

Images of the Nativity



Jules Chadel
French, 1870-1942

Nativité
early 20th century
Color woodcut

Series inspired by the
Thrivent Collection
of Religious Art

Christmas Eve, December 24, 2023

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH & PRESCHOOL

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THE GOSPEL OF ST. LUKE SERVICE

Worship in a traditional order drawing words from Luke's Gospel.
Luke is the focus of Year C Gospel readings in the Lectionary.

Anthem

Long, Long Ago

Adult Choir

- Use the anthem's music and words to help you to meditate on God's Word and His truth for you today. Maintain this as meditative time.

Winds through the olive trees
Softly did blow,
'Round little Bethlehem
Long, long ago.

Sheep on the hillside lay
Whiter than snow;
Shepherds were watching them
Long, long ago.

Then the happy sky,
Angels bent low,
Singing their songs of joy,
Long, long ago.

For in a manger bed,
Cradled we know,
Christ came to Bethlehem
Long, long ago.
Christ came to Bethlehem
Long, long ago.



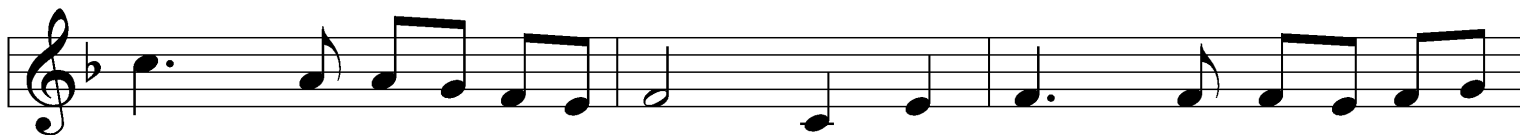
Opening Hymn

Once in Royal David's City

LSB 376 sts. 1-3



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y Stood a
2 He came down to earth from heav - en, Who is
3 For He is our child - hood's pat - tern, Day by



low - ly cat - tle shed, Where a moth - er laid her
God and Lord of all, And His shel - ter was a
day like us He grew; He was lit - tle, weak, and



ba - by In a man - ger for His bed: Mar - y
sta - ble, And His cra - dle was a stall; With the
help - less, Tears and smiles like us He knew; And He



was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
poor and mean and low - ly Lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
feels for all our sad - ness, And He shares in all our glad - ness.

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

Invocation (Based on Luke 2:14)

P: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

P: Glory to God in the highest,

C: **peace to all the Earth,**

P: and goodwill from God in heaven.

C: **Amen.**



Confession and Absolution

(Based on the Song of Zechariah—Luke 1:68-79 (LSB 238), along with Luke 3:7-8,10; 15:21)

P: John the Baptist was called the prophet of the Most High,
for He went before the Lord Jesus to prepare His way,
confronting the people and us with our sin, saying:
“Who warned you to escape from the angry judgment that is coming soon?
Produce fruit that shows you have repented.
Produce actions that show you have changed your hearts and lives.”
The crowds asked him, “What then shall we do?”
And we find ourselves asking this same question.

C: Lord, we have sinned. What then shall we do?

P: God calls on us to confess our sin and seek His forgiveness and mercy,
so that these words from the prodigal son in the parable of Jesus
become our own words of confession:

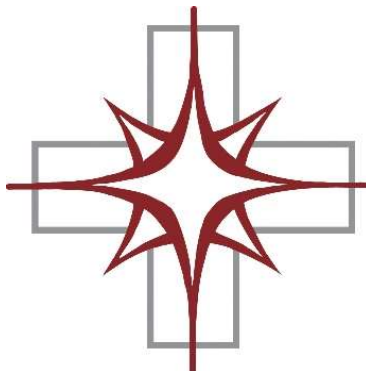
**C: Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you.
I am no longer worthy to be called your child.**

P: John the Baptist, the prophet, went before the Lord Jesus
to give His people knowledge of their salvation
by the forgiveness of their sin.
In the tender compassion of our God,
the dawn from on high shall break upon us
to shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

**C: Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel;
He has come to His people and redeemed them.
He has raised up for us a mighty Savior,
born of the house of His servant David.**

P: In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the
name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.



