

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
508 Bloom Street, Red Bud, Illinois 618/282-2394

Rev. Mark A. Nebel, Senior Pastor *The Nativity of Our Lord December 25, 2020 9 a.m.*

WELCOME TO ST. JOHN'S! God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him may not perish but have eternal life. In our response to this great love of God, we join together to worship our Savior born for us in Bethlehem. We welcome our visitors with us. We pray that this service will add to the joy of your holiday season. Please worship with us again!

WE CELEBRATE HOLY COMMUNION TODAY: In this Supper of our Lord we receive the true body and blood of our Savior Jesus Christ in, with and under the bread and wine for the forgiveness of our sins and the strengthening of our faith. Since this sacrament is also a common confession of our Christian faith, we welcome to the Lord's Table all those who are confirmed members of congregations of our Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. The cups of white non-alcoholic wine in the center of the tray are for those who would prefer this.

THE FESTIVAL ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE: "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

arranged by Kenneth T. Kosche

THE RINGING OF THE BELL announces the birth of our Savior and calls us to holy worship.

THE PROCESSIONAL HYMN: 379 "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

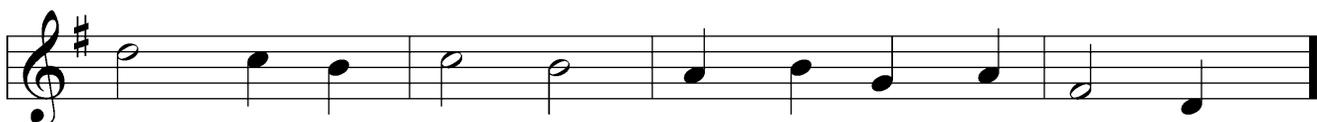
(if you are able, please stand as the cross enters the sanctuary)



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

O come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a - dore Him,

O come, let us a - dore Him, Christ the Lord!

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THE INVOCATION AND CALL TO WORSHIP: Psalm 98

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

P: Sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things;

C: His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for Him.

P: The Lord has made His salvation known

C: and revealed His righteousness to the nations.

P: He has remembered His love and His faithfulness to the house of Israel;

C: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

P: Shout for joy to the Lord all the earth, burst into jubilant song with music;

C: make music to the Lord with the harp, with the harp and the sound of singing,

P: With trumpets and the blast of the ram's horn—shout for joy before the Lord, the King,

C: let the sea resound, and all that is in it, the world and all who live in it.

P: Let the rivers clap their hands, let the mountains sing for joy;

C: let them sing before the Lord, for He comes to judge the earth.

P: He will judge the world in righteousness

C: and the peoples with equity.

ALL: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

THE CHRISTMAS COLLECT:

P: The Lord be with you. **C: And also with you.**

P: Let us pray: O God, through the birth of Your only-begotten Son in human flesh, You offer us freedom from the sin that holds us in bondage. As we celebrate the festival of our Savior's first coming as the Babe of Bethlehem, we look with joy and sure confidence to that day when He will come again in glory and grant to the faithful eternal life;

C: through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (please be seated)

ANTHEM: "Mary's Little Boy Child" (arranged by Ed Lojeski)

Choir

THE OLD TESTAMENT READING: Isaiah 62:10-12

Pass through, pass through the gates! Prepare the way for the people. Build up, build up the highway! Remove the stones. Raise a banner for the nations. The Lord has made proclamation to the ends of the earth: "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'See your Savior comes! See, His reward is with Him, and His recompense accompanies Him.'" They will be called the Holy People, the Redeemed of the Lord; and you will be called Sought After, the City No Longer Deserted.

P: This is the Word of our Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

THE EPISTLE READING: Titus 3:4-7

But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

P: This is the Word of our Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

THE HYMN OF PRAISE: 381 "Let Our Gladness Have No End"



1 Let our glad - ness have no end, al - le - lu - ia!
 2 Proph - e - sies in days of old, al - le - lu - ia!
 3 See, the love - liest bloom - ing rose, al - le - lu - ia!
 4 In - to flesh is made the Word, al - le - lu - ia!



For to earth did Christ de - scend, al - le - lu - ia!
 God has sent Him as fore - told, al - le - lu - ia!
 From the branch of Jes - se grows, al - le - lu - ia!
 He, our ref - uge and our Lord, al - le - lu - ia!

Refrain



On this day God gave us Christ, His Son, to save



us; Christ, His Son, to save us.

