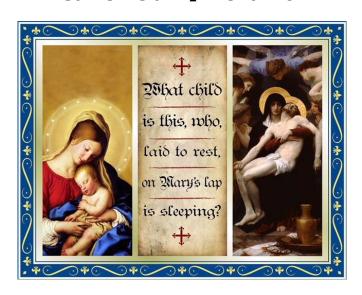
The Eve of the Nativity of Our Lord

Service of Lessons and Carols December 24th Year of Our → Lord 2024



Welcome to the Lord's House on this blessed and holy night! Tonight we focus upon the fulfillment of God's promise to send us a Savior in the birth of Jesus Christ, our Lord. We pray that the Holy Spirit will enable us to truly listen to the Lord tonight as He speaks to us through His holy Word and points us to the Baby Jesus lying in the manger for us and for our salvation. May we faithfully confess with confidence that this Baby is the Eternal Word of God in human flesh, who came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary in order to save us from our sins. He is Immanuel, which means "God with us." He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who was born to die for us! That's what Christmas is all about—the salvation accomplished and won by Jesus Christ. And for this we rejoice. Merry Christmas!



ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

A Church of The Lutheran Church— Missouri Synod

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→ Service of Lessons and Carols →

The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols was first held on Christmas Eve 1918 as a way to showcase their musical gifts. As the "Singing Church," Lutherans have rejoiced in the opportunity to sing the great Christmas Carols together as a Church while hearing the story of our Lord's incarnation and the salvation He has worked to save us from our sin. We are grateful to God for the gifts He has given to His Church, particularly the gifts that extol the beauty of His Word through instrument and song. May you find such "good news and great joy" as you gather tonight to meditate on our Lord's coming in the flesh for us.

The congregation is invited to stand and face the cross at the back of the sanctuary. While singing, the congregation is invited to follow the cross, turning as it passes.

The Hymn of Invocation: 379 O Come, All Ye Faithful



Text: tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-80, alt. Text and tune: John F. Wade, c. 1711-1786 Text and tune: Public domain

The sign of the cross + may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Invocation

- **P** In the name of the Father and of the

 → Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C Amen.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

- P The Lord be with you.
- **And with your Spirit.**
- P Let us pray.

O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our Judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

G Amen.

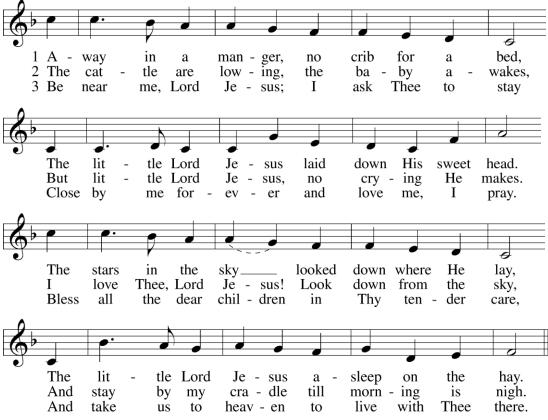
Sit

The First Lesson Genesis 3:8-15

And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

- **A** This is the Word of the Lord.
- Thanks be to God.

The First Carol: 364 Away in a Manger



Text (sts. 1–2): Little Children's Book, 1885, Philadelphia; (st. 3): Vineyard Songs, 1892, Louisville, alt. Tune: James R. Murray, 1841–1905 Text and tune: Public domain

The Second Lesson

Genesis 22:15-18

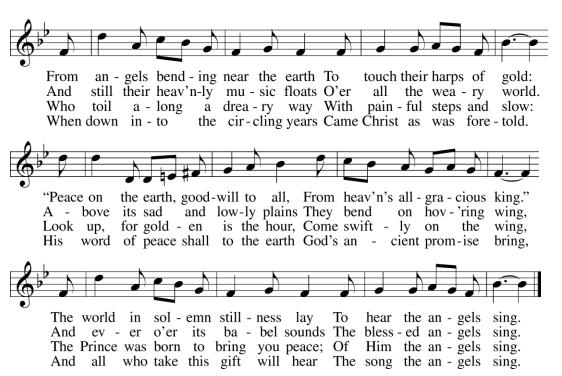
¹⁵ And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven ¹⁶ and said, "By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷ I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, ¹⁸ and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."

