

**Thursday, December 24, 2020**

**Nativity of Our Lord I: Christmas Eve, Year B**

**Christmas Music**

Flute & Piano      *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

Piano                *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

*Birth night of a King*, Milton Scott

Reading of *Christmas is a Story of Light*, Ken Bible

*Light & Darkness*, Holden Prayer around cross (Christ Candle, Advent Wreath)

**Introduction – Assistant Liturgist**

*In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.*

**Music** *Silent Night*      ELW#281

**Confession and Forgiveness - Pastor**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who was in the beginning,  
who makes a dwelling among us, who covers us with justice and mercy, **Amen**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.  
*Silence is kept for reflection.*

God of goodness and lovingkindness,  
**we confess that we have sinned against you  
and our neighbors.**

**We have turned away from your invitation to new life.  
We have turned away from the lowly and downtrodden.  
In your abundant mercy, forgive us our sins,  
those we know and those known only to you,  
for the sake of the one who came to live among us,  
Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

Hear the good news of peace and salvation!  
God forgives us all our sins,  
not through our own work,  
but through † Jesus Christ, made known to all people.  
With all who come to the manger, rejoice in this amazing gift of grace. **Amen.**

**Gloria**                *Light is Shining All Around*

Ken Bible

## Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## First Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

<sup>2</sup>The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.

<sup>3</sup>You have multiplied the nation,  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.

<sup>4</sup>For the yoke of their burden,  
and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

<sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup>For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup>His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.

He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onward and forevermore.

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

The Word of the Lord     **Thanks be to God.**

**Antiphonal Carol**

Words and Music by Ken Bible

## **Gospel: Luke 2:1- 20**

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup>“Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

<sup>15</sup>When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Music** *Mary Did You Know?* lyrics by Mark Lowry, music by Buddy Greene  
Danielle Augsburger, soloist, Steve Somers, guitar, and sound mixing

## **Pastor Message “CHRIST COMES TO OUR HEARTS IN OUR HOME”**

We gather this evening to reflect on, ponder, and celebrate Emmanuel - “God with Us”. God alive in the past, alive in the present, and alive in the future.

“God with You” – discovering & awakening to God in your heart wherever this moment finds you.

This Creator God, who is ever at work forming, shaping and renewing all of creation, comes to you in a little child and from this child Jesus, who is fully human and fully divine, brings you salvation, brings you in the power of the Holy Spirit to the one who is the source of all life, healing, and forgiveness.

Imagine the moment of physical birth:

- Physical birth – the longing, the conception, the growth, the wondering how all will turn out, the cries of pain as contracting muscle ready for their task of helping in the delivery, the blood and fluids as one bursts forth onto the scene of life...the cry of the newborn, the washing, and swaddling, the feeding, the moment of quiet as the little one sleeps...

It was not a silent night – at least in the beginning...

**Music:** *Labor of Love*, Andrew Peterson

Molly Berry, soloist

Those who have been involved in the process of any type of labor understand that pain, sweat, tears, and a mixture of other emotions often accompany this process of birth, of something new being created. The process of letting go of something that was, to create space for the new. A labor of pain/sorrow and a labor of love/joy.

In Mary and Joseph's case, their story of letting go to create space for the new, includes their engagement, the angels words to them both, the care of Jesus placed into their hearts and hands...the journey to Bethlehem, away from their loved ones, Joseph returning to his home country and yet an outsider...no room for them in the inn...and the birth, the angels sing, the shepherds arrive, the wise men from the east, the holy family journeys to Egypt...and then back to Nazareth, the letting go of Jesus as he began his public ministry, and journeyed to the cross.

How did Mary and Joseph find the strength to carry on amidst all the unknowns, the uncertainty of the road they were on?

**Music:** *Breath of Heaven*, Amy Grant

Danielle Augsburger, soloist  
Steve Somers, guitar and sound mixing

Both Joseph and Mary knew who it is who gives the strength to carry on. In prayer and pondering in the heart, they both discern how they are being called in this task to carry and protect the Christ Child.

They see God answering their prayers in many ways...the unexpected visits of the angels to the shepherds, the shepherds following the angel's message to the manger, and the sharing of the Jesus' birth to others causes amazement, wonder, awe...a holy fear...a drawing into a deeper relationship with Emmanuel, God with us...an ability to labor in pain and to labor in love...and carry on even amidst the unknown or unexpected turns in life.

