

*"The  
Light  
Shines  
in the  
darkness"*

*Luke 2:5a*



ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH  
December 25, 2021 ~ Christmas Day

# CHRISTMAS DAY, THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

December 25, 2021

**Welcome** to all who are attending our service today. We are glad you are with us! To all guests and visitors, we especially extend our hands of friendship. May God bless the worship time for each one of you. Please come again!

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

## ✠ PREPARATION ✠

### “Lighting the Way”

**AS WE GATHER:** The Gospel reading appointed for this most holy day is God’s revelation to all people of a Savior born into darkness and sin. Trouble is constantly surrounding us, and the darkness is pressing in with little hope of overcoming it. Yet, 2000 years ago, a little baby entered into humanity to give us hope that all is not lost. In fact, we are more than saved by His work, we are victorious!

## PRELUDE

“A Child Is Born”  
Marty Parks  
Peggy and Heather Hall, duo

## WELCOME

### CAROL

### “The First Noel”

The First Noel, the Angels did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep  
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel!

They looked up and saw a star  
Shining in the East beyond them far  
And to the earth it gave great light  
And so it continued both day and night.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel!

Then entered in those Wise men three  
Full reverently upon their knee  
And offered there in His presence  
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel!

Then let us all with one accord  
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord  
That hath made Heaven and earth of nought  
And with His blood mankind has bought.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel!

### INVOCATION

*(The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.)*

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

**C** Amen.

### OPENING SCRIPTURE

**P** The people who walked in darkness  
**C** have seen a great light!

**P** For behold, I bring you good news of great joy!

**C** **Unto us is born this day a Savior!**

**P** He is Christ, the Lord!

**C** **Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace!**

**CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION** *Psalm 124:8; 130:3, adapt.;*  
*Luke 18:13*

**P** Our help is in the name of the LORD,

**C** **who made heaven and earth.**

**P** If You, O LORD, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

**C** **But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.**

**P** Since we are gathered this Christmas morning to hear God's Word, to marvel at the mystery of the Word becoming flesh, and to receive Him as He comes to us in His body and blood, let us first consider our unworthiness before God and confess before Him and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed. We cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition; only God's Son, Jesus Christ, has set us free from our fears and failures, our sin and death, and He enables us to live forever as God's children. Let us then take refuge in the infinite mercy of our God and, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, say: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

**C** **Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

**P** Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son, born into this world on Christmas, to live, suffer, die, and rise again for you. For Jesus' sake, your heavenly Father forgives you all your sins. As your pastor, it is my privilege to announce this message of grace unto you and, as Christ has commanded, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** **Amen.**

## CHRISTMAS LITANY

**P** Today we celebrate Christ's birth in Bethlehem.

**C** **Today we celebrate Christ's birth in each of us.**

**P** For Christ is born in Bethlehem to save the whole world.

**C** **And Christ is born in our hearts to save us each from sin.**

**P** Christ is born in Bethlehem to fulfill the words of the prophets of old.

**C** **And Christ is born in our hearts so that we may speak the words of Good News to future generations.**

**P** Christ is born in Bethlehem to bring joy to the world.

**C** **And Christ is born in our hearts to restore to us the joy of His salvation.**

## CAROL OF PRAISE

### **“Good Christian Men, Rejoice”**

(tune: Now Sing We, Now Rejoice)

Good Christian men, rejoice With heart and soul and voice.

Give ye heed to what we say, Jesus Christ is born today!

Ox and ass before Him bow And He is in the manger now.

Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

Good Christian men, rejoice With heart and soul and voice!

Now ye need not fear the grave! Jesus Christ was born to save.

Calls you one and calls you all, To gain His everlasting hall.

Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

**P** Let us pray.

Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from our fears and from the bondage of our sin that we may rejoice in Your salvation; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

## GREETING OF PEACE

**P** The peace of Christ, our newborn King, be with you all.  
**C** **And also with you.**

## ✠ SERVICE OF THE WORD ✠

*(The reading of God's Word is central to our worship, our life, and our faith; this portion of the service concludes with the sermon, or the preached Word.)*

## OLD TESTAMENT READING

**Isaiah 62:10–12 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup> Go through, go through the gates; prepare the way for the people; build up, build up the highway; clear it of stones; lift up a signal over the peoples. <sup>11</sup> Behold, the Lord has proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say to the daughter of Zion, "Behold, your salvation comes; behold, His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him." <sup>12</sup> And they shall be called The Holy People, The Redeemed of the Lord; and you shall be called Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken.

