

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
508 Bloom Street, Red Bud, Illinois

Rev. Mark Nebel, Senior Pastor; Rev. Brian Nowak, Associate Pastor

The Nativity of Our Lord

December 25, 2021

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 the public common confession of our Christian faith, we welcome to the Lord's Table all those who are confirmed members of congregations of our church body, The 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" *arr. 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"

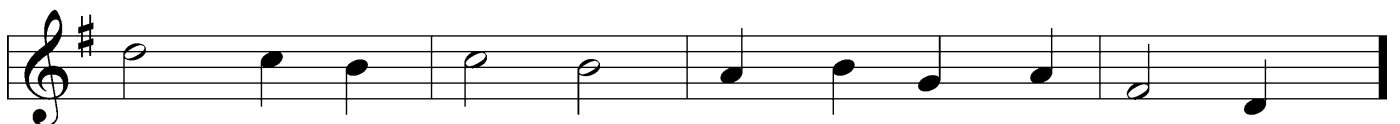
(if you are able, please stand as the cross enters the sanctuary)



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!**

THE INVOCATION AND CALL TO WORSHIP: Psalm 98

Pastor: 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: "Do You Hear What I Hear?" (arr. by H. Simeone) *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 JOY: 386 “Now Sing We, Now Rejoice”



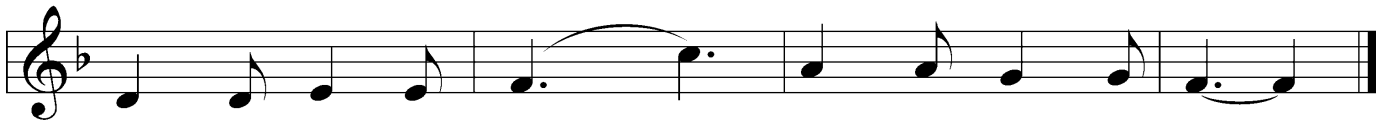
1 Now sing we, now re - joice, Now raise to heav'n our voice;
 2 Come from on high to me; I can - not rise to Thee.
 3 Now through His Son doth shine The Fa - ther's grace di - vine.
 4 Oh, where shall joy be found? Where but on heav'n - ly ground?



He from whom joy stream - eth Poor in a man - ger lies;
 Cheer my wea - ried spir - it, O pure and ho - ly Child;
 Death was reign - ing o'er us Through sin and van - i - ty
 Where the an - gels sing - ing With all His saints u - nite,



Not so bright - ly beam - eth The sun in yon - der skies.
 Through Thy grace and mer - it, Blest Je - sus, Lord most mild,
 Till He o - pened for us A bright e - ter - ni - ty.
 Sweet - est prais - es bring - ing In heav'n - ly joy and light.



Thou my Sav - ior art! Thou my Sav - ior art!
 Draw me un - to Thee! Draw me un - to Thee!
 May we praise Him there! May we praise Him there!
 Oh, that we were there! Oh, that we were there!

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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 CONFESSION 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: "Salvation By Means of a Government Mandate" Luke 2:1

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 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: "Away In a Manger" (arranged by Ralph Schultz) *Choir*

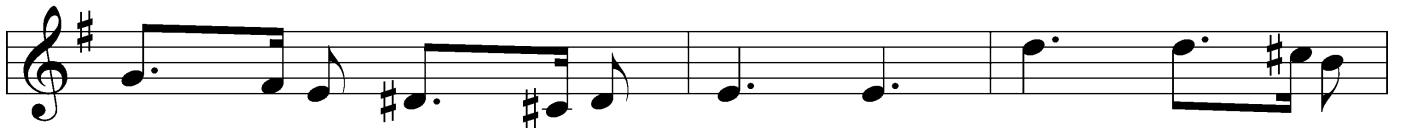
370 "What Child Is This"



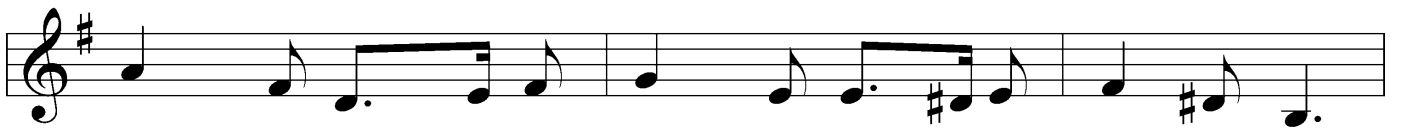
1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mar - y's lap is
2 Why lies He in such mean es-tate Where ox and ass are
3 So bring Him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; Come, peas - ant, king, to



sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet While
feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here The
own Him. The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; Let



shep - herds watch are keep - ing? This, this is
si - lent Word is plead - ing. Nails, spear shall
lov - ing hearts en - throne Him. Raise, raise the



Christ the king, Whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
pierce Him through, The cross be borne for me, for you;
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!