Gloria in Excelsis (based on Luke 2:14)

LSB 204



C 1 To God on high be glo - ry And peace to all the earth;
2 To You, O sole-be - got - ten, The Fa - ther's Son, we pray;
3 For You a - lone are ho - ly; You on - ly are the Lord.



Good-will from God in heav - en Pro-claimed at Je-sus' birth!
O Lamb of God, our Sav - ior, You take our sins a - way.
For - ev - er and for - ev - er, Be wor-shiped and a - dored;



We praise and bless You, Fa - ther; Your ho - ly name, we sing—
Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus; Re - ceive our heart - felt cry,
You with the Ho - ly Spir - it A - lone are Lord Most High,



Our thanks for Your great glo - ry, Lord God, our heav'n-ly King.
Where You in pow'r are seat-ed At God's right hand on high—
In God the Fa - ther's glo - ry. "A - men!" our glad re - ply.

Collect (Prayer of the Day)

P: Let us pray. O God, You have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light—Jesus, the Christ, Messiah, Savior, our Lord: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy Him perfectly in eternal life; in the Name of Jesus, Your Son, our Lord, who with You and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting.

C: Amen.

Anthem**Bethlehemtown****Adult Choir**

- Use the anthem's music and words to help you to meditate on God's Word and His truth for you today. Maintain this as meditative time.

O who will direct me to Bethlehemtown?
For brightness has hidden the way;
And tinsel distractions have stolen from view
the Infant asleep on the hay.

O come and go with me to Bethlehemtown,
And shielding our eyes from the flare,
We'll bow in a stable as starlight shines down,
and quietly worship Him there
O who will go with me to Bethlehemtown?
For clamor has deafened the ear.
The shouting of merchants has muffled the song
of angel choirs hovering near.

O come and go with me to Bethlehemtown,
And shielding our ears from the blare,
We'll bow in a stable as singing floats down,
and quietly worship Him there.

O come, all you people, to Bethlehemtown,
Leave all of the glitter behind.
Leave diamonds and rubies and silver and gold,
the richest of treasures to find.

O come and go with me to Bethlehemtown,
And shielding our hearts from the glare,
We'll bow in a stable where God has come down
and quietly worship Him there.

We'll bow in a stable in Bethlehemtown
and quietly worship Him there.

Versicles

Isaiah 9:2a; John 1:5; Isaiah 9:2b; John 1:14b; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:4

P: The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.

**C: *The light shines in the darkness,
but the darkness has not understood it.***

P: On those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.

**C: *We have seen His glory,
the glory of the one and only Son
who came from the Father.***

P: For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

C: *In Him was life, and that life was the light of men.*

Holy Gospel

Luke 2:1-20 (ESV)

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And 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, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth.

⁷And 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.

⁸And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. ¹⁰And 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. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest,
peace to all the Earth, and goodwill from God in heaven!"

P: The song the angels sang has now become our song of praise to Jesus:

**C: *Glory to God in the highest,
peace to all the Earth,
and goodwill from God in heaven!***

¹⁵When 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.” ¹⁶And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

L: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn of the Day

Go Tell It on the Mountain

LSB 388

Refrain



Go tell it on the moun - tain, O-ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;



Go tell it on the moun - tain That Je - sus Christ is born!



1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing O'er si - lent flocks by night,
 2 The shep-herds feared and trem - bled When lo, a - bove the earth
 3 Down in a lone - ly man - ger The hum-ble Christ was born;

Refrain



Be - hold, through - out the heav - ens There shone a ho - ly light.
 Rang out the an - gel cho - rus That hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
 And God sent us sal - va - tion That bless - ed Christ - mas morn.

