



# CHRISTMAS EVE VESPERS

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

DECEMBER 24, 2020 † 5:00 P.M.

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH † NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA

# *Welcome to worship at St. John's!*

***We especially welcome all who are listening this morning!***

*During the season of COVID-19 pandemic, St. John's will continue to follow state and federal guidance for public gatherings. We deeply miss seeing our community in person and eating at the Lord's table together. We hold fast to the knowledge that we are not the first generation to experience fear of deadly disease, and we are not the first community separated unwillingly by circumstances.*

*We know that the resources of our faith can sustain us as we are apart.*

*Our prayer is that in this broadcast you can hear the Holy Spirit speaking to you through the Word; that you can sing along and join in fervent prayer for our world, and that as we share the peace, you can set an intention to reach out, in whatever ways this moment allows, to share God's love with someone else.*

## **Christmas Poinsettias 2020**

*In memory of Leonard Anderson by Phil & Barb Eaves*

*In memory of Mary Pelletier and Ken Nelson by the Pelletier Family*

*In Memory of David Halvorson by David & Cheryl Buck*

*In honor of the St. John's Chorale by Nathan Proctor*

*In celebration of Christmas by Bob & Cora Scholz*

*In honor of the St. John's Staff by Ruth Smestad Anglin*

*In memory of Richard, Carol, Matthew and Michelle Schaefer and Andrew and Anita Westerback by Emily Westerback*

*In honor of Dave Zdenek and Mark Gleason in their service on the audio/visual team during this challenging year by Pastors Pam Fickenscher and Jonathan Davis and Nathan Proctor*

*In honor of Nathan Proctor and David Sims in their faithful musical leadership during the pandemic by Pastor Pam Fickenscher*

*In memory of Ed Lindell by Herb & Pat Fick*

*In celebration of Christmas by Herb & Pat Fick*

*In honor of Nathan Proctor and David Sims by Duane & Jewell Proctor*

*In memory of our parents by David & Ruth Legvold*

*In memory of loved ones who are no longer with us by David & Debby Becker*

*In memory of our parents and friends by Rod & Deb Christensen*

# GATHERING IN GOD'S PRESENCE

**Prelude** — Lullabies on Christmas Eve

“I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve”

Stephen Gabrielsen

“Lullaby on Christmas Eve”

F. Melius Christiansen, arr. G. Winston Cassler

“Away in a Manger”

John Ferguson

“Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day”

James Biery

## Welcome and Announcements

**\*Hymn** — “O Come, All Ye Faithful” (#283)

ADESTE FIDELES



O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O come, ye, O  
 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal, born of a  
 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion, sing, all ye  
 Yea, Lord we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing; Je - sus, to



come ye to Beth - le - hem; come and be - hold him,  
 vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes; Son of the Fa - ther  
 cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove! Glo - ry to God . . . .  
 thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n! Word of the Fa - ther,



born the king of an - gels:  
 now in flesh ap - pear - ing! O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a -  
 in . . . the . . . high - est:  
 now in flesh ap - pear - ing:



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

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, sts. 1, 3-4; tr. unknown, st. 2; Music: attr. John Francis Wade

## \*Lighting of the Advent Wreath

- L** In times of violence and despair, an ancient prophet gives good news:  
The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.  
For a child has been born to us, wide will be the dominion and  
boundless the peace, with justice and righteousness forevermore.

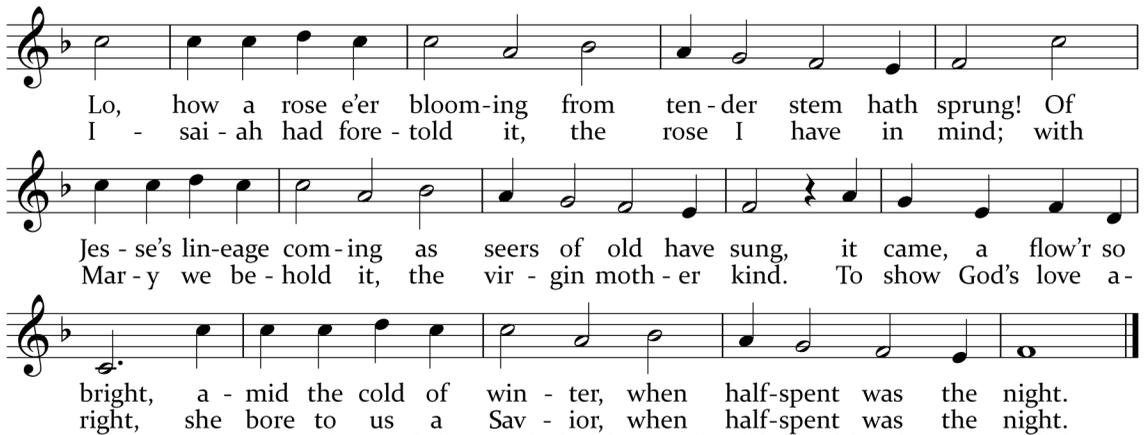
Tonight we light the Christ candle, thankful that God has come  
to us, not as a conquering hero but as a child, whose faithful,  
peaceful life will follow God's way of love.

