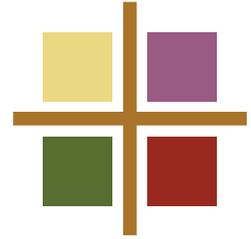


SAINT MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH

318 Chester Avenue • Moorestown, NJ 08057-2526

Rev. Dr. Eric J. Trozzo, Pastor



CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24, 2020

PRELUDE

“Once in Royal David’s City”

John Ness Beck/Douglas Wagner

Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as people of God.

CHRISTMAS PROCLAMATION

“I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: To you is born this day in the City of David, a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.” —Luke 2:10-11

Let your steadfast love come to us, O Lord.
Save us as you promised, we will trust your word.

HYMN

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

No. 283

SONG OF PRAISE

“Gloria”

arr. Frances L. Callahan

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

God speaks to us in scripture, preaching and song.

CHILDREN’S TIME

FIRST READING ISAIAH 9:2-7

2The 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



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the Lord of hosts will do this.

Response after the conclusion: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

“In Silent Night”

Mitchell B. Southall

In silent night, when all is calm and all is bright,
In silent night, O holy night
The Baby from heaven is born on this night.
The Child, innocent Child is born.

In silent night, as darkness flies and all is light;
In silent night, O holy night,
The Baby in radiance lay sleep on this night.
The Child, the holy Child is born.

In silent night, this Son of God and son of man.
Shall one day cry and later die
Upon a cross for you and me.
The Child, The Prince of Peace, is born.

SECOND READING TITUS 2:11-14

11The 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.

Response after the conclusion: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

“From Heaven Above To Earth I Come”

No. 268 (stanzas 8,12,13,14)

GOSPEL 1 LUKE 2:1-7

1In 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.

BELL ANTHEM

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

arr. Sandra Eithun

GOSPEL 2 LUKE 2:8-14

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!”



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HYMN

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

No. 270

GOSPEL 3 LUKE 2:15-20

[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.]

HYMN

“Angels We Have Heard on High” No. 289 arr. Anne Krentz Organ
(a gift from the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians)

SERMON

THE REV. DR. ERIC J. TROZZO

HYMN

“Joy to the World”

No. 296 arr. John Rutter

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray,

Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

THE PRAYERS ASSISTING MINISTER: HEAR US, O GOD. ALL: YOUR MERCY IS GREAT.

Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.
Response: **Your mercy is great.**

God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to you, in the name of Jesus.

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.

PEACE

The Peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

CANDLE LIGHTING CEREMONY

We give thanks for the arrival of hope—unrelenting and inexplicable.

Our hope in Christ shines on.

We give thanks for the arrival of peace—strong and unafraid.

The peace of Christ illuminates our way.



We give thanks for the arrival of joy—persistent and unpredictable.

The joy of Christ brightens our lives.

We give thanks for the arrival of love—fiery and holy.

The love of Christ comforts and challenges.

May we share in the radiance of Christ, one with another.

You are invited to light a candle.

ANTHEM

“O Holy Night”
(sung by Aurelia and Kristin Harp)

Adolphe Adam

HYMN

“Silent Night, Holy Night!”
(sung by Robert Edwin Steinfort)

No. 281

Sending

God blesses us and sends us into the world to serve our neighbor.

BLESSING

The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.
The God of all grace + bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Candles may be extinguished following the blessing).

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news. Christ is born!

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

“Lo! How a Rose/The Rose”

arr. Craig Hella Johnson

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
From tender stem hath sprung!

*Some say love, it is a river
That drowns the tender reed*

Of Jesse's lineage coming
As men of old have sung.

*Some say love, it is a razor
That leaves your soul to bleed*

It came a floweret bright

*Some say love, it is a hunger
An endless aching need*

Amid the cold of winter

*I say love, it is a flower
And you its only seed.*

When half-spent was the night.



*It's the heart afraid of breaking That never takes a chance,
It's the dream afraid of waking That never learns to dance,
It's the one who won't be taken, Who cannot seem to give,
And the soul afraid of dying That never learns to live.*

This Flower, whose fragrance tender
With sweetness fills the air,

*When the night has been too lonely
And the road has been too long,*

Dispels with glorious splendor
The darkness everywhere.

*And you think that love is only
For the lucky and strong,*

True Man, yet very God,

*Just remember in the winter
Far beneath the bitter snow,*

From sin and death he saves us...

*Lies the seed that with the sun's love
In the spring becomes a rose.*

And lightens every load.

About the music used in this service...

All Bell Choir anthems and O Holy Night were recorded at St. Matthew Lutheran Church in December of 2020. A big THANK YOU to Ethan Geehr for all of the time he spent recording us and ensuring we had several options from which to choose.

Additional recordings were selected from previous Advent Concerts and Christmas Eve services as follows:

- *O Come, All Ye Faithful* - Christmas Eve 2019
- *In Silent Night* - Advent Concert 2015
- *From Heaven Above to Earth I Come* - Advent Concert 2017
- *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* - Advent Concert 2015
- *Joy to the World* - Advent Concert 2015
- *Lo How a Rose/The Rose* - Advent Concert 2016

The arrangement of *Angels We Have Heard on High* is provided as a gift to all congregations by the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians with permission to use it within the context of our Christmas service.

Special thanks to Robert Edwin Steinfort for recording *Silent Night*. We hope you all sang along at home.