



*The Nativity of Our Lord
Festival Worship Service*

Christmas Day

December 25, 2025

9:00 AM

WRAPPED PRESENTS

This Advent, we prepared for our Christmas celebration by considering various ways our seasonal decorations amplify the real meaning of Christmas. Though many of the reasons behind holiday decorations go unappreciated and even unnoticed, they still point us to Christ. Some of the decorations do this in a more obvious way. Even the most secular of souls sees baby Jesus in the crèche. But even seemingly nonreligious signs of the season like evergreens and lights originated in Christendom. Now, as we have come to the Twelve Days of Christmas, we consider another Christian tradition: the exchange of Christmas presents. The giving of gifts, beautifully wrapped, reflects the gracious love of our heavenly Father, the "Father of lights," from whom "every good gift and every perfect gift" comes (James 1:17). Certainly, the greatest gift of all is none other than what we have come to celebrate: God's self-offering to us through His Son for the forgiveness of our sin. It is a gift that produces abundant blessings for us and in us. These blessings know no end. They regenerate and renew us as we walk into the bright eternity God has in store for us. The gift is all wrapped up in the babe, who lies in a manger. Come, let us adore Him!

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

RINGING OF THE BELLS

CALL TO WORSHIP

WELCOME

OPENING HYMN: ♪"ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY"

LSB 376

- 1 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.**
- 2 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 mean and lowly
Lived on earth our Savior holy.**
- 3 For He is our childhood's pattern,
Day by day like us He grew;
He was little, weak, and helpless,
Tears and smiles like us He knew;
And He feels for all our sadness,
And He shares in all our gladness.**

4 And our eyes at last shall see Him,
Through His own redeeming love;
For that child so dear and gentle
Is our Lord in heav'n above;
And He leads His children on
To the place where He is gone.

5 Not in that poor, lowly stable
With the oxen standing by
Shall we see Him, but in heaven,
Set at God's right hand on high.
Then like stars His children, crowned,
All in white, His praise will sound!

Text: Public domain

Stand

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

C Amen.

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

C Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. 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.

Sit

HYMN: ♪"O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL"

LSB 379

1 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: *Refrain*

Refrain:

**O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!**

**2 Highest, most holy,
Light of Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
Son of the Father
Now in flesh appearing! *Refrain***

**3 Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God
In the highest: *Refrain***

**4 Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father
Now in flesh appearing! *Refrain***

Text: Public domain

Stand

Kyrie

P In peace let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C Amen.

Sit

- 1 Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!” Refrain**

Refrain:

**Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”**

- 2 Christ, by highest heav’n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come,
Offspring of a virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel! Refrain**
- 3 Hail, the heav’n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Ris’n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth. Refrain**

Text: Public domain

Stand

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray.

Everlasting Father, You brought us peace even as we rebelled against You. Thank You for being faithful to Your promise to give us a Messiah to save us from our sins and give us an eternal inheritance of reconciliation with You. Grant that, as Your children, we may hold fast to Your merciful love, that we may cling to our inheritance and enjoy the blessings of life in Your holy family; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord and Brother, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Sit

ADULT CHOIR ANTHEM: ♪“ALL MY HEART AGAIN REJOICES”

OLD TESTAMENT READING

ISAIAH 52:7–10

P The Old Testament Reading is from Isaiah, the fifty-second chapter.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.” The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the return of the LORD to Zion. Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted His people; He has redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD has bared His holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

G Thanks be to God.

ADULT CHOIR ANTHEM: ♪“CHRIST IS BORN THIS DAY”

EPISTLE

TITUS 3:4–7

P The Epistle is from Titus, the third chapter.

When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 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, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 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.

G Thanks be to God.

Stand

ALLELUIA

G ♪ Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

HOLY GOSPEL

LUKE 2:1–20

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

G Glory to You, O Lord.

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. 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, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. 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.

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. 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.” And suddenly there was

with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!"

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Apostles' Creed

C 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.

Sit

SERMON HYMN: ♪"O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM"

LSB 361

- 1 O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.
- 2 For Christ is born of Mary,
And, gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the king
And peace to all the earth!

3 How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heav'n.
No ear may hear His coming;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still
The dear Christ enters in.

4 O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Immanuel!

Text: Public domain

SERMON: "WRAPPED PRESENTS"

By Pastor John Schmidt

Stand

P The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.
G Amen.

OFFERTORY

G Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free spirit. Amen.

Sit

OFFERING

As offerings are brought forward the congregation stands and sings.

OFFERING HYMN: ♪ "WE GIVE THEE BUT THINE OWN"

LSB 781 V. 1-2

1 We give Thee but Thine own, Whate'er the gift may be;
All that we have is Thine alone, A trust, O Lord, from Thee.

2 May we Thy bounties thus As stewards true receive
And gladly, as Thou blessest us, To Thee our firstfruits give!

Text: William W. How, 1823–97 Text: Public domain

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

- P** Let us pray to God our Father through the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- P** Heavenly Father, in Your kindness and love, You sent Your Son into the world to be our Savior. Be with those You sent today to bring Jesus to us. Bless especially all pastors, teachers, deaconesses, missionaries, and musicians of Your church, and strengthen the witness of all the congregations of our Synod, that more people may know Your loving kindness each and every day. Lord, in Your mercy,
- G** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Heavenly Father, as the angel testified as to whom the gift of Jesus was given, so may each of us tell others about how the baby wrapped in swaddling cloths is for them as well, that, by Your Spirit's power, our neighbors and coworkers and all whom we love may unwrap the greatest gift of all this Christmas. Lord, in Your mercy,
- G** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Heavenly Father, under Your watchful care, You preserve and sustain life. We give You thanks for those who keep watch over us: firefighters, police officers, doctors, nurses, and all who are entrusted with public work. Bless their work, and guide those who rule our land, especially Donald, our president, and [name], our governor. We especially ask Your protective and sustaining care for those who serve our country, particularly our military personnel. Grant that they may share the good tidings of comfort and joy even in days of separation from their families. Grant faithfulness to our Synod's military chaplains as they proclaim the good news of Christ's birth, and watch over all who place themselves in harm's way on our behalf. Lord, in Your mercy,
- G** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Heavenly Father, You once sent Your angels to announce good news to lonely shepherds. Send us and others with the same good news of the Savior, who has come for the lowliest among us, including the lonely and destitute, those who are homebound, those who live in nursing homes and care facilities, those who spend their days in institutions and prisons, and those who live on the streets of our towns and cities. Help us love others as You have loved us, and so provide for our neighbors in need. Lord, in Your mercy,
- G** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Heavenly Father, sustain all those from this congregation who are sick and infirm. Grant them healing of body, peace of mind, and the renewal of the Holy Spirit. Comfort them and their families with the certainty that Jesus is indeed the Savior of the nations who gives us the sure hope of eternal life. Lord, in Your mercy,
- G** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end.
- G** **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

GERMAN BENEDICTION

- P** Der Herr segne dich und behüte dich!
Der Herr erleuchte dein Angesicht über dich
Und sei dir gnädig!
Der Herr erhebe sein Angesicht auf dich und
Gebe dir Frieden!
- G** **Amen, Amen, Amen.**

BENEDICTION

P The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

G **Amen, Amen, Amen.**

HYMN: ♪"JOY TO THE WORLD"

LSB 387

- 1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!**
Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.
- 2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!**
Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
- 3 No more let sins and sorrows grow**
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.
- 4 He rules the world with truth and grace**
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.

Text: Public domain

Silent Prayer

Announcements