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

Children's Message

Sermon

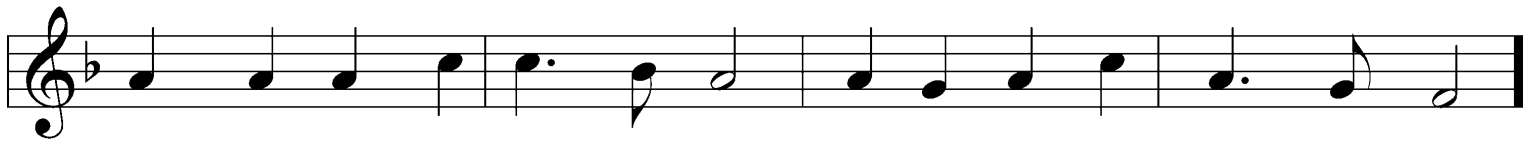
Hymn of Response

Angels We Have Heard On High

LSB 368



1 An - gels we have heard on high, Sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;



And the moun - tains in re - ply, Ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad - some tid - ings be Which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.

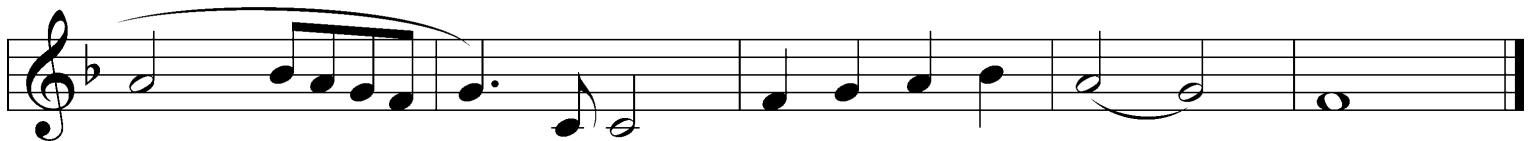
Refrain



Glo - - - - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - -



- ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

Text: tr. The Crown of Jesus, 1862, Part 2, London, alt. Text and tune: French

Confession of Faith from Luke 24:26-27,32; 4:21; 24:44-49

We confess that Jesus interpreted for us the things written about Himself in all the Scriptures, starting with Moses and going through all the Prophets, so that our hearts burn within us when He opens the Scriptures to us by His Holy Spirit to reveal His grace and mercy. —As Jesus declared, “Today these words have been fulfilled in your hearing.”— He has opened our minds to understand the Scriptures, and shown us, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you—the Holy Spirit.” Amen.

Offering & Carols

What Child Is This

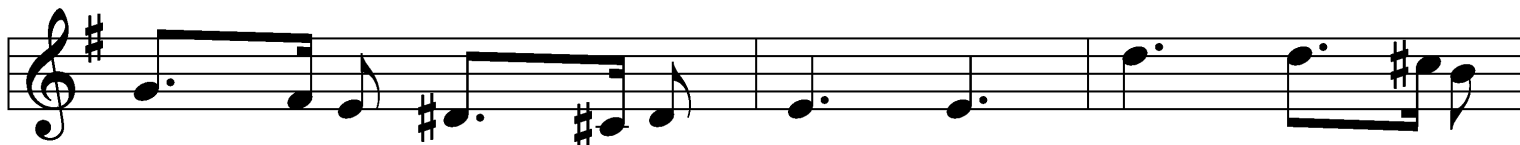
LSB 370 sts. 1-2



1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mar - y's lap is
2 Why lies He in such mean es - tate Where ox and ass are



sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet While
feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here The



shep - herds watch are keep - ing? This, this is
si - lent Word is plead - ing. Nails, spear shall



Christ the king, Whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
pierce Him through, The cross be borne for me, for you;



Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The babe, the son of Mar - y!
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The babe, the son of Mar - y!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-98 Tune: English, 16th cent.