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THE GOSPEL READING:

(please stand if able; read from the center of the sanctuary)

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

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

Luke 2:1-20 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the Baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a Son. She wrapped Him in cloths and placed Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.

An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a Baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” Suddenly a great company of the heavenly hosts appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests.” When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.” So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the Baby, who was lying in the manger.

When they had seen Him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

P: This is the Gospel of our Lord. **C: Praise to You, O Christ.**

OUR CHRISTMAS CONFESSON OF FAITH:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God in Jesus Christ. Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life, and that life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, He has made Him known. Amen. *(please be seated)*

SERMON HYMN: 361 “O Little Town of Bethlehem”



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!
 2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, And, gath - ered all a - bove
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly The won - drous gift is giv'n!
 4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, De - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by;
 While mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won - d'ring love.
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of His heav'n.
 Cast out our sin, and en - ter in, Be born in us to - day.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing light.
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
 No ear may hear His com - ing; But in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad tid - ings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.
 And prais - es sing to God the king And peace to all the earth!
 Where meek souls will re - ceive Him, still The dear Christ en - ters in.
 O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Im - man - u - el!

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SERMON: "God's Son Is the One" Hebrews 1:1-4

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,² 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.³ 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,⁴ having become as much superior to angels as the name He has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION: (please stand if you are able)

P: We join together in the confession of our sins.

C: Eternal God, our Creator from old, we confess that we have done wrong in Your sight. We have lived for ourselves. We have ignored the troubles of

others. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have not been faithful in our worship of You. O God, in Your mercy forgive our sins and free us from our selfishness so that we may follow Your will and obey Your commandments. This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord.

P: God shows His love for us, in that while we were yet sinners, Jesus was born in Bethlehem for us. Jesus lived under the law for us. Jesus underwent judgment for us. Jesus died for us. Jesus has risen! As a called and ordained servant of God's Word, I declare to you, in the stead and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, that your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father and of the (+) Son and of the Holy Spirit. **C: Amen.**

THE PREFACE:

P: Oh, may the good Lord be with you. **C: And may the Lord be with you also.**

P: Lift up your hearts to God in praise. **C: To the Lord our hearts we raise.**

P: Let us offer praises true.

C: It is fitting so to do. Gratefully we sing to the Lord, our King!

P: It is truly good, right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, everlasting God, for in the mystery of the Word made flesh You have given us a new revelation of Your glory that, seeing You in the person of Your Son Jesus, we may be drawn to the love of those things which are not seen. Therefore with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and singing:

THE SANCTUS: *(to the tune, "As With Gladness Men of Old")*

**Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho-ly Lord, God of hosts, by all a-dored;
Heav'n and earth can-not con-tain All the glo-ry of Your name!
With the heav'n-ly host we sing High-est prais-es to our King.**

**Hail! Ho-san-na! End-less fame Be to Him who, in God's name
Now draws nigh with us to dwell, Je-sus our Em-man-u-el!
Hail! Ho-san-na! Prais-es be To the Lord e-ter-nal-ly!**

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION:

P: ...The peace of the Lord be with you. **C: And also with you.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER: (to the tune of "Away in a Manger")

**Our Fa-ther in heav-en, all praise to Your name!
Your king-dom among us, Your will done the same
By mor-tals and an-gels, Come, Lord reign a-lone;
Oh, hear us and bless us from heav-en's high throne.**

**The bread that we yearn for pro-vide us each day;
As we for-give others, our sins take a-way;
In times of temp-ta-tion, to lead us be near;
From e-vil de-liver Your child-ren most dear.**

**For Yours is the king-dom; o'er all things You reign.
And Yours is the pow-er; all things You main-tain.
To You be the glo-ry, re-sound-ing a-gain
From all of cre-a-tion, for-ev-er! A-men.**

THE DISTRIBUTION: (please be seated)

Anthem: "Bring a Torch, Jeannette" (arr. by Shaw and Parker) *Choir*
368 "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.

Refrain



Glo - - - - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - -

374 "Gentle Mary Laid Her Child"



1 Gen - tle Mar - y laid her child Low - ly in a man - ger;
 2 An - gels sang a - bout His birth, Wise Men sought and found Him;
 3 Gen - tle Mar - y laid her child Low - ly in a man - ger;



There He lay, the Un - de - filed, To the world a strang - er.
 Heav - en's star shone bright - ly forth Glo - ry all a - round Him.
 He is still the Un - de - filed But no more a strang - er.