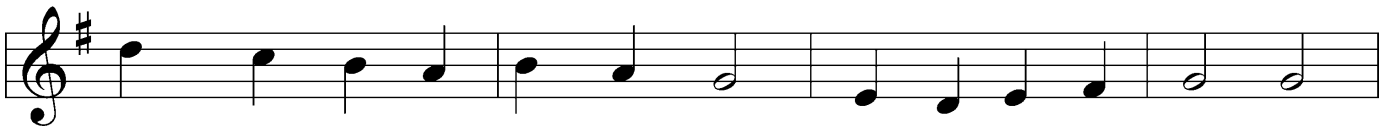
374 "Gentle Mary Laid Her Child"



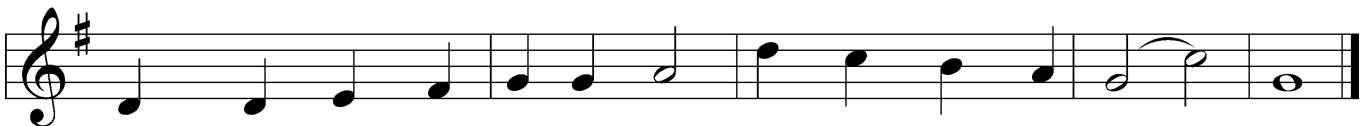
1 Gen - tle Mar - y laid her child Low - ly in a man - ger;
 2 An - gels sang a - bout His birth, Wise Men sought and found Him;
 3 Gen - tle Mar - y laid her child Low - ly in a man - ger;



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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380 "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"



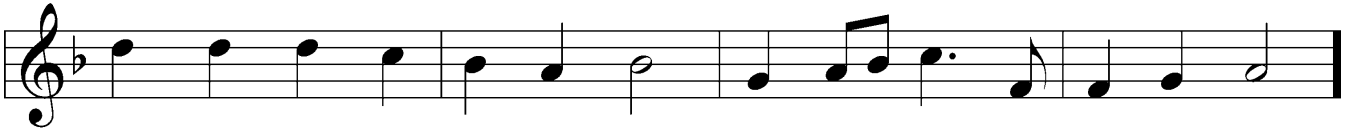
1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King;
 2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
 3 Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righ - teous - ness!



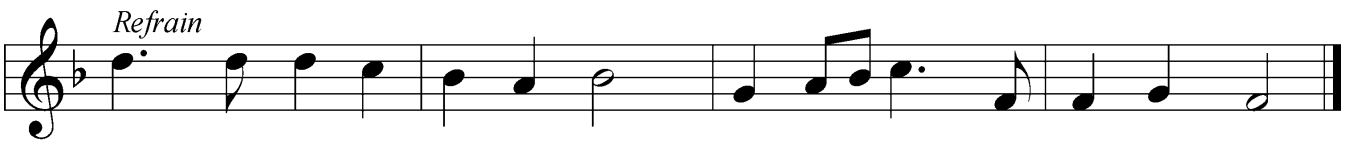
Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
 Late in time be - hold Him come, Off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
 Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with heal - ing in His wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God - head see, Hail the in - car - nate De - i - ty!
 Mild He lays His glo - ry by, Born that man no more may die,



With the an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Je - sus, our Im - man - u - el!
 Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec - ond birth.



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

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392 "God Loves Me Dearly"



1 God loves me dear - ly, Grants me sal -
 2 I was in slav - 'ry, Sin, death, and
 3 He sent forth Je - sus, My dear Re -
 4 Je - sus, my Sav - ior, Him - self did
 5 Now I will praise You, O Love E -



va - tion, God loves me dear - ly, Loves e - ven me.
 dark - ness; God's love was work - ing To make me free.
 deem - er, He sent forth Je - sus And set me free.
 of - fer; Je - sus, my Sav - ior, Paid all I owed.
 ter - nal; Now I will praise You All my life long.

Refrain: There - fore I'll say a - gain: God loves me dear - ly, God love me dear - ly, Loves e - ven me.

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!

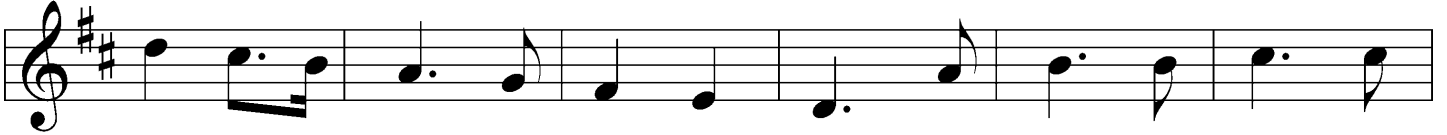
C: Amen. Joy to the world!

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: "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

arranged by Kevin Hildebrand

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SERVING US IN WORSHIP TODAY

Preacher/Celebrant: Pastor Mark Nebel

Organist and Choir Director: Mrs. Lindsey Hudak

Acolyte: Mr. Bill Becker Crucifer: Mr. Bryce Becker

REMAINING SPECIAL HOLIDAY WORSHIP SERVICESSunday, Dec. 26, **9 a.m.** First Sunday After Christmas (only one service; no Sunday School)

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

Saturday, January 1, 2022, 5 p.m. and Sunday, January 2, 2022, 8 and 10:30 a.m. 2nd Sunday After Christmas (regular weekend schedule)

Thursday, January 6, 3 p.m. Epiphany Afternoon Holy Communion

Addition to poinsettia list: *In loving memory of Ralph Born, Evan Rushing, Patricia Selix and Rich Candler as a gift from Joe, Staci, Riley and Olivia Candler. Thank you!*

PLEASE place your offering for this service in the plates in the entryway.

OFFERING envelopes for 2022 are on the table in the Fellowship Hall!

PORTALS OF PRAYER for the first quarter of 2022 are available in the entryway.

A BLESSED AND MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU!*From Pastor Mark and Cindy Nebel and their family**From Pastor Brian and Heather Nowak 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