



Christmas Eve

Thursday, December 24, 2020; 4PM, 5:30PM, & 7PM

Mount Olive Lutheran Church & School, ELS

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Pastors John J. Petersen & Luke Ulrich | Principal Adam Pavelchik |



I. The Service of Preparation

(We prepare ourselves for worshiping God by acknowledging our unworthiness to stand before Him, and by receiving His forgiveness through absolution (forgiveness). We respond with thanks and joy.)

~Prelude — Preservice music & opportunity for prayer (See “Prayers for Worship”—ELH p. 40)

~Opening Prayer

(ELH p. 41)

P: O Lord, our Maker, Redeemer, and Comforter, we are assembled in Your presence to hear Your holy Word. We pray You to open our hearts by Your Holy Spirit, that through the preaching of Your Word we may be taught to repent of our sins, to believe on Jesus in life and death, and to grow day by day in grace and holiness. Hear us for Christ’s sake. Amen.

~Hymn 125, vv. 1, 2 *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing*

*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 th’angelic host proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
(Refrain)*

*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 th’incarnate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell;
Jesus, our Immanuel!
(Refrain)*

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

~Invocation

(ELH p. 41)

P: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men,
And He will dwell with them,
And they shall be His people,
And God Himself shall be with them,
And be their God.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, forevermore. Amen.

~Confession of Sin — *Admitting our sinfulness to God* (ELH p. 41, 1)

P: Let us bow before the Lord and confess our sins. Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto You that we are by nature sinful and unclean, and that we have sinned against You by thought, word and deed. Therefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C: O most merciful God, You have given Your only-begotten Son to die for us: have mercy upon us, and for His sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by Your Holy Spirit increase in us a true knowledge of You, and of Your will, and true obedience to Your Word, to the end that by Your grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

~Confessional Verse — *Hymn 268, v. 6 My Sins Are Countless As the Sands*

*My sins are countless as the sands,
My crimes, O God, are crying,
Deliver me from sin's dread bands
And save me, Lord, when dying;
O let me not, for evil past,
Be lost at last,
Grant me Thy grace, I pray Thee!*

~Absolution — *God's declaration of forgiveness* (ELH p. 43, 1; Mk 16:16, Jn 1:12)

P: Lift up your hearts unto God! Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us, and has given His only Son to die for us, and for His sake forgives us all our sins. To all who believe on His name He gives power to become the children of God, and has promised them His Holy Spirit. He who believes and is baptized will be saved. Grant this, Lord, unto us all. Amen.

~Hymn 116, vv. 3, 4 Come to Bethlehem

*3. Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
(Refrain)*

*4. See, within a manger laid,
Jesus, Lord of heav'n and earth,
Lend your voices, lend your aid
To proclaim the Savior's birth!
(Refrain)*

*Refrain:
Gloria in excelsis Deo;
Gloria in excelsis Deo.*

~Salutation — *The people's blessing for the pastor's work*

(ELH p. 45)

P: The Lord be with you.

C: ♪ **And with your spirit.**

~Collect — *The congregation's prayer of the day*

(ELH p. 45; p. 148, #9)

P: O God, as You once caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light, grant, we beseech You, that we who have known the mysteries of that Light here on earth may come to the fullness of Its joys in heaven; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever.

C: ♪ **Amen.**

4pm & 5:30pm Services Only

~Senior Choir "The Wexford Carol"

(Don Michael Dicie)

*Good people all this Christmas time,
Consider well, and bear in mind
What our Good God for us has done
In sending his begotten Son.
With Mary holy we should pray
to God with love this Christmas Day.
In Bethlehem this Christmas morn
There was a blessed Messiah born.*

*In Bethlehem did shepherds keep
Their flocks of lambs and feeding sheep,
To which the angels did appear
Which put the shepherds in great fear.
"Prepare and go," the angels said,
"To Bethlehem, be not afraid,
"For there you'll find this happy morn
A princely Babe, sweet Jesus born.*

*With thankful hearts and joyful mind,
The shepherds went the babe to find,
and as God's angels had foretold
They did our Saviour Christ to behold.
Within a manger he was laid,
And by his side the Virgin maid,
Attending to the Lord of Life
Who came to earth to end all strife.*

II. The Service of the Word



(After receiving the forgiveness of sins, we thanked God by singing His praises and praying to Him. He now increases our faith through His holy Word which we hear through the Lessons and especially through the Sermon where God's Word is applied to our lives today.)

~Old Testament Lesson

Isaiah 7:10-14 Moreover the Lord spoke again to Ahaz, saying, "Ask a sign for yourself from the Lord your God; ask it either in the depth or in the height above."

But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, nor will I test the Lord!"

Then he said, "Hear now, O house of David! Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

4pm & 5:30pm Services Only

~Senior Choir “O Sweetest Lord Jesus”

(J.S. Bach)

*O sweetest Lord Jesus, tender and mild,
The Father's will, You have fulfilled:
In human form, You came from heav'n,
That greatest gift, so freely giv'n:
O sweetest Lord Jesus, holy Child.*

*O sweetest Lord Jesus, tender and mild,
Who God and sinners reconciled:
Come fire in us, love's burning light,
That we in turn love You aright:
O sweetest Lord Jesus, holy Child.*

~Epistle Lesson

Titus 2:11-14 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.

~Hymn 123, vv. 1, 2, 3 *From Heaven Above*

1. *“From heav'n above to earth I come
To bear good news to ev'ry home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
Whereof I now will say and sing:*

2. *“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.*

3. *“'Tis Christ, our God, who far on high
Hath heard your sad and bitter cry;
Himself will your salvation be,
Himself from sin will make you free.*

~Holy Gospel Lesson

Luke 2: 1-14 And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into 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 wife, who was with child. So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, 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, goodwill toward men!"

