



Celebrating
THE BIRTH OF
Christ

Bethel Lutheran Church

December 24th, 2021

7:00 PM

The Nativity of Our Lord

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

Bethel Lutheran Church, Winchester, Virginia

Welcome to Bethel! Tonight we join with Christians from all around the world in celebrating the birth of Jesus. We're glad God has brought you to worship tonight and pray that you will be filled with the love, hope, and promise that the Christ Child brings to all of creation.

Many people are searching for a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. If that happens to be you, we invite you to contact our pastor or a member of our staff and join in our vision of being a "community growing DEEPER in faith and WIDER in love."

Worship Notes

Please note that the congregation's responses are in **bold** text.

- Child care is available for infants through three years of age. See an usher for assistance. Infants and young children are welcome at worship and are encouraged to sit with their families near the front of the church so that they can fully participate in worship. However, please respect the needs of other worshipers. Our well-trained nursery staff will be eager to welcome your children should they need some play time!
- Many thanks to those who ordered poinsettias for use in tonight's service. You are invited to take your poinsettia home following worship.
- A special "Thank You" to all our musicians participating in tonight's worship:

*George W. Donovan, Jr., Director of Music
Darline DeMott, Percussion
Alex Kimble, Double Bass
John Romano, Clarinet
Charlene Romano, Flute
Kevin Romano, Trumpet*

GATHERING

(*Indicates to please rise as you are able in body, mind, or in spirit.*)

In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

PRELUDE (6:45 PM)

Offered by Charlene and John Romano

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Welcome tonight to a celebration like no other!

This is the night of the holy birth.

Let the love of Jesus be born in your hearts and spirits!

Open our hearts to receive this blessed gift, Loving God.

Rejoice, good friends, the Good News is here!

Christ our Savior is born! Hallelujah! AMEN!

* HYMN

O Come All Ye Faithful

1 *O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!*

O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem; come and behold him, born the king of angels:

*Refrain: O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

2 *The highest, most holy, light of light eternal,*

born of a virgin, a mortal he comes; Son of the Father now in flesh appearing! (Refrain)

3 *Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,*

sing, all ye citizens of heaven above! Glory to God in the highest: (Refrain)

4 *Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;*

Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n! Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: (Refrain)

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711-1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880, sts. 1, 3-4; tr. unknown, st. 2

*WELCOME/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.**

WORD

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Pastor Dave

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

FIRST READING

Isaiah 9:2-7

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. ³You 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.⁴For 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. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For 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.⁷His 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.**

HYMN

Away in a Manger

*Please turn to Hymn # 277 in the Red Hymnal
Stanzas 1 & 2 are sung before the Gospel Reading.*

*GOSPEL READING

Luke 2:1-20

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph 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. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And 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.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth 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 heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” ¹⁵When 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.” ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary

treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Stanza 3 of “Away in A Manger” is sung.

SERMON

Pastor David Young

*HYMN OF THE DAY

God of Wonders

*Lord of all creation, of water, earth, and sky,
the heavens are Your tabernacle, glory to the Lord on high.*

*God of wonders beyond our galaxy, You are holy, holy.
The universe declares Your majesty, You are holy, holy.
Lord of heaven and earth. Lord of heaven and earth.*

*Early in the morning, I will celebrate the light,
When I stumble in the darkness, I will call Your name by night.*

*God of wonders beyond our galaxy, You are holy, holy.
The universe declares Your majesty, You are holy, holy.
Lord of heaven and earth. Lord of heaven and earth.*

*Hallelujah, to the Lord of heaven and earth! Hallelujah, to the Lord of heaven and earth,
Hallelujah, to the Lord of heaven and earth,*

*God of wonders beyond our galaxy, You are holy, holy.
The universe declares Your majesty, You are holy, holy.
Lord of heaven and earth. Lord of heaven and earth.*

(WM by M. Burd and S. Hindalong, arr. Robert Elkins; All Rights Reserved. Used by permission CCLI# 5607039)

*OUR AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.

We believe in God the Son, crucified and risen, who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high.

We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*You are invited to kneel or sit, as you are able. Each petition ends with,
“Lord, in your mercy”. The assembly responds, “**hear our prayer.**”*

*PEACE

*We greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace,
and may say, "Peace be with you," or similar words.*

HOLY COMMUNION

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

During this time, the table is set and music is shared as we meditate and reflect.

SPECIAL MUSIC

"O Holy Night!"

Words: J.S. Dwight; Music: A. Adam Arr. D. Allen

Offered by the Worship Choir and Musicians

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

* JESUS' WORDS ABOUT COMMUNION & THE 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; 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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Love has come: **God's love for all people.**

Come and eat, for Christ invites you.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Emmanuel, God with us, you grace us with life and breath and give us bread for the journey. Send us out in service to this world that you love, telling the amazing news of your coming to be Savior and Lord of all. **Amen.**

MUSIC WHILE CANDLES ARE LIT

“Peace, Peace” (Powell) and “Silent Night”

Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,
 1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake,
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,

ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.
 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,

Hol - der Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher
 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

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

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792–1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820–1885
 Music: STILLE NACHT, Franz Gruber, 1787–1863

SENDING

*BLESSING AND BENEDICTION

Grace from God's own heart, peace from the Child in the manger, and strength from the Spirit of life be blessings for you today and forever. **Amen.**

*HYMN

Go Tell it on the Mountain

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-en-s 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.

*DISMISSAL

Christ is born! Go tell it on the mountain and everywhere. **Thanks be to God.**
Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus. **Thanks be to God.**