

**CHRIST IS BORN!**  
**Midnight Communion & Candlelight Service**  
**December 24/25, 2018**  
**11:30 P.M**

**ENTRANCE HYMN No. 357    “O Come, All Ye Faithful” (vss. 1,2,5,6)**

Oh, come, oh, come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appear. (refrain)

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel!

Oh, come, Thou Wisdom from on high,  
Who ord’rest all things mightily;  
To us the path of knowledge show,  
And teach us in her ways to go. (refrain)

Oh, come, Thou Key of David, come,  
And open wide our heav’nly home;  
Make safe the way that leads on high,  
And close the path to misery. (refrain)

Oh, come, our Dayspring from on high,  
And cheer us by your drawing nigh;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
And death’s dark shadows put to flight. (refrain)



**INVOCATION**

**P:**     In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**C:**     Amen.

**OPENING SENTENCES        John 1:1, 4–5, 9; Isaiah 9:6; 1 John 1:5–7**

**P:**     In the beginning was the Word, the Logos  
**C:**     and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

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

**P:** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.  
**C:** The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

**P:** To us a child is born, to us a son is given;  
**C:** and the government shall be upon His shoulder,

**P:** and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
**C:** Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

**P:** And so this is the message we have heard from Him and proclaim to you, that God is light,  
**C:** and in Him is no darkness at all.

**P:** If we say we have fellowship with Him while we walk in darkness,  
we lie and do not practice the truth.  
**C:** But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and  
the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

#### **CONFESSIO AND ABSOLUTION Titus 2:11–14**

**P:** St Paul writes to St Titus: “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age.” As we gather together this Christmas Midnight, let us confess our sins to God our Father, seeking His forgiveness and blessing.

**P:** Lord God,  
**C:** Pour out Your Holy Spirit upon us and deliver us from all evil. Open our eyes to see how we are broken and do not live in healthy relationship with You or with our neighbors. Guide our confession through the Holy Spirit, that we may return to You through the redemption we have in Jesus, God with us. Grant us peace as we wait for the glorious second appearance of Your only-begotten Son, the Logos made flesh and dwelling among us, whose birth we celebrate this night and in whose life we are joined as we commune with Him in bread and wine, His true body and blood, given for our sins.

**P:** Family of faith, born not of flesh but of water and the Spirit, our God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love; and out of that love God sent Jesus Christ to die for us that we may be restored to life through His sacrificial life and death and raised to new life in Him.

Therefore, as Isaiah proclaimed, as Mary and Elizabeth proclaimed, as Simeon and Anna proclaimed, so too, can we proclaim to one another now:

C: God has redeemed and restored us, God loves and forgives us, God sees us and claims us as His beloved children. Let it be to us as it is spoken,

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

C: Amen.

## SHARING OF THE PEACE

HYMN NO. 358 "From Heaven Above to Earth I Come" (vss. 1-3, 5-7)

From Heav'n above to earth I come  
To bring good news to ev'ry home;  
Glad tiding of great joy I bring  
Whereof I now will say and sing:

To you this night is born a child  
Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;  
This little child of lowly birth  
Shall be the joy of all the earth.

This is the Christ, our God Most High,  
Who hears your sad and bitter cry;  
He will himself your Savior be  
From all your sins to set you free.

These are the signs that you shall mark:  
The swaddling clothes and manger dark.  
There you will find the infant laid  
By whom the heav'ns and earth were made."

How glad we'll be to find it so!  
Then with the shepherds let us go  
To see what God for us has done  
In sending us His own dear Son.

Come here, my friends, lift up your eyes,  
And see what in the manger lies.  
Who is this child, so young and fair?  
It is the Christ Child lying there.

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P:** Eternal God, in the stillness of this night  
You sent your almighty Word, the Logos  
to pierce the world's darkness with the light of salvation:  
give to the earth the peace that we long for  
and fill our hearts with the joy of heaven  
through our Savior, Jesus Christ.

**C:** Amen.

## **OLD TESTAMENT    Isaiah 52:7–10**

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.      **C:** Thanks be to God.

## **EPISTLE    Hebrews 1:1–6 (The Supremacy of God's Son)**

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son"?

And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him."

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

**GOSPEL     John 1:1–14     (The Word Became Flesh)**

**P: The Holy Gospel according to St John, the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter.**

**C: Glory to You, O Lord.**

**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.**

**P: This is the Gospel of our Lord.**

**C: Praise to You, O Christ.**

**HYMN No. 380     “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”**

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

**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, incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel!  
Hark! The Herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”**

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.  
Hark! The Herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

SERMON                      "The Logos Became Flesh"   John 1:1-4   Pastor Vern

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."

I am indebted to Dr. Francis Collins, an eminent geneticist and former Director of the NIH (National Institute of Health). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HaEQyNeaFZs&t=1479s>

CONFESSION OF FAITH

THE NICENE CREED

*Please stand*

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth  
and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of his Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made,  
being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made;

Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary  
and was made man;

And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.  
He suffered and was buried.

