

Julaften 2023
Kvindherred Kyrkje

***OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE
24 DECEMBER 2023***

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

[* PLEASE STAND IF ABLE]

***GREETING**

P: The grace and peace of our Savior Jesus Christ, Word made flesh,
born of Mary, be with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

CHRISTMAS EVE

~ HOPE FOR THOSE WHO ARE WILLING ~

P: Our Savior's birth is celebrated with bold faith.

C: **May our hearts be willing.**

P: Like Mary, who showed humble surrender:

C: **May our hearts be willing.**

P: Like Joseph, who exhibited unconditional trust:

C: **May our hearts be willing.**

P: Like the shepherds, who displayed awestruck wonder:

C: **May our hearts be willing.**

P: Like the angels, who sang glorious praise:

C: **May our hearts be willing.**

P: For all who are willing to receive the gift of the Savior born in Bethlehem:

C: **Grant that we might have the peace of Christ as we wait, the love of Christ as we act, and the grace of Christ as we speak.**

***LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES**

P: Tonight we light all the candles. The **first candle** is the hope shining for those worn thin by times of waiting. The **second candle** is the hope shining for those worn down with wearied souls. The **third candle** captures the hopeful expectation of those eagerly watching for God's glory in our day. The **fourth candle** is the hope of a new tomorrow shining for those seeking freedom from the wounds of this world. Tonight, we light the **Christ candle**. This candle radiates the hope of Jesus Christ to all who are willing to receive it.

C: **Amen.**

*  **HYMN #283: "O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL"**

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Let us pray.

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C: Amen**

*** ♪ HYMN #838: "BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR"**

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 9:2-7

P: A reading from Isaiah.

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.

P: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 96 (*READ IN UNISON*)

O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth.

Sing to the Lord, bless his name;
tell of his salvation from day to day.

Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous works among all the peoples.

For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;
he is to be revered above all gods.

For all the gods of the peoples are idols,
but the Lord made the heavens.

Honor and majesty are before him;
strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;
bring an offering, and come into his courts.

Worship the Lord in holy splendor;
tremble before him, all the earth.

Say among the nations, "The Lord is king!
The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved.
He will judge the peoples with equity."

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
let the field exult, and everything in it.

Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the Lord;
for he is coming, for he is coming to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with his truth.

SECOND READING: TITUS 2:11-14

P: A reading from Titus

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

P: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

♪ **HYMN #270: "HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING"**

***GOSPEL: LUKE 2:1-20**

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 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: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

**C: "Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"**

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." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

YOUTH SERMON: PASTOR LEAH HOLLOWAY-NILSEN

SERMON: PASTOR LEAH HOLLOWAY-NILSEN

♪ HYMN: “*I AM SO GLAD EACH CHRISTMAS EVE*”

♪ I am so glad each Christmas Eve,
the night of Jesus’ birth!
Then like the sun the star shone forth,
And angels sang on earth.

Jeg er saa glad hver julekveld;
Ti da blev Jesus født,
Da lyste stjernen som en sol,
Og engle sang saa sødt.

The little child in Bethlehem,
he was a king indeed!
For he came down from heav’n above
to help a world in need.

He dwells again in heaven’s realm
the Son of God today;
and still he loves his little ones
and hears them when they pray.

I am so glad each Christmas Eve!
His praises then I sing;
he opens now for ev’ry child
the palace of the king.

When mother trims the Christmas tree
which fills the room with light,
she tells me of the wondrous star
that made the dark world bright.

And so I love each Christmas Eve,
and I love Jesus too;
and that he loves me every day
I know so well is true.



***NICENE CREED**

P: Using the words of the Nicene Creed, let us confess our holy faith:

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate
from the virgin Mary, and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.**

**With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

P: Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors and all the world God loves.

(Each petition ends: P: May it be the prayer of all, C: and may it be answered.)

P: Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace.

C: Amen.