O Come, All Ye Faithful

LSB 379 sts. 1, ref, 2



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, Joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
2 High - est, most ho - ly, Light of Light e - ter - nal,



come ye, O come — ye to Beth - le - hem;
Born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal He comes;

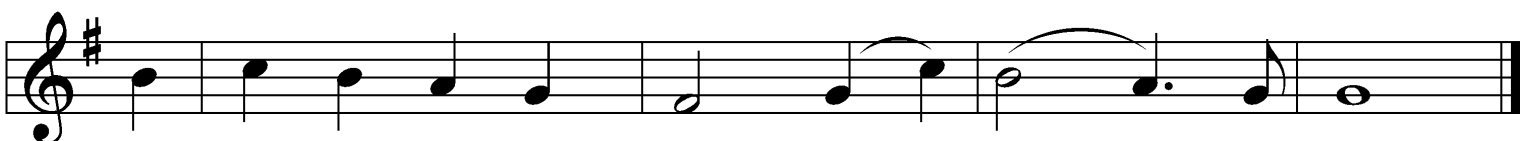


Come and be - hold Him Born the king of an - gels:
Son of the Fa - ther Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!

Refrain

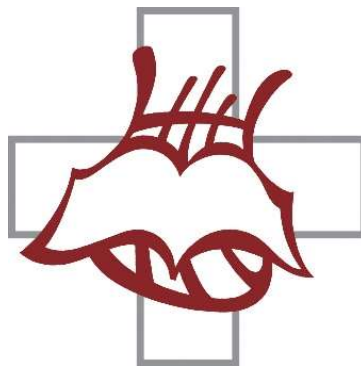


O come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a - dore Him,



O come, let us a - dore Him, Christ the Lord!

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



Acknowledgements

This liturgy arranged and written by the Rev. Dr. Benjamin C. Squires., Portions used by permission: LSB Hymn License .NET, no. 000013448.,

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Prayers of the Church

P: Almighty God, in the person of Your Son Jesus Christ, You reveal Your strength before the eyes of all nations. Grant that we may break forth in joyous song as we thank You for our redemption from sin, death, and the devil's power that has come down from heaven. Jesus Christ--the one and only Light--has come into the world;

C: *Oh come, let us worship Him.*

P: Eternal God, in the mystery of Your holy incarnation and blessed nativity You took upon our human flesh. It is in the very flesh of Jesus that we behold Your glory, receive grace and understand Your truth. Increase our faith that we may be bold witnesses concerning the complete revelation of Your Word. Jesus Christ--the one and only Light--has come into the world;

C: *Oh come, let us worship Him.*

P: With the shepherds, O Lord, we marvel at the miracle of Your nativity. Magnify the power of the Gospel in the hearts of Your faithful people so that, without reservation, we would spread the good news of salvation revealed to us through the Word made flesh. Jesus Christ--the one and only Light--has come into the world;

C: *Oh come, let us worship Him.*

P: O Lord, in humility, You who were rich became poor to redeem us from sin's curse. Comfort those who face economic challenges granting them courage to endure hardship; help us to know how to lovingly support and encourage them to look in trust to You. Jesus Christ--the one and only Light--has come into the world;

C: *Oh come, let us worship Him.*

P: Almighty God, grant Your blessing to those in need. Banish their sadness, anxiety, and sorrow with the certainty of forgiveness and life everlasting. Cheer their weary spirits by Your gracious visitation. Keep us ever mindful that Your only begotten Son bears our burdens and grief. Jesus Christ--the one and only Light--has come into the world;

C: *Oh come, let us worship Him.*

P: Through the gracious works of our Prince of Peace, graciously receive our prayers, deliver and preserve us, for to You alone we give all glory, honor, and worship, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: *Amen.*

The Lord's Prayer

P: Lord, remember us in Your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

All: 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.