Such a babe in such a place, Can He be the Sav - ior?
 Shep - herds saw the won - drous sight, Heard the an - gels sing - ing;
 Son of God of hum - ble birth, Beau - ti - ful the sto - ry;



Ask the saved of all the race Who have found His fa - vor.
 All the plains were lit that night, All the hills were ring - ing.
 Praise His name in all the earth; Hail the King of glo - ry!

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388 "Go Tell It on the Mountain"

Refrain

Go tell it on the moun - tain, O - ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;



Go tell it on the moun - tain That Je - sus Christ is born!



1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing O'er si-lent flocks by night,
 2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled When lo, a - bove the earth
 3 Down in a lone - ly man - ger The hum-ble Christ was born;



Be - hold, through - out the heav - ens There shone a ho - ly light.
 Rang out the an - gel cho - rus That hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
 And God sent us sal - va - tion That bless - ed Christ - mas morn.

THE THANKSGIVING: *(please stand if able)*

(tune: "From Heaven Above to Earth I Come")

**Now lettest Thou Thy guest depart With full assurance in his heart.
 For such communion, Lord, with Thee A new life may my off'ring be.**

**When Thou shall in Thy glory come to gather all Thy people home,
 Then let me, as Thy heav'nly guest, In anthems praise Thee with the blest.**

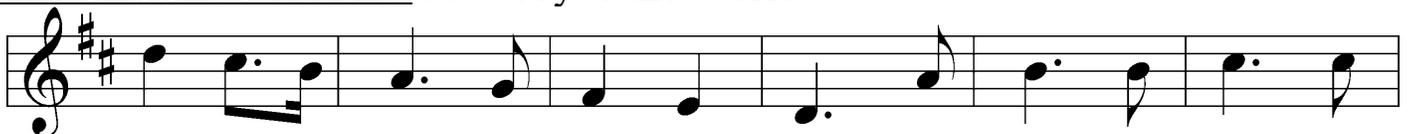
THE BENEDICTION:

P: Christ is born! Glory to God in the highest! **C: Amen. Joy to the world!**

P: May the peace and joy of Christ's birth be yours to spread the good news of His salvation now and forevermore. **C: Amen. Joy to the world!**

P: The grace of the almighty God—the Father, the (+) Son, and the Holy Spirit, be with you all. **C: Amen. Joy to the world!**

THE CLOSING HYMN: 387 "Joy to the World"



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive her
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their songs em -
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow Nor thorns in - fest the
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the na - tions



King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare Him
 ploy, While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
 ground; He comes to make His bless - ings
 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.

POSTLUDE: "Let Our Gladness Have No End" arr. by Theodore Beck

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SERVING US IN WORSHIP TODAY

Preacher/Liturgist: Pastor Mark Nebel

Organist and Choir Director: Mrs. Lindsey Hudak

Acolyte: Christine Liefer

REMAINING SPECIAL HOLIDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

Tuesday, December 31, 6 p.m., New Year's Eve Holy Communion

Wednesday, January 1, 2021, 10 a.m. New Year's Day Matins Service

OFFERING envelopes for 2021 are on the table in the Fellowship Hall!

PORTALS OF PRAYER for the first quarter of 2021 are available in the entryway.

A BLESSED AND MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU!

From Pastor Mark and Cindy Nebel and their family

God's Great Gift of Love

A mansion or palace would be a more appropriate place
for God's Son to be laid on a soft pillow adorned with lace.

The story unfolds with love so great and a manger so crude
when God the Father gave up His Son Jesus for me and for you.
Through His Holy Spirit's power, a virgin conceived and gave birth
to Jesus who left heaven for a servant's life here on earth.

He came to suffer and die and showed us His great compassion
when He paid our sin-debt with his blood for all our transgressions.
Our hearts glow with the angel's news, "Christ is born for you this day!"

"Glory to God in the highest!" the angels praise and say.

Come, join the angels, the shepherds and the heavenly throng
in worshipping our Savior and praising Him in song.

"Believe that Jesus is Lord and Savior," the message for your life.

"Share your blessings with the poor and forgive in every strife."

May God's holy peace be yours through Jesus, His beloved Son.

Praise God for His great Gift of love, for heaven has been won!

By Joan Voges, 2008