



PROCLAMATION

The Birth of Christ

Many ages after God created the heavens and the earth,
when man and woman were formed in God's own image;
long after the great flood, when God set the rainbow
in the clouds as a sign of the covenant;
twenty-one centuries from the time of Abraham and Sarah;
thirteen centuries after Moses led God's people to freedom;
eleven centuries from the time of Ruth and the judges;
a thousand years from the anointing of David as king;
in the sixty-fifth week as Daniel's prophecy takes note;
in the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad;
the seven hundred and fifty-second year
from the founding of the city of Rome;
the forty-second year of the reign of Octavian Augustus;
in the sixth age of the world, all earth being at peace,
Jesus Christ, eternal God, Son of the eternal Father,
willing to hallow the world by his coming in mercy,
was born of the virgin Mary in Bethlehem of Judea.
Today is the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, God made flesh.

WELCOME!

Everyone is welcome. As a community of the people of God, the members of Central Lutheran Church are called to welcome all people regardless of age, economic status, ethnic background, gender, physical or mental ability, race or sexual orientation. We affirm that in Christ "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male or female" (Galatians 3:28). Christ has made us one.

Guests are welcome. We are pleased you are worshiping with us today. We invite guests to complete the "Welcome to Central" card found in the pew racks and leave it with an usher or place it in the offering plate. If you would like more information about Central, please speak to a staff member or call the church at 612-870-4416.

Children are welcome at all services. Worship bulletins for children and activity bags are available at sanctuary entrances. If you would prefer to use Central's nursery (available for children ages four and younger), you will find it **up the steps from the information desk at the south entrance (across from the fellowship hall)**. An usher or greeter will be glad to assist you.

We envision becoming a thriving, vibrant model of urban Lutheran ministry for the 21st century. This lofty vision requires us to ask each day if our goals for worship, learning, and service are clearly reaching a diverse neighborhood and city in language and action that reflect the world as well as our heritage.



Large print service folders,
assisted listening devices, and access seating
are available to aid your participation in worship.
Please inquire with an usher.



TWILIGHT SERVICE OF BLESSING

NATIVITY OF OUR LORD



Christmas Eve
December 24, 2009 + 4:00 p.m.

Central - in the heart of the city, welcomes all people to celebrate, discover and share the love of Christ

On God's throne we see the prince of peace

On a long winter evening we gather to proclaim the coming of the light. Isaiah announces that the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. In his letter to Titus Paul reminds us that the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all. In the familiar account of Christ's birth, the evening sky is bright with the heavenly host singing, "Glory to God in the highest." Amid our broken world we proclaim that the prince of peace is born among us. God comes to us in human flesh— so that we may be bearers of divine light to all the world.

GATHERING

*The Holy Spirit gathers
us in unity
on the eve of
Christ's birth.*

PRELUDE

Carols for Organ

The carillon calls the assembly to worship.

At the sound of the carillon, the assembly stands and faces the entrance.

PROCESSIONAL CAROL

(hymn) 283

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

DIALOG

A Jesus Christ is the Light of the World.

All The Light no darkness can overcome.

A Alleluia! Christ is born for us.

All Oh, come, let us adore him.

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

All The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.

A Those who dwell in a land of deep darkness, on them light has shined.

All We have seen Christ's glory, glory as of the only Son of the Father.

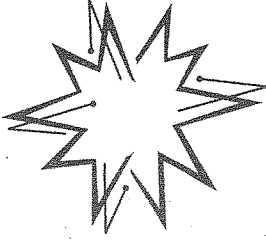
A For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

All In him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

GREETING

P The true light that enlightens all has come into the world!
Grace and peace be with you all.

All And also with you.



*God speaks to us in
scripture reading,
preaching,
and song*

*This poem promises
deliverance from Assyrian
oppression, a hope based on the
birth of a royal child with a
name full of promise. While
Judah's king will practice
justice and righteousness, the
real basis for faith lies in God's
passion for the people:
The zeal of the Lord of hosts
will do this!
(pew bible, front page 598)*

*The appearance of God's grace
in Jesus Christ brings
salvation for all humanity.
Consequently, in the present
we live wisely and justly while
also anticipating the hope of
our Savior's final appearance.
(pew bible, back page 190)*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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

A Amen.

WORD

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Children are invited to come forward; parents are welcome to come with their children.

CAROL BY THE ASSEMBLY

(hymn) 277

"Away in a Manger"

READING

A child is born for us

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.

Word of God, word of life.

A Thanks be to God.

READING

The grace of God has appeared

Titus 2:11-14

Paul writes to Titus:

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all,
¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions,
and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly,
¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory
of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity
and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Word of God, word of life.

A Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL PROCESSION

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

(hymn) 279

stanzas 1 & 2

Please stand to face the Gospel as it is proclaimed in the midst of the assembly.

GOSPEL

God with us

Luke 2:1-20

P The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

A Glory to you, O Lord.

*God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.
(pew bible, back page 50)*



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.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

A Praise to you, O Christ.

GOSPEL PROCESSION

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

(hymn) 279

stanzas 3 & 4

SERMON

"Home for Christmas"
silence for reflection

Pastor Rick Nelson

CAROL BY THE ASSEMBLY
"What Child Is This"

(hymn) 296

OFFERING

The offering is received.