- **A** This is the Word of the Lord.
- Thanks be to God.

The Second Carol: 366 It Came upon the Midnight Clear



- 1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, That glo-rious song of old
- 2 Still through the clo ven skies they come With peace-ful wings un furled,
- 3 All you, be-neath your heav y load, By care and guilt bent low,
- 4 For lo, the days have come to pass By prophets seen of old,



Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810-76, alt. Tune: Richard S. Willis, 1819-1900 Text and tune: Public domain

The Third Lesson

Isaiah 7:14; 9:2, 6-7; 11:1-9

^{7:14} Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel...

^{9:2} 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. ⁷ Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this...

^{11:1} There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. ²And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

³ And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, ⁴ but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. ⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins. ⁶ The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. ⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down

together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. ⁹ They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

- **A** This is the Word of the Lord.
- Thanks be to God.



The Fourth Lesson Micah 5:2-5a

Now muster your troops, O daughter of troops; siege is laid against us; with a rod they strike the judge of Israel on the cheek. But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given

birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. And he shall be their peace.

- **A** This is the Word of the Lord.
- Thanks be to God.





Text (sts. 1–2): tr. Theodore Baker, 1851–1934, alt.; (sts. 1–2, 4): German, 16th cent.; (st. 3): Friedrich L. C. Layriz, 1808–59; (st. 3): tr. Harriet R. K. Spaeth, 1845–1925; (st. 4): tr. John C. Mattes, 1876–1948 Tune: Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengeseng, 1599, Köln Text and tune: Public domain

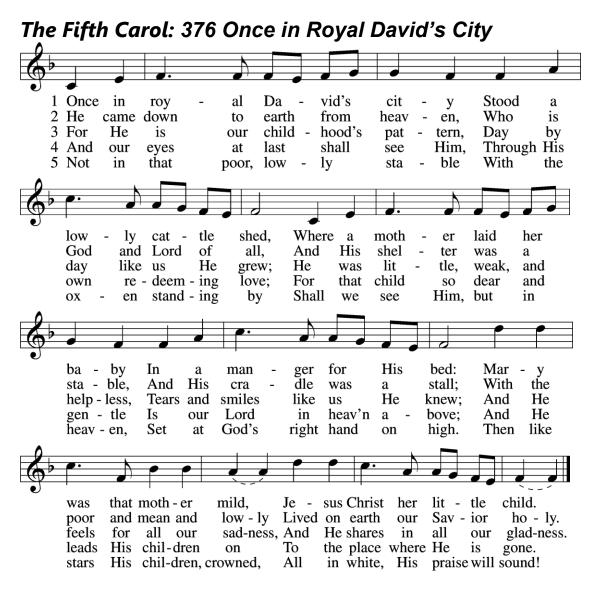
The Fifth Lesson

Luke 1:26-35, 38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him

the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy--the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

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



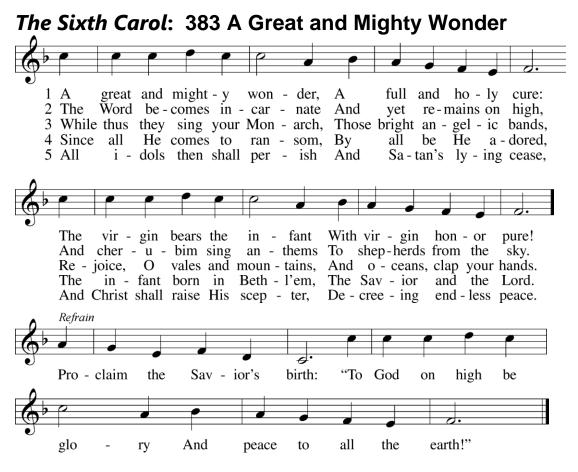
Text: Cecil F. Alexander, 1818-95, alt. Tune: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805-76 Text and tune: Public domain

The Sixth Lesson Luke 2:1-7

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.