~Hymn 119, vv. 1, 3 *Away In A Manger*

*1. Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus lay down His sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.*

*3. Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care
And take us to heaven to live with Thee there.*

~Apostles' Creed — Confession of faith

(ELH p. 46)

P: Let us confess our holy faith in the words of the 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there He shall 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.

~Chief Hymn 115, vv. 7, 8 *Hark! A Voice From Yonder Manger*

*7. Hark! A voice from yonder manger.
Soft and sweet, Doth entreat:
"Flee from woe and danger.
Brethren, from all ills that grieve you
You are freed; All you need!
I will surely give you."*

*8. Come, then, banish all your sadness,
One and all, Great and small;
Come with songs of gladness.
Love Him who with love is glowing;
Hail the Star Near and far
Light and joy bestowing.*

~Sermon Text

Luke 2:15 So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us."

~Sermon Message

"Let Us Go To Bethlehem"

- 1. Who goes to Bethlehem?*
- 2. What do they find there?*

~Hymn 138, vv. 1, 4 *Joy To The World*

*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.*

*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.*

~Christmas Eve Prayer

~Lord's Prayer

(ELH p. 49; Mt 6:9-13)

C: ♪ 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.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Ceremony

This part of our Christmas Eve service symbolizes how our Lord Jesus has entered into our world as a “light shining in the darkness” (John 1:5). The child born and announced in the midst of a dark Bethlehem night is the great “Light of the World” who brings His light of salvation to us (John 8:12). As the light is taken from the Christ-Candle in our Advent wreath, it is spread around our altar symbolizing how Christ and His light is spread to others—bringing us out of the darkness of sin and into God’s light and presence. This wonderful light of Christ also now enters into our hearts with His forgiveness and salvation as we receive His Word and Sacraments. (NOTE: Normally each person would be holding their own candle, signifying one’s own faith in Christ, that is then passed on to one’s neighbor and provides light for others around them. We pray that in coming years, as health concerns subside, we might resume this beloved practice of our congregation.)

~Responsory —

(Taken from Isaiah 59 & 60)

P: We hope for light, but look, there is only darkness.

C: We hope for bright light, but we walk around in the darkest gloom.

P: Yes, our rebellious deeds are many before You;

C: And our sins testify against us.

P: Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord is dawning upon you.

C: The Lord will dawn upon you, and His glory will be seen over you.

P: The sun will never again be your light by day, and the moon will not shine to provide brightness for you;

C: For the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your splendor.

P: Your sun will never again set, and your moon will not wane,

C: Because the Lord will be your everlasting light.

ALL: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, forevermore. Amen.

~Lighting of the Candles & Organ Voluntary

(Candlelight will be taken from the center “Christ Candle” in the Advent wreath. Ushers will proceed to light the candles stationed on our communion rail. Once the Ushers are finished lighting these candles, the Sanctuary lights will be dimmed for the remainder of the service.)

~Closing Hymn 140, *Silent Night*

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!*

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.*

4. *Silent night! Holy night!
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
With the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born.*

~**Benediction** — *Final blessing for God's people*

(ELH p. 59; Num 6:24-26)

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 give you peace.

C: ♪ **Amen, amen, amen.**

~Closing Prayer

(ELH p. 59)

P: O Lord, we render unto You our heartfelt thanks that You have taught us what You would have us believe and do. Help us, O God, by Your Holy Spirit, for the sake of Jesus Christ, to keep Your Word in pure hearts, that we thereby may be strengthened in faith, perfected in holiness, and comforted in life and death. Amen.

~Postlude

(See “Prayers for Worship”—ELH p. 40)

Liturgist/Preacher: Pastor John Petersen
Organist: 1st Service: Mark DeGarmeaux
Organist: 2nd Service: John Baumann
Organist: 3rd Service: Cassie Johnson
Preservice Music: Strings Group
Choir Director: Elisabeth Urtel
Cover Artwork by Bill Bukowski

Join Us for These Special Worship Services: *2020 Schedule*

Friday, **December 25**, Christmas Day

Office Closed

8:30 AM – Divine Service, w/Holy Communion

10:00 AM – Divine Service, w/Holy Communion

Thursday, **December 31**, New Year's Eve

Office Closed

6:30 PM – New Year's Eve Service, w/Holy Communion

Friday, **January 1**, New Year's Day

Office Closed





The Poinsettias displayed on and around the altar have been donated by our members in memory/honor of the following:

Members

Mercedes Hansen
Art & Terri Westphal
Brenda Garbers
Elli & Joe Fisher
Paul & Mary Jane Tweit
Rev. Ted & Diane Gullixson, Mark & Paul
Audrey Spear
John & Kari Sehloff
Bob & Ruth Heidenreich
Tom & Joni Bode
Mark & Michelle Graham
Bill & Suzanne Bohning
Phil & Jean Jurgenson
Dottie Kunkel
Greg & Janet Costello
Bruce Gratz
Peggy Harstad
Mark & Sharon Madson
Antonino Guerrero Jr.
Craig & Lisa Brown
Chad & Sally Sorensen

In Memory/Honor of

Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Ruth Widle Gullixson Webber
Stella & Raymond Richter
Loved Ones
Our Parents
Loved Ones
Our Fathers
Our Grandchildren
Luella Jurgenson
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
David Gratz
Mark O. Harstad
Our Parents
Loved Ones
Bea Brown
Loved Ones