



“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a Baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” *Luke 2:11-12*

Ascension Lutheran Church
Christmas Eve ~ December 24, 2021

CHRISTMAS EVE 2021

Theme: “From Start to Finish”

AS WE GATHER: God’s love was promised and fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. Despite ongoing sin and sinfulness by His human creatures, God loved us so much that our Lord was born as one of us so that He could die for us. When He appeared on the scene of human history, it marked the start of His fulfilling the very promises He had made centuries before. But His love was not finished for us until He was born in our hearts. That took the gracious gift of faith by which we receive His great love and are enabled to share it with others. We now celebrate the start of Christ’s love at His birth in Bethlehem and His finishing it as He is born anew in our hearts in time and into eternity.

(**P** = Pastor, **C** = Congregation, **A** = Reader/Assisting)

✠ PREPARATION ✠

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

(The true beginning of our church service. Music helps draw us into an attitude of prayer and praise. Be mindful of others in preparation for worship. Quietly consider your encounter with the living God.)

“Lo, How A Rose E’er Blooming”

“Personent Hodie”

Barbara Greco, cellist

“One Small Child”

D. Meece, arr. L. Larson

Bonnie Webber & Brad Hall, duo

“Tidings Of Joy!”

Arr. Lloyd Larson

Ascension Choir

WELCOME

HYMN

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels,
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him!
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation!
Sing all ye citizens of Heaven above!
Glory to God, In the highest!
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him!
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

INVOCATION

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

OPENING SCRIPTURE *John 1:1, 4–5, 14*

- P** In the beginning was the Word,
C **and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**
- P** In Him was life,
C **and the life was the light of men.**
- P** The light shines in the darkness,
C **and the darkness has not overcome it.**
- P** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory,
C **glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

1 John 4:9, 12b

P Brothers and sisters, although “God abides in us and His love is perfected in us,” we sin every day and need the assurance of His forgiveness. Let us go to God, seeking His power to amend our sinful lives. Lord Jesus, the love of God made manifest among us,

C **we have not loved You with our whole heart, nor have we loved our neighbors as ourselves. Without Your help we cannot change. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

O God, with joy we remember the time when Your love was made visible in the birth of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Strengthen our faith as He finishes His journey to rule our hearts and minds as Savior and Lord today and always; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

(Please be seated.)

MUSIC

Karlee Wood, trumpet

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 7:14; 9:2; 6 (ESV)

¹⁴ Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel,” [which means, God with us.]² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. ⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

MUSIC

“A Baby Changes Everything”

T. Nichols/C. & K.K. Wiseman

Carlyn Staudt, soloist

SCRIPTURE

Luke 2:1–20 (ESV)

¹ In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶ And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

MUSIC

“The Virgin’s Slumber Song” (Mariä Wiegenlied)

Music by Max Reger

Barbara Greco, soloist

⁸ And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰ And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

The Babe the Son of Mary.
So bring Him incense gold and myrrh,
Come peasant, king, to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings,
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise the song on high,
The virgin sings her lullaby,
Joy, joy, for Christ is born,
The Babe the Son of Mary.

SERMON “ALL HEAVEN BROKE LOOSE” **Luke 2:1-20**
Pastor Jim Sprengle

TITHES AND OFFERINGS

(Our offerings are made as an act of worship, given in loving response to all that God has graciously given us, both materially and spiritually.)

“O Holy Night”
Karon Keup, soloist

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P God entered human history in the person of Jesus, who experienced all our joys and sorrows. He has promised that our heavenly Father will hear whatever we ask in His name. Let us bring our requests to Him in confident faith.

Wonderful Counselor, we pray that You will give empathy, wisdom, and compassion to all who meet the needs of the people around them, providing food, clothing, and shelter, tending to the sick and injured, and responding to human crises and natural disasters. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Mighty God, whose Word created all things in heaven and on earth, please bless and care for all those impacted by storms and natural disasters, granting them a peace that comes from Your presence and the support and care of those around them. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

- P** Everlasting Father, You promise to never leave us or forsake us. Be with those suffering from illness, loneliness, loss, and trials, especially...[silence to name people in our hearts].
Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Prince of Peace, without You there is no peace. Use us to be Your instruments of peace in a troubled world. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Into Your hands, heavenly Father, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy for the sake of Him whose birth we celebrate this day, Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- C** **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

- 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.**

MUSIC

“Christmas Sanctus”

Words by Susan Naus Dengler/Music by Lee Dengler
Ascension Choir

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

(The choir will exit the chancel. Their candles will be lit first. They will then share with everyone in the pews. Always keep lit candles in the upright position to keep wax from spilling. The unlit candle is tipped to be lit.)

P As the light of these candles illumine our faces, it symbolizes the light of Christ, a child in the manger at Bethlehem, a Savior suffering our death on the cross, and soon to come from His throne on high as Judge of all. He is our Light here on earth and the eternal Light who enlightens heaven, where there is no need of candle or sun. Rejoice, for the Light of the world has come, who transforms us with the brightness of His glory.

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

(Vs. 1 Morgan Berg, solo)

*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.*

(All)

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!

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light.
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace.
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth;
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

PRAYER

P Loving God, in the darkest of times, when all seems lost, You pierce the darkness with Light. Never again shall we be alone. No more shall we sit in fear. For Christ, the Light of the World and of our lives, is born. Let us celebrate again this miracle, this wonder that You became one with us.

C **Amen.**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Scripture taken from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Capitalization of pronouns referring to the Deity has been added and is not part of the original English Standard Version text.

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We invite you to start your Christmas with worship.

Join us tomorrow morning at 10:00am

Ascension Lutheran Church

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Church: 503-665-8821 ♦ Childcare Center: 503-667-6750

Web Site: www.alcportland.org

Church Office Hours: Monday–Friday 9am to 3pm

Our Mission Statement:

~Go and Share Jesus Christ~

Our Vision Statement:

“Take part...Join Jesus on His mission”

The members of Ascension Lutheran Church are committed to being God’s witnesses in Gresham, and in all of Portland and the Northwest, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8):

With the universal Christian Church, we believe, teach and respond to the love of the Triune God— the Father, Creator of all that exists; the Son Jesus Christ, Who left His home in Heaven to become flesh and blood, to suffer and die for the sins of all peoples of the world, and Who rose from the grave, victorious over sin, death and the devil, that we too might live with Him in Heaven; and the Holy Spirit, Who creates faith in our hearts in Christ Jesus through God’s Word and Sacrament. The three Persons of the Holy Trinity are one God, co-equal and co-eternal. The core teachings of our faith from the Lutheran perspective can be summarized in three short phrases: Grace alone, Scripture alone, Faith alone.

STAFF

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