Let us pray that we may know the warmth and brightness of Jesus Christ,  
and show Christ's love to the world.

- C** **Risen Christ, Light of the world,  
shine in our lives and shine among us now.**

## \*Hymn of Praise — “Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming” (#272)

ES IST EIN ROS



Lo, how a rose e'er bloom-ing from ten-der stem hath sprung! Of  
I - sai - ah had fore - told it, the rose I have in mind; with  
Jes - se's lin-eage com-ing as seers of old have sung, it came, a flow'r so  
Mar - y we be - hold it, the vir - gin moth - er kind. To show God's love a -  
bright, a - mid the cold of win - ter, when half-spent was the night.  
right, she bore to us a Sav - ior, when half-spent was the night.

Text: German carol, 15th cent.; tr. Theodore Baker; Music: *Alte catholische geistliche Kirchengesänge*, arr. Michael Praetorius

## \*Greeting

- P** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
**All** **And also with you.**

## \*Prayer of the Day

☐ Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

☑ Amen.

# HEARING GOD'S WORD

## First Reading — Isaiah 9:2-7

<sup>2</sup>The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.

<sup>3</sup>You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.

<sup>4</sup>For the yoke of their burden,  
and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

<sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup>For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup>His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.  
He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onward and forevermore.  
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

☐ The word of the Lord.

☑ Thanks be to God.

Psalmody — Psalm 98, “Joy to the World” (#267)

ANTIOCH



Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -  
 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their  
 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -  
 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him  
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings  
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture  
 plains re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing  
 flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
 ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n and heav'n and na - ture sing.  
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts; Music: English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason

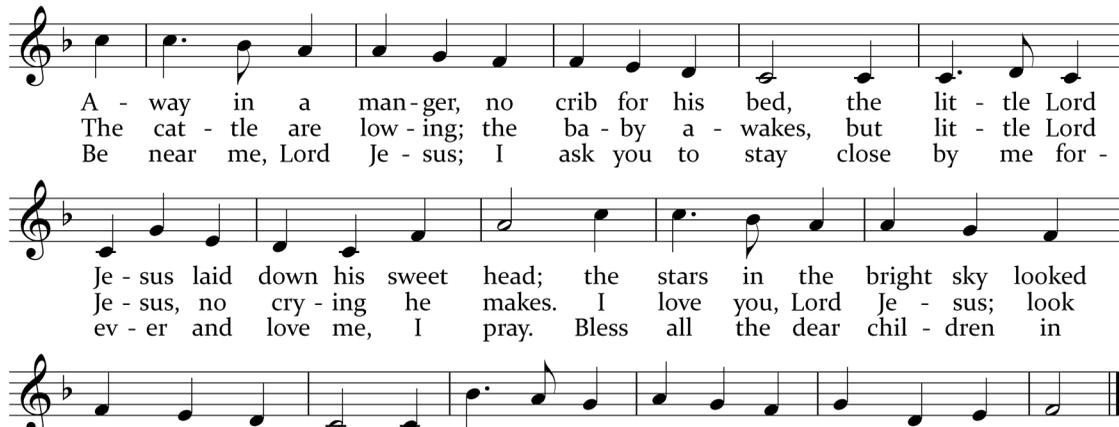
Children's Message

Luke 2:1-7

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

\*Hymn — “Away in a Manger” (#277)

AWAY IN A MANGER



A - way in a man-ger, no crib for his bed, the lit - tle Lord  
The cat - tle are low - ing; the ba - by a - wakes, but lit - tle Lord  
Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay close by me for -  
Je - sus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked  
Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes. I love you, Lord Je - sus; look  
ev - er and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil - dren in  
down where he lay, the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.  
down from the sky and stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.  
your ten - der care and fit us for heav - en, to live with you there.

