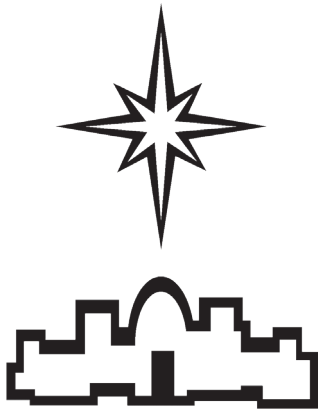


Christmas Eve

December 24, 2024

Nativity of Our Lord (Year C)

On this holy night we hear the familiar story of Jesus’ birth in a stable filled with animals. Into a dark and lonely world the Christ-child came — not into a sterile maternity ward, but into the messiness of human life, to look at each of us face to face so that we might know the power of his forgiveness and mercy in our lives. God revealed the nativity news to some shepherds who then came to worship him.



THIS WEEK’S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Lesson: Isaiah 9:2-7 **For Unto Us a Child is Born**

With the arrival of the Messiah of Israel, a new reality has come into being. The prophet Isaiah foretold what that new reality would look like: those in darkness shall walk in the light, the nations will rejoice, the yoke of Israel’s oppressors shall be broken, and the Messiah will reign in peace.

Psalm 96 **Great is the Lord**

The salvation of the Lord is so glorious that the psalmist encouraged the people to sing to the Lord a new song telling of his wonders. He is great and deserving of praise, he is to be feared above all because he is the creator of the heavens and the earth. There is none like him; he judges the earth with equity and cannot be moved.

Second Lesson: Titus 2:11-14 **God’s Grace Has Appeared**

Paul explained that through Christ, God’s grace has appeared to all people, bringing salvation to the world. Because of his grace, we are called to act in ways that show that grace to others. No longer are we to live according to worldly passions; instead, we are to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives for the sake of Jesus.

Luke 2:1-14 (15-20) **Joseph and Mary Travel to Bethlehem**

Even though Mary’s time to deliver her child was very near, she and Joseph had to report to Bethlehem to register for the census. While the couple was in the city of David, Mary gave birth to her firstborn son, Jesus. Some shepherds received the news via angels, and they went to visit the newborn king where he lay in a manger.

Suggestions for the Day:

- Liturgical Color: White
- Consider using the Christmas Eve Family Service Script for worship on this holy night. You can find it on the Christmas Seasonal page of SOWeR. It combines lessons, carols, and sermon reflections based on the two birth narratives from Matthew and Luke.
- Have a family light the Christ candle as the congregation sings “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.” You can find a “Lighting of the Christ Candle” dialogue on the Christmas Seasonal page. Simply copy and paste into the bulletin.
- After Holy Communion, segue into the “Service of Light.” You can find this on the Christmas Seasonal page of SOWeR.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
A Birth, It Is a Glorious Thing	---	---	---	---	---	web
All My Heart This Night Rejoices	46	---	118	273	118	118
Angels from the Realms of Glory	50	---	367	275	126	126
O Little Town of Bethlehem	41	---	361	279	115	115
The First Noel	56	---	---	300	121	121
It Came Upon a Midnight Clear	54	---	366	282	---	---
Away in a Manger (alt. tune WOV)	67	---	64	227	110	110
Silent Night	65	---	363	281	107	107
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing	60	---	380	270	106	106
O Come, All Ye Faithful	45	---	395	308	129	129

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOV= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at “Hymns and Music.”

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

- Praise Song Titles:**
- Manger Throne (CCLI #7226106)
 - It’s Christmas (CCLI #7050425)
 - Sing We the Song of Emmanuel (CCLI #7078042)
 - Mary, Did You Know? (CCLI #839225)
 - O Come, All You Unfaithful (CCLI #7160115)

The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.