This God who comes to us in Jesus - hungers, thirsts, and wants you, and desires

for you, to seek and ponder the beloved God with all your heart, to love God with all your soul and mind, and then to spread the love of that relationship with your neighbors as yourself.

I invite you during this Christmas season to reflect on:

- 1) *How many times in your life you have found pain/sorrow being the other side of love/joy?*
- 2) *What have been the times where your life took unexpected turns and what were the results of those unforeseen/unexpected turns?*
- 3) *Who helps you find the strength to carry on?*

### **Let us pray:**

O gracious Lord, we thank you for coming among us, for coming into this world as the light of hope, as the prince of peace. Your birth among us was a labor of pain, and a labor of love, and for these gifts, this blessing, we give you thanks as we bask in your presence in our hearts, in our homes. We ask that you continue to lead and guide us in your will in this time and place. Form and shape us by your holy spirit into a people who sing your glory and praise now and forever. Amen.

### **Music**

*God is Here Among Us*

Words by Ken Bible

### **Prayers of Intercession**

P: Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

*A brief silence.*

A: The shepherds sing, "Jesus Christ is born!"

Let your church throughout the world proclaim this good news, over the hills and everywhere. Unite the voices of all your faithful people in songs of praise and rejoicing. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: Heaven and nature sing, "Joy to the world!"

Give respite to flocks, fields, and those who tend them. Come near to us in the beauty of nighttime, the shining of the stars, and the hush of a world at rest.

May our wonder at your creation rouse our care for all the earth.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: The angels sing, "Peace on earth!"

Come quickly to still the strife of this world. Hush the noise of war and violence in places of unrest. Inspire leaders of nations to seek lasting peace and sustainable provision for all in their care.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: Mary sings melodies of comfort to her newborn child. Bring rest and reassurance to those facing struggles this night. Shelter travelers and those without homes. Console those who lie awake due to pain or anxiety. Heal those who are sick or hurting. We take a moment to name those we carry in our hearts (pause). Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: Love sings through the sound of a new baby's cry. Bless new parents and expectant parents. Comfort those who long for children, especially those running out of hope or options. Surround families of every shape and size with your love and care. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: The heavenly chorus sings, "Glory to God in the highest!" We give you thanks for all the saints who have proclaimed your glory in word and deed. Let us join them this night in joyful praise around your eternal throne. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

P: God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to you, in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

**Music**

*Lo, How a Rose*

Flute & Piano

### **Offering Prayer**

Gracious God, you came to us as one unknown, bringing joy and salvation to the earth.

Nourish us at your banquet table, that with all who welcome your birth we may proclaim your peace, revealed in Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

### **Words of Institution**

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,  
the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup  
we remember your Word dwelling among us,  
full of grace and truth.

We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.

We look with hope for his coming.

**Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.

Come among us.

Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us.

Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light.

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

**Come, Holy Spirit.**

All praise and glory are yours,

Holy One of Israel,

Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High,

one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

#### **Invitation to Communion**

The Word is revealed in a manger, in simple bread and wine.

Come meet Christ in this meal.

**Music**

*Peace, Peace, Peace*

Ken Bible

#### **Prayer after Communion**

We give you thanks, gracious God,  
that you have once again fed us from your very self  
with the body and blood of Christ.

Through this mystery, send us forth to proclaim your promise to a world in need,  
through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

## **Blessing**

Almighty God,  
who sent the Holy Spirit to Mary,  
proclaimed joy through the angels,  
sent the shepherds with good news,  
and led the magi by a star,  
bless you this day † through the Word made flesh. **Amen.**

**Music**      *Love Has Come*      *ELW#292*

## **Dismissal**

Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus. **Thanks be to God.**

**Music**                      *O Come All Ye Faithful*                      Flute & Piano

## **CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP LEADERS**

Pastor Rita Augsburg, Presider

Val Grohne, Assistant Liturgist

Milton Scott, Director of Music

Rick Strine, Organist

Colleen Hillyer, Flute

Molly Berry, Soloist

Danielle Augsburg, Soloist & Steve Somers, Guitar, and Sound mixing

Jeremy Hahn, Camera and Editing

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