"Allegro" from *Concerto in g minor*

Antonio Vivaldi

BLESSING

BLESSING OF FAMILIES AND VISITING THE CHAPELS

At Christmas we celebrate the coming of hope – for to us is born a Savior who is Christ the Lord. Because God has shown us such love and favor, we are bold to pray for God's blessing. Christmas is a time to gather together the whole family of God. Christmas is a time when families gather. And families take many forms – individuals, closely related groups, persons who live together, those who are bound together by marriage and affection. However your family is composed, we invite you to come forward for a blessing. There will be stations in front of the altar rail. Following your blessing we invite you to visit Christ the baby in the west chapel, and visit Christ the word in the east chapel. Come.

Music for violin

"Christmas Concerto"

Arcangelo Corelli

Carol by the assembly

"Go Tell It on the Mountain"

(hymn) 290

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

- A** Rejoicing in the Word made flesh,
let us pray for the church,
those in need, and all of God's creation.

after each petition:

Lord, in your mercy,

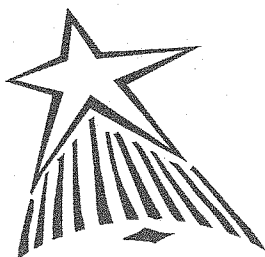
- Al** Hear our prayer.

- P** Trusting in your mercy,
O saving God,
we commend to you all for whom we pray,
through the one born among us, Jesus Christ our Lord.

- Al** Amen.

Lord's Prayer (1975)

- Al** 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.



SENDING

CANDLE LIGHTING

Following the lighting of candles, the assembly remains seated and sings the carol.

Carol by the assembly

"Silent Night, Holy Night!"

sung in harmony

Please raise your lighted candles  for the final line of each stanza.

AD 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,



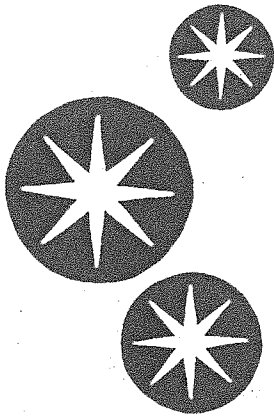
Heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior is born! Christ, the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from your holy face,



With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

*God blesses and sends us
in mission to the world*



BLESSING

P May you be filled with the wonder of Mary,
the obedience of Joseph,
the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the determination of the magi,
and the peace of the Christ child.
Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.

AD Amen.

Please extinguish your candles as the carol begins.

RECESSIONAL CAROL

(hymn) 267

"Joy to the World"

Please face the cross for the dismissal.

DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Your light has come.

AD Thanks be to God!

The carillon sends the assembly into mission.

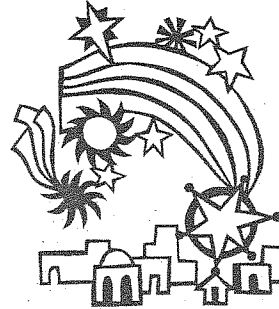
POSTLUDE

"Joy to the World"

arr. Craig Phillips

*Portions of the liturgy are from Sundays and Seasons.com © 2009 Augsburg Fortress.
All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress liturgies license #26515.*

SERVING TODAY



Pastor Kristen Jacobson *presiding*
Pastor Rick Nelson *preaching*
David West *assisting minister*
Maggie West *intercessor*
Austin Stanley, Chris Stanley *readers*
Mark Sedio *cantor/organist*
David Coltz, Sarah Coltz *violinists*

Pastor D. Foy Christopherson *liturgy director*
Richard Stegall *sacristan*
Veronica Garcia *crucifer*
Mary Greer *bells*
Brooke Lynne Olsson,
Brad and LaRae Olsson, Bradley Olsson *holy family*

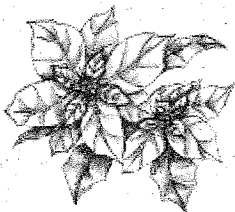
Bob Boldt *cover design*

Pastor D. Foy Christopherson,
Dennis & Louise Griffin, Mary Gunderson,
Bill Masche, Karen Snyder *hosts and greeters*

Kris Stedje, Christopher Haug,
David Nelson, Michael Wickman,
Paul Troselius, John Troselius,
Stephen Shearer, Karl Starr, Sara Klomp,
Maggie Peterson, Judith Stone *seasonal environment*

Phil & Laura Holst, Trudy Ness,
Mary Jo Olson, Michael Wickman,
Richard Stegall, David West *seasonal worship team*

The poinsettia garden in our sanctuary is a gift from donors who choose to honor and remember loved ones during our Christmas worship. A list of donors and those they honor and remember is available at all sanctuary entrances. At the close of the Christmas Day service tomorrow, you are invited to select a plant from the chancel, pick up an address card and bulletin from the boards in South Commons, and deliver our good wishes to one or more of our homebound members. Thank you for participating in this decades-long tradition of Central.



CHRISTMAS EVE
4:00 p.m.

CENTRAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
*in the heart of the city, welcomes all people
to celebrate, discover and share the love of Christ*
333 South Twelfth Street • Minneapolis, MN 55404
Office – 612.870-4416 • Infoline – 612.767-9101 • www.centralmpls.org