And the third day rose again according to the Scriptures  
and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father.

And he will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose  
kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.

**And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## **OFFERING**

## **PRAYERS**

**Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.**

**Lord God Almighty, on this most holy night we come before You in awe at the wonder and majesty of the incarnation. The Savior of the nations has come, and with joy we greet our newborn King. Let the proclamation of His birth sound forth throughout the world. Give to Your people willing ears to hear and believe. Lord, in Your mercy,**

**C:     hear our prayer.**

**Heavenly Father, You sent an angel to reveal to Joseph that the Child in Mary's womb was Your own, preserving their marriage and family. Preserve our homes also by Your Holy Word. Fill them with Your grace, that husbands and wives, parents and children may live in peace and love with one another. Lord, in Your mercy,**

**C:     hear our prayer.**

**Almighty God, the One born in Bethlehem is the David's Son and David's Lord, to whom every knee shall bow. Look upon those You have placed in authority, and grant that they would govern in wisdom and justice. Lord, in Your mercy,**

**C:     hear our prayer.**

**Heavenly Father, You love us and sent Your Son to be the satisfaction for our sins. Strengthen us to love one another. As You have mercy upon all who are poor and troubled, so perfect Your love in us, that we would gladly be Your instruments of help in time of need. Lord, in Your mercy,**

**C:     hear our prayer.**

**Giver and Preserver of life, Your Son came to save us from sin and its curse. Hear the pleas of all who call to You for mercy. Deliver them from affliction according to Your will, and work in them steadfast faith to cling to the life they have in the Lord Jesus Christ. Lord, in Your mercy,**

**C:     hear our prayer.**

**Almighty Father, guard in safety all emergency workers and those whose vocations keep them from their families for our well-being this evening. Lord, in Your mercy,**

**C:     hear our prayer.**

**Almighty God, You have given Your Son, born of Mary, to be the Savior of the world. Send Your Spirit and abide with us, that we may confess Him and remain in Your love until He comes again in glory; for He lives and reigns with You and the same Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**

**C:     Amen.**

### **+ SACRAMENT +**

#### **PREFACE**

**P:     The Lord be with you.**

**C:     And also with you.**

**P:     Lift up your hearts.**

**C:     We lift them to the Lord.**

**P:     Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.**

**C:     It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

#### **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

**P: Blessed are You, Lord our God, for You have had mercy on us and entered human history wrapped up in flesh through the gracious gift of Your Son, Jesus, that we with joy receive Your infinite gifts and by faith enter Your eternal kingdom. Christ fulfilled all prophecy and was born of a virgin so that He might live a perfect and blameless life, die on a cross, rise from the dead, and thereby give us eternal life. We give thanks for the assurance of heaven He won for us. Grant us now that we may faithfully receive Him as the gift for us still wrapped in, with, and under bread and wine, together with the blessings of forgiveness, life, and salvation. To You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all praise and glory now and forever.**

**C:   Amen.**

#### **THE WORDS OF OUR LORD**

**P:   Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."**



In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✕ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

#### PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

P: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup,  
we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

C: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

P: O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

#### LORD'S PRAYER

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.

#### THE PEACE OF THE LORD

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

DISTRIBUTION                      "I Will Trust My Saviour Jesus" CityAlight (video)  
LSB 359 "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming From tender stem hath sprung!  
Of Jesse's lineage coming As prophets long have sung,  
It came, a flow'ret bright, Amid the cold of winter,  
When half-spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, The rose I have in mind;  
With Mary we behold it, The virgin mother kind.  
To show God's love aright, She bore to us a Savior,  
When half-spent was the night.

This flow'r whose fragrance tender With sweetness fills the air,  
Dispels with glorious splendor The darkness ev'ry where.  
True man, yet very God, From sin and death He saves us  
And lightens ev'ry load.

O Savior, child of Mary, Who felt our human woe;  
O Savior, King of glory, Who dost our weakness know:  
Bring us at length we pray To the bright courts of heaven,  
And to the endless day.

#### POST COMMUNION PRAYER

P: God our Father, in this night you have made known to us again the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him until the day dawns and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts. To him be glory both now and forever.

C: Amen.

#### DISTRIBUTION OF THE LIGHT

*(As the acolytes pass the light to members of the congregation, pass it to the person next to you. DO NOT TIP the lighted candle.)*

#### BEHOLDING THE LIGHT

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

C: 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.

C: 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.

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

**CLOSING HYMN No. 363**

**“Silent Night, Holy Night”**

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.

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!

Silent night, holy night!  
Son of God, loves pure light  
Radiant beams from thy holy face  
With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

**BLESSING OF THE LORD (John 1:14; 2 Corinthians 13:14)**

**P:** The Logos became flesh and dwelt among us,

**C:** And we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father,  
full of grace and truth.

**P:** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be with us all.

**C:** Amen.

