



**WELCOME TO
ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL**

2415 Silas Creek Parkway

Winston-Salem, NC 27103

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THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD – CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24, 2017 – 7:00 p.m.

***St. John's Mission: To help one more person get to Heaven
by pointing them to Jesus Christ.***

Pre-Service Prophecy: Isaiah 9:6-7

⁶ For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Pre-Service Prayer

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray; cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel! Amen.

Prelude A Garland of Carols

Welcome & Sharing of the Peace

(Please Stand)

Processional Hymn #379 "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

Invocation

P: In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

The Act of Adoration

P: In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit

C: Amen

P: The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;

C: on those living in the land of the shadow of death a Light has dawned. (Isaiah 9:2)

P: For the grace of God that brings salvation

C: has appeared to all people. (Titus 2:11)

P: Jesus Christ is born.

C: Alleluia! Amen!

P: On this holy night, we come to adore You, O Christ.

C: With devotion in our hearts, with praise on our lips, with joy in our souls, we worship You, Lord Jesus Christ.

P: Praise be to You, Father for sending Your Son.

C: Praise be to You, Jesus, for becoming one of us.

P: Praise be to You, Holy Spirit, for creating faith in us.

C: Amen.

Confession and Absolution

P: Recalling our sin and God's mercy, let us examine our lives and consciences. Holy and gracious God,

C: I, a poor sinner, plead guilty before You, O Lord, for all my sins. I have lived as if You did not matter and I mattered most. Your name I have not honored and my worship and prayers have faltered. I have not let Your love have its way with me and so my love for others has failed. There are those whom I have hurt, and those whom I have failed to help. My thoughts and desires are soiled with sin. I am sorry for all my sins and plead for Your mercy in Christ Jesus. Graciously forgive me all my sins and help me amend my sinful life. Amen.

P: God be merciful and strengthen your faith. In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: May He who began this good work in you bring it to completion on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. The peace of the Lord † be with you.

C: And also with you.

Introit *Psalm 24:1, 3-5; antiphon: Psalm 2:7*

P: I will tell of the decree: The Lord said to Me, "You are My Son; today I have begotten You."

C: The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein.

P: Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in His holy place?

C: He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.

P: He will receive blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

P: I will tell of the decree: The Lord said to Me, "You are My Son; today I have begotten You."

Hymn of Praise #368

"Angels from the Realms of Glory"

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray.

O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our Judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

(Be Seated)

First Lesson: A Christmas Dialogue

L: To a small quiet village in the backwaters of the Roman Empire; to a small band of shepherds, tending their flocks, as they had for years, and as others had done before then for centuries; to a time far removed from us and in a place we can only think of in romantic, unreal ways came an event that changed not only that time and that place but all of time and every place.

L: To infuse our hearts with joy and to open us to receive the grace that God showers into our lives,

C: the angels said to them, “To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” (Luke 2:11)

L: To give direction to those who have lost their way and wandered far from God,

C: the angel said to them, “This will be a sign for you: you will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.” (Luke 2:12)

L: To herald the Good News that God has entered human history and to celebrate the beginning of God’s actions to bring all people into fellowship with Him and with one another,

C: 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 among men with whom He is pleased!” (Luke 2:13)

L: To us this day the angels come again to bring their message of hope, love, peace, and joy. God has opened His heart through Christ; may our hearts also be opened that we may rightfully glorify and bless His holy name.

C: Thanks be to God! Christ the Savior is born! Alleluia! Amen.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Second Lesson: Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. ²⁰ But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. ²¹ And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.”

²² So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: ²³ “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.”

²⁴ Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, ²⁵ and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son.^[a] And he called His name JESUS. and he in God.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

Hymn of Response: #376 “Once in Royal David’s City” (vs. 1, 2, 5)
(*Please Stand*)

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 2nd chapter.

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

Holy Gospel: Luke 2:1-20

And it came to pass in those days *that* a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. ³ So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

⁴ 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, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife,^[a] who was with child. ⁶ So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. ⁷ 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.

⁸ Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And behold,^[b] an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this *will be* the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.”

¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”^[c]

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.” ¹⁶ And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. ¹⁷ Now when they had seen *Him*, they made widely^[d] known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. ¹⁸ And all those who heard *it* marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. ¹⁹ But Mary kept all these things and pondered *them* in her heart. ²⁰ Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Apostles' Creed

**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 sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will 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.**

(Be Seated)

Children's Message

Hymn of the Day #370 "What Child is This"

Sermon "The Waiting Room of Eternity"

Offering

Offertory Anthem "Shepherd's Carol"

William Billings

Candles are lit; John 1:1-14 is read

(Please Stand)

Hymn #363 – "Silent Night, Holy Night"

Closing Collect

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.**

Solo

"O Holy Night"
(Andrew René, baritone)

Adolphe Adam

Benediction

P: Out of darkness we have light,

C: Which made the angels sing this night:

P: "Glory to God and peace to men

C: Now and forevermore. Amen."

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and † give you peace.

C: Amen.

Hymn #387

“Joy to the World”

Postlude

“In dulci jubilo”

J.S. Bach

Worship Assistant: Steve Anderson

Lector: Lynne Wagenknecht

Altar Guild: Tina Kottlowski, Mary Rochester, Jackie Downey, Claudia Essbach

Lock-ups: John Williams, Don Adamick

Poinsettias are given to the glory of God by:

To the Glory of God:

Dale and Alice Mierisch

Bill and Sheryl Thorpe

Allison Weston

Bob and Martha Burke

Mark and Beth Meier

Arden and Glenda Lackey

Don and Clare Adamick

Steve Covington

Joan Happel

Mary Rochester

In memory of:

Richard Blizard by Jeanne Blizard

Bob Cleary by Dot Cleary

Dewey and Debbie Davidson by Jane Davidson

Joyce Clocker by Pastor and Gwen Clocker

Keith N Bowen Jr (Hatti's father) by Lauren and Hatti Bowen

In honor of:

Mary Barcio and Arline Urban by Dave and Gayle Barcio

Our children and grandchildren by Pastor and Gwen Clocker

You are welcome to take your flowers home to enjoy after the 10:00 service on Christmas Day.

Special thanks to Fran Johnson for sharing her nativity scene with us. It was made by Fran and Jim several years ago. It is on the table in the narthex.

Christmas Day worship service will be at 10:00 a.m. with Holy Communion.

New Year's Eve worship service will be at 7:00 p.m. with Holy Communion.