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

## EPISTLE

**Titus 3:4–7 (ESV)**

<sup>4</sup> But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, <sup>5</sup> He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup> whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

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

## MUSIC

### **"Breath of Heaven"**

C. Eaton & A. Grant, arr. L. Larson  
**Carlyn Staudt and Brad Hall, duo**

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.  
**C** **Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. <sup>4</sup> In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. <sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup> He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world did not know Him. <sup>11</sup> He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. <sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

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

### **CAROL**                    **“Once In Royal David's City”**

Once in royal David's city Stood a lowly cattle shed,  
Where a mother laid her baby In a manger for His bed.  
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little Child.

He came down to earth from Heaven Who is God and Lord of all,  
And His shelter was a stable, And His cradle was a stall.  
With the poor and meek and lowly, Lived on earth, our Savior holy.

And our eyes at last shall see Him Through His own redeeming love,  
For that Child so dear and gentle Is our Lord in Heaven above.  
And He leads His children on To the place where He has gone.

Not in that poor lowly stable With the oxen standing by  
We shall see Him, but in Heaven, Set at God's right hand on high.  
There His children gather round, Bright like stars with glory crowned!

**APOSTLES’ CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**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.)*

**“Be Born In Me”**

Bernie Herms | Nichole Nordeman  
**Morgan Berg, soloist**

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

- P** Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs. Wonderful Counselor, You govern all things with wisdom, righteousness, and truth. Grant to Your creation the joy of Your presence, that we may see You at work in our midst. Guide the nations of the earth to Your Son, that all would know Your salvation. Wherever the good news of great joy is announced this day, grant that lives are changed forever by the power of Your Holy Spirit. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**



**P** Mighty God, Your power knows no limits. You reign over all things and yet, in Christ, You stoop down to save us. Give to us, Your Church, the power to declare Your mighty deeds throughout the world. Inspire us to fulfill our earthly callings so that, through our lives of joyful service, all would know of Your grace and mercy. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C** **hear our prayer.**

**P** Everlasting Father, You embrace us and make us Your children through faith in Your only-begotten Son. Bless all those who, in any form of sickness or infirmity, need Your tender care. Heal the sick, bind up the brokenhearted, and grant Your saving power to all who rest in You. [This day we especially pray for *names* that they rejoice in the message of Christ coming into this world for them.] Lord, in Your mercy,

**C** **hear our prayer.**

**P** Prince of Peace, You give to us what the world can never give. Drive out all fears and doubts. Deliver us from all enemies, seen and unseen. Grant us solace in Him whose blood has set us free that we would be Your people forever. Open our ears to the message of the angels: “Fear not! For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord!” Lord, in Your mercy,

**C** **hear our prayer.**

**P** Fearing, loving, and trusting in You above all things, we entrust all of these prayers to Your mercy, O Lord, for the sake of Him whose birth we celebrate this day: Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**C** **Amen.**

## THE LORD’S PRAYER

(tune: “It Came Upon A Midnight Clear”)

Our Father, Lord on Heav’n’s high throne,  
Most holy be Your name.

Your kingdom come. Your will be done  
On earth—in Heav’n the same.

Give us this day the food we need;

Forgiven may we be;

Into temptation do not lead;

From evil set us free.

Yours is the kingdom; unto You  
In grateful love we bow;  
And Yours the pow'r; Lord, let us view  
Your mighty presence now.  
The glory Yours; Your praise be sung  
By angel hosts and men  
In ev'ry land, by ev'ry tongue  
Forevermore! Amen.

## **BENEDICTION**

*Isaiah 9:6, adapt.; Numbers 6:24–26*

**P** Unto us  
**C** **a child is born!**

**P** Unto us  
**C** **a son is given!**

**P** And the government shall be upon His shoulder. And His  
name shall be called  
**C** **Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father,  
Prince of Peace.**

**P** Christmas peace and joy be yours through God's infinite love  
given in Christ, His only-begotten Son; and the blessing of  
God Almighty—Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit—be and abide  
with you forever.  
**C** **Amen.**

## **CAROL**

### **“Angels We Have Heard On High”**

Angels we have heard on high,  
Sweetly singing o'er the plains;  
And the mountains in reply,  
Echoing their joyous strains:  
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
Say what may the tidings be  
Which inspire your heav'nly song?  
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.  
Come to Bethlehem and see

Him whose birth the angels sing;  
Come, adore on bended knee,  
Christ the Lord, the newborn King!  
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

## **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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# Ascension Lutheran Church

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Web Site: [www.-alcportland.org](http://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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