Text: North American, 19th cent.; Music: James R. Murray

\*Gospel — Luke 2:8-20

**P** The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter.

**C** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup>“Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

<sup>15</sup>When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

**P** The Gospel of the Lord.

**C** **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn of the Day — “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (#279)

ST. LOUIS



O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!  
 For Christ is born of Mar - y, and, gath - ered all a - bove  
 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is giv'n!  
 O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by;  
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - d'ring love.  
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heav'n.  
 cast out our sin, and en - ter in, be born in us to - day.



yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light.  
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,  
 No ear may hear his com - ing; but, in this world of sin,  
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.  
 and prais - es sing to God the king, and peace to all the earth!  
 where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.  
 oh, come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Im - man - u - el!

Text: Phillips Brooks, Music: Lewis H. Redner

### \*Prayers of Intercession

*After each petition:*

- On this holy night,
- hear our prayer.

## \*Peace

☞ The peace of Christ be with you always. ☛ **And also with you.**

*You are invited to share God's peace with those around you.*

## Offering of Our Gifts

*Music at the Offering:*

“Bring a Torch, Jeannette Isabella”

Traditional, arr. David Scholz

*Kristin Partlo, soprano*

## \*Thanksgiving for the Word

☞ Holy God, everlasting Father,  
Prince of Peace, wonderful Counselor,  
at the birth of time your Word brought light into the world,  
and throughout the ages, you proclaim newness of life.

In the fullness of time, your Word became flesh,  
to shine in our world's darkness,  
to speak peace to all peoples,  
and to welcome us as members of your family.

Grant us now the gift of your Spirit,  
that held, nourished, and protected by your Word,  
we may live as your children,  
bearing your goodness throughout the world.  
All glory to you, holy God, now and forever.

☛ **Amen.**

## \*The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

# DEPARTING TO SERVE GOD'S WORLD

\*Hymn — "Silent Night, Holy Night!" (#281)

STILLE NACHT

Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,  
Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake  
Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,

all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.  
at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,  
love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,

Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly  
heav'n - ly hosts ... sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is  
with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your

peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.  
born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!  
birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, tr. John F. Young; Music: Franz Gruber

## \*Prayer for Peace

☞ Let us pray.

O God, it is your will to hold both heaven and earth in a single peace. Let the design of your great love shine on the waste of our wraths and sorrows, and give peace to your church, peace among nations, peace in our homes, and peace in our hearts; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

☞ Amen.

## \*Blessing

*Response:*

☞ Amen.

\*Postlude — “IN DULCI JUBILO—IN QUIET JOY”

Marcel Dupré



## **SERVING AT ST. JOHN'S TODAY:**

Presiding Pastor Pam Fickenscher

Preaching Pastor Jonathan Davis

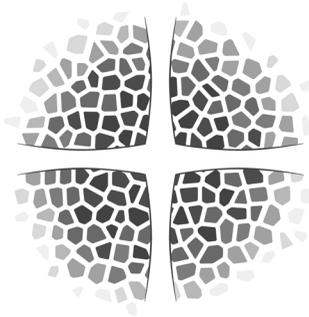
Assisting Minister Kristin Partlo

Organist Nathan Proctor

**Today's Radio Broadcast** is given in loving memory of Lowell and Eulalie Smestad and Helene Anglin by Ruth, Ronnie and Lucas Anglin. Sunday services are broadcast on KYMN Radio 1080AM / 95.1FM from 9:00-10:00 a.m. on Sundays. If you would like to sponsor a broadcast (cost is \$160), please contact the church office. Next available dates: February 28 and March 28. Video broadcasts can be seen on Northfield Community Television (NTV)-cable channel 187, Mondays at 7:30 p.m., Tuesdays at 12:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., Wednesdays at 2:00 p.m., and Fridays at 7:00 p.m.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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*Pam Fickenscher, Senior Pastor*

*Jonathan Davis, Associate Pastor*

*Carol Benson, Director of Jubilate Choir*

*Julie Brehmer, Director of Children's Ministry*

*Tim Byers, Facility Manager*

*Leah H. Garlie, Office Manager / Finance Manager*

*Angie Gehring, Shared Ministry Coordinator*

*Christy Hall-Holt, Welcome Ministry Coordinator*

*Emmanuel Kaghondi, Director of Ministry with Youth & Families*

*Sally Lindell, Parish Nurse*

*Arielle Loy, Director of Alleluia Choir*

*Zachery Pelletier, Director of Rejoice Ringers*

*Jaida Gehring / Marvin Perez, Security and Custodial Assistants*

*Nathan Proctor, Organist and Director of Worship, Music & Arts*

Call the church office or check the website for a complete listing of staff emails.