictions together in the birth of the Son of God in human flesh born of the Virgin Mary. It is the “day when grace is dawning.” In our worship and quiet celebration, this same Savior, Jesus, comes among us recalling with us that holy moment of His birth, embracing us, comforting us, and feeding us with His endless life. Let our gladness have no end!

ORDER OF SERVICE

PRELUDE

Prelude on an Irish Carol

George Emlen

RINGING OF THE BELLS/ WELCOME

OPENING HYMN

Joy to the World

Hymnal p.387

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.**

**Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**No more let sins and sorrows grow Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow Far as the curse is found.
Far as the curse is found. Far as, far as the curse is found.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love, And wonders, wonders of His love.**

Text and music: Public Domain

INVOCATION

The sign of the cross (+) may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

P: In the name of the Father and of the (+) Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: For unto us a child is born,

Isaiah 9:6-7

C: unto us a son is given;

P: and the government shall be upon his shoulder,

**C: and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

P: Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end,

C: on the throne of David and over his kingdom,

P: to establish it and to uphold it

**C: with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and
forevermore.**

P: Let us pray.

Almighty God, You have given us Your only-begotten Son to take upon Himself our own nature and be born of a pure virgin. Grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may celebrate the incarnation and birth of Your Son aright, and receive the gift of a Savior who is Christ the Lord; through Jesus Christ, Your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with You, and the Holy Spirit, one God both now and forever.

C: Amen.

(please be seated)

HYMN

Hymnal p. 375 sts. 1,2

Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising

**Come, your hearts and voices raising,
Christ the Lord with gladness praising;
Loudly sing His love amazing,
Worthy folk of Christendom.**

**Christ, from heav'n to us descending
And in love our race befriending;
In our need His help extending,
Saved us from the wily foe.**

OLD TESTAMENT

Isaiah 52:7-10

L: The old Testament reading is from the fifty-second chapter of Isaiah.

God reigns thru the Christ Child.

L: How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the return of the Lord to Zion. Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the Lord has comforted His people; He has redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord has bared His holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Following the reading...

L: This is the Word of our Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

HYMN

Hymnal p. 375 sts. 3,4

**Jacob's star in all its splendor
Beams with comfort sweet and tender,
Forcing Satan to surrender,
Breaking all the pow'rs of hell.
From the bondage that oppressed us,
From sin's fetters that possessed us,
From the grief that sore distressed us,
We, the captives, now are free.**

EPISTLE

Hebrews 1:1-6

L: The epistle is from chapter one of Hebrews.

God reveals Himself in the Babe of Bethlehem.

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom also He created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature, and He upholds the universe by the word of His power. After making purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name He has inherited is more excellent than theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten You"? Or again, "I will be to Him a father, and He shall be to Me a son"? And again, when He brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship Him."

Following the reading...

L: This is the Word of our Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN

Hymnal p.375 sts 5,6

**Oh, the joy beyond expressing
When by faith we grasp this blessing,
And to You we come confessing
That Your love has set us free.**

**Gracious Child, we pray, O hear us,
From your lowly manger cheer us,
Gently lead us and be near us
Till we join your choir above.**

Text: Paul Gerhardt; Public Domain

HOLY GOSPEL *(please rise)*

John 1:1-14

P: The Holy Gospel is according to St. John, chapter one.

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

The Word of God became flesh in Jesus, Mary's child.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Following the reading...

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

THE APOSTLES' CREED²

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.

Now Sing We, Now Rejoice

Now Sing We, Now Rejoice, Now raise to heav'n our voice;
 He from whom joy streameth Poor in a manger lies;
 Not so brightly beameth The sun in yonder skies.

Thou my Savior art! Thou my Savior art!

Now through His Son doth shine the Father's grace divine.

Death was reigning o'er us Through sin and vanity

Till He opened for us A bright eternity.

May we praise Him there! May we praise Him there!

Oh, where shall joy be found? Where but on heav'nly ground?

Where the angels singing With all His saints unite,

Sweetest praises bringing In heav'nly joy and light.

Oh, that we were there! Oh, that we were there!

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SERMON

HYMN

Hymnal p.390

Let Us All with Gladsome Voice

Let us all with gladsome voice Praise the God of heaven,
 Who, to bid our hearts rejoice, His own Son hath given.

We are rich, for He was poor; Is not this a wonder?

Therefore praise God evermore Here on earth and yonder.

Text and music: Public Domain

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P: To save us and make us His children and heirs, our Father in heaven has given His most precious treasure, His Son, to be born of the Blessed Virgin! Let us cast aside all fear, then, and come with confidence to our loving Father's throne, praying in the Spirit for the holy church and all mankind.

For our heartfelt thanks and praise to the Eternal Father of our salvation, as we now bask in the light of Christmas Day, for sending us the promised Deliverer, let us pray to the Lord;

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For the gift of the Holy Spirit, that we may walk in the light, peace and joy of Christmas every day of the year, let us pray to the Lord;

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For those who travel, those who are far from home, those who suffer in body, mind, and spirit, and also ...let us pray to the Lord;

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For the Church throughout the world, that all the baptized, by their faithful witness to the Gospel, bear the joy of the Light and Life of Christ into the darkness and death of this world, let us pray to the Lord;

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For all who wander in the darkness, still unaware of the love of Christ, that the Holy Spirit enlighten their hearts so that they may join us in confessing and praising Him who became the Child of the Blessed Virgin Mary in order to make us all the children of God, let us pray to the Lord;

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For the nations, that all those entrusted with leadership be given grace to serve with wisdom, courage and integrity, and for all who serve in our armed forces that they serve under God's protection with integrity and honor, let us pray to the Lord;

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For those who rejoice with us but upon another shore and in a greater light, that multitude which no man can number whose hope was in the Word made Flesh and with whom in Him we are one forevermore, let us give thanks and praise, asking that we be brought to share in their unending joy, let us pray to the Lord;

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: These prayers and praises we offer in the name of Him who came among us as Mary's child, Jesus Christ the Lord.

C: Amen.

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.

BENEDICTION

P: Let us bless the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

P: 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 His favor and (†) give you His peace.

C: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

Go Tell It on the Mountain

Hymnal p. 388

Refrain: **Go tell it on the mountain, Over the hills and ev'rywhere;**

Go tell it on the mountain That Jesus Christ is born!

**While shepherds kept their watching O'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens There shone a holy light. Refrain**

The shepherds feared and trembled When lo, above the earth

Rang out the angel chorus That hailed our Savior's birth.

Down in a lonely manger The humble Christ was born;

And God sent us salvation That blessed Christmas morn. Refrain

POSTLUDE

I Saw Three Ships

Douglas E. Wagner

Christ Lutheran Church is a member of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.