Video Meditation:
“A Christmas Hallelujah” by Cloverton
(original song written by Leonard Cohen)

I've heard about this baby boy
Who's come to earth to bring us joy
And I just want to sing this song to you
It goes like this, the fourth, the fifth
The minor fall, the major lift
With every breath I'm singing Hallelujah
Hallelujah

A couple came to Bethlehem
Expecting child, they searched the inn
To find a place for You were coming soon
There was no room for them to stay
So in a manger filled with hay
God's only Son was born, oh Hallelujah
Hallelujah

The shepherds left their flocks by night
To see this baby wrapped in light
A host of angels led them all to You
It was just as the angels said
You'll find Him in a manger bed
Immanuel and Savior, Hallelujah
Hallelujah

A star shown bright up in the east
To Bethlehem, the wisemen three
Came many miles and journeyed long for You
And to the place at which You were
Their frankincense and gold and myrrh
They gave to You and cried out Hallelujah
Hallelujah

I know You came to rescue me
This baby boy would grow to be
A man and one day die for me and you
My sins would drive the nails in You
That rugged cross was my cross, too
Still every breath You drew was Hallelujah
Hallelujah



Lighting of the Candles (The Pastor lights the candles of the people at the center aisle who will pass the flame to the others in the row. Please turn the unlit candle sideways to receive the light; do not turn lit candles on their side. When all have received the light, the service continues with the liturgy.)

P: Jesus Christ is the Light of the world,

C: the light no darkness can overcome.

P: Stay with us, Lord, for it is evening,

C: and the day is almost over.

P: Let Your light scatter the darkness

C: and illumine Your Church.

Closing Hymn

Silent Night, Holy Night

LSB 363, sts. 1-2

1 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.

2 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!

Benediction

based on Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 98:1a

P: To you a child is born, to you a son is given;

and the government is upon his shoulder.

And his name is called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Sing to the Lord a new song,

for he has done marvelous things for you,

in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **C: Amen.**

Silent Night, Holy Night

LSB 363, st. 3

3 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.



Thank You for Beautifying our Worship Areas with Poinsettias

Norm Balliet – To the glory of God;

Sheila Bunnell – (2 plants) In memory of Helen & Richard Tone;

Wayne & Kathy Henkel – In memory of Mavis Henkel;

Jim Franz – (3 plants) In memory of his mother, father, brother, sister and grandmother;

Chris Mason – (2 plants) In memory of Noreen Hyde, Helen & Earl Mason and Christine & Roy Roberts;

Midge & Bill Ratzburg – (2 plants) To the glory of God;

Ted & Marlene Witt – To the glory of God;

Paul & Linda Groh - (2 plants) To the glory of God;

John & Karen Kozlik – (2 plants) To the glory of God;

The Sanders Family - To the glory of God;

The Rayos Family – In memory of Grace Moreland;

Holly Traynor - (4 plants) In memory of Sun Traynor, Muriel Adams and to the glory of God;

Victor Sundararaj – (2 plants) In memory of his father;

The Kazarian/Rasmussen/Souza Families – (4 plants) In memory of Grace Gibson, Art & Evelyn Rasmussen, Bill & Alice Souza, Mark Souza and Pat Souza-Rasmussen;

Elizabeth Blasko – In memory of Michael Yarusinsky;

Joan Blasko – (2 plants) In memory of parents & grandparents and to the glory of God;

The Squires Family - (2 plants) In memory of Pastor's grandparents Palmer & Mary;

The Kailer Family – (2 plants) In memory of Betty & Henry Schramm;

David & Cheryl Ross – (4 plants) In memory of Gordon & Carol Gillings and George & Jean Ross;

Dawn Werfelmann – (2 plants) To the glory of God.

Your Poinsettia's will be available for pickup after the Christmas day worship service or arrange to pick them up with the church office the following week. Contact the church office at 847-244-9647 with any questions.

Come to Bethel, Come to Bethlehem

Bethel Lutheran Church, Gurnee

Christmas Eve

Sunday, December 24

6:30PM

Candlelight Worship

Christmas Day

Monday, December 25

10:00AM

Worship with Communion