- A This is the Word of the Lord.
- Thanks be to God.



Text: Germanus, c. 634–c. 734; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–66, alt. Tune: Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengeseng, 1599, Köln Text and tune: Public domain

The Seventh Lesson Luke 2:8-20

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. 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. 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.

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





Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748 Tune: George Frideric Handel, 1685-1759, adapt. Text and tune: Public domain

The Eighth Lesson

Matthew 2:1-11

¹Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ²saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." ³When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

6"'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

⁷Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. ⁸And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." ⁹After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.

- A This is the Word of the Lord.
- Thanks be to God.



The Ninth Lesson John 1:1-14

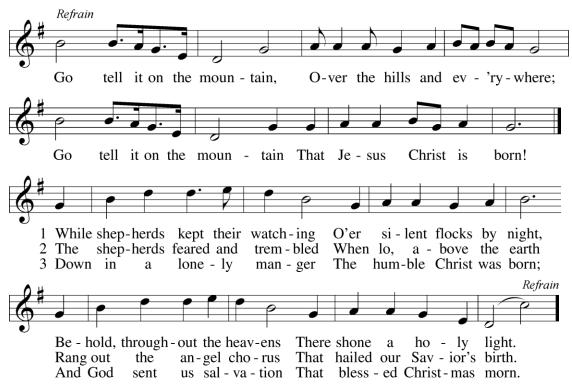
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There

was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. 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.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

GThanks be to God.

The Ninth Carol: 388 Go Tell It on the Mountain



Text (sts. 1-3): John W. Work II, 1873-1925, alt. Text (ref) and tune: African American spiritual Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon

Stand

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,

Closing Prayer

- **P** The Lord be with you.
- **C** And with your Spirit.
- **P** Let us pray.

O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that as we have known the mysteries of that Light on earth we may also come to the fullness of His joys in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Lord's Prayer

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;

the resurrection of the body,

and the life \(\psi \) everlasting. Amen.

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.

Benediction

- P Let us bless the Lord!
- Thanks be to God.
- P The Lord bless you and keep you.

 The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

 The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and T give you peace.
- C Amen.

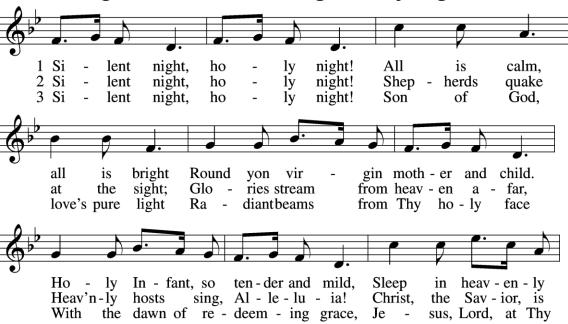
→ Service of Light →

As the lights are dimmed, Pastor lights his candle and the congregation turns on their candles.

Isa 9:2; Jn 1:5; Isa 9:2b; Jn 1:14b; Isa 9:6; Jn 1:4

- The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.
- The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
- P Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.
- **@** We have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.
- P For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given.
- In Him was life, and that life was the light of men.

The Closing Carol: 363 Silent Night, Holy Night





Text: Franz Joseph Mohr, 1792–1848; tr. John F. Young, 1820–85 Tune: Franz Xaver Gruber, 1787–1863 Text and tune: Public domain

Dismissal and Postlude~ As the Postlude is played, you are free to dismiss yourselves ~ departing in the joy of the Gospel. Please leave your candles in the box on the table in the narthex.

We also invite you to return tomorrow morning for our Christmas Day Divine Service with Holy Communion at 10am.