OFFERING

*** ♪ OFFERTORY: HYMN #272: "LO, HOW A ROSE E'ER BLOOMING"**

***GREAT THANKSGIVING**

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

“OF THE FATHER’S LOVE BEGOTTEN” – (FOR TUNE, SEE HYMN #295)

♪ **Of the Father’s love begotten
ere the worlds began to be,
he is Alpha and Omega,
he the source, the ending he,
of the things that are, that have been,
and that future years shall see,
evermore and evermore**

♪ **Oh, that birth forever blessed,
when the virgin, full of grace,
by the Holy Ghost conceiving,
bore the Savior of our race,
and the babe, the world’s redeemer,
first revealed his sacred face,
evermore and evermore.**

P: Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophet’s hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary’s openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread,
And gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks and gave it for all to
drink, saying: This is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for
all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

P: Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

C: Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

P: With this bread and cup we remember your Word

Dwelling among us, full of grace and truth.

We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.

We look with hope for his coming.

C: Come, Lord Jesus.

P: Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us.

Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us.

Awaken your people. Fill us with your light.

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

C: Come, Holy Spirit.

P: All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel,

Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High,

One God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

♪ **This is he whom seers in old time
chanted of with one accord,
whom the voices of the prophets
promised in their faithful word;
now he shines, the long-expected;
let creation praise its Lord
evermore and evermore.**

♪ **Let the heights of heav'n adore him;
angel hosts, his praises sing;
pow'rs, dominions, bow before him
and extol our God and King;
let no tongue on earth be silent,
ev'ry voice in concert ring
evermore and evermore.**

♪ **Christ, to thee, with God the Father,
and, O Holy Ghost, to thee,
hymn and chant and high thanksgiving
and unwearied praises be:
honor, glory, and dominion,
and eternal victory
evermore and evermore! Amen**

***LORD'S PRAYER**

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

**C: 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.**

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

(All who are baptized into Christ Jesus are invited forward to receive Holy Communion. Those not communing may come forward to receive a blessing. Communion will be by tables. Please proceed forward at the direction of the ushers. Gluten free wafers and white grape juice are available during Holy Communion. Please indicate if this is your preference.)

♪ **HYMN #286: "YOUR LITTLE ONES, DEAR LORD"**

♪ **HYMN #289: "ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH"**

♪ **HYMN #279: "O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM"**

♪ **HYMN #276: "INFANT HOLY, INFANT LOWLY"**

♪ **HYMN #296: "WHAT CHILD IS THIS"**

***POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

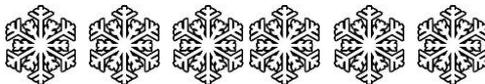
P: Let us pray.

O Lord our God, we give you thanks for the gifts of bread and wine,
the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ.

Send us out into your world to proclaim with joy:

**C: Glory to God in highest heaven, who unto us the Son has given.
Amen.**

* ♪ **HYMN #267: "JOY TO THE WORLD"**



***BENEDICTION**

P: The Maker of all, the Word made flesh, the Giver of life,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen

P: May the Word that Mary and Joseph cradled in their arms enfold you with
love and strength.

C: Amen.

P: May the Word that angels proclaimed in song bring harmony to our world.

C: Amen.

P: May the blessing of almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.

C: Amen.

PLEASE REFER TO THE BACK COVER OF THE BULLETIN FOR OUR CLOSING HYMN.



“I encourage you to look upon the little hands [of baby Jesus] and
remember they will be pierced to save you. See His beautiful brow and
recall how it will be crowned with thorns. Listen to His first cry and
hear that cry echo, 33 years later, upon Calvary’s cross
as He proclaims our salvation is finished.”

Rev. Ken Klaus, speaker emeritus on “The Lutheran Hour”

(Pastor, taking a candle, lights it from the Christ Candle, which symbolizes Christ, the Light of the world. The ushers light their candles from Pastor's candle, then light the candle of each worshiper nearest the aisle. The lighted candle is never tilted, but is always held upright when giving light to another.)

“SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT!”

**1) Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.**

**2) Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!
Alles schläft, einsam wacht
nur das traute, hochheilige Paar.
Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,
schlaf in himmlischer Ruh,
schlaf in himmlischer Ruh.**

**3) Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!**

**4) Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face.
with the dawn of redeeming grace.
Jesus, Lord, at your birth,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth,**

**5) Silent night, holy night!
Wondrous Star, lend thy light!
With the angels let us sing
hallelujah to our King!
Christ, the Savior, is here!
Christ, the Savior, is here!**

(After a brief silence, the candles are extinguished at Pastor's invitation.)

**RINGING OF THE BELL
POSTLUDE**

God, Jul!