

Christmas Eve Vespers



Our Savior Lutheran Church
Westminster, MA

Gloria in Excelsis Deo! Christus Natus Est!

> *The liturgy is spoken.* <

HYMN – TUNE & TEXT: LSB 375

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| <p>1 Come, your hearts and voices raising,
Christ the Lord with gladness praising;
Loudly sing His love amazing,
Worthy folk of Christendom.</p> <p>2 Christ, from heav'n to us descending
And in love our race befriending;
In our need His help extending,
Saved us from the wily foe.</p> <p>3 Jacob's star in all its splendor
Beams with comfort sweet and tender,
Forcing Satan to surrender,
Breaking all the pow'rs of hell.</p> | <p>4 From the bondage that oppressed us,
From sin's fetters that possessed us,
From the grief that sore distressed us,
We, the captives, now are free.</p> <p>5 Oh, the joy beyond expressing
When by faith we grasp this blessing,
And to You we come confessing
That Your love has set us free.</p> <p>6 Gracious Child, we pray, O hear us,
From Your lowly manger cheer us,
Gently lead us and be near us
Till we join Your choir above.</p> |
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THE INCARNATION PROCLAIMED BY ST. JOHN

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only-begotten Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. No one has ever seen God; the only-begotten God, who is at the Father's side, He has made Him known.

God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, so that whoever believes in Him may not perish but have everlasting life.

John 1:1–3b, 4, 10–12, 14, 18; 3:16

O Lord, open Thou my lips
And my mouth shall show forth Thy praise.

Make haste, O God, to deliver me.
Make haste to help me, O Lord.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
 as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

The Prophecy through Isaiah

selections from the Prophet Isaiah

HYMN – TUNE & TEXT: LSB 357, STS. 1, 5–7

**1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
 And ransom captive Israel,
 That mourns in lonely exile here
 Until the Son of God appear**

Refrain **Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
 Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

**2 O come, Thou Key of David, come,
 And open wide our heav'nly home;
 Make safe the way that leads on high,
 And close the path to misery.**

Refrain

**3 O come, Thou Dayspring from on high,
 And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;
 Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
 And death's dark shadows put to flight.**

Refrain

**4 O come, Desire of nations, bind
 In one the hearts of all mankind;
 Bid Thou our sad divisions cease,
 And be Thyself our King of Peace.**

Refrain

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The Angel Appears to Joseph

Matthew 1:18–25

THE PSALMODY

Psalm 110; antiphon: v. 2a

The LORD sends forth from Zion Your mighty scepter.

*The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand,
 until I make your enemies your footstool."*

The LORD sends forth from Zion Your mighty scepter.

Rule in the midst of Your enemies!

Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of Your power, in holy garments;
from the womb of the morning, the dew of Your youth will be Yours.

The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind,

“You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

The LORD sends forth from Zion Your mighty scepter.

The Child Is Born

Luke 2:1–7

HYMN – TUNE: LSB 383 & TEXT: LSB 359

- 1 Lo, how a Rose e’er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse’s lineage coming as prophets long have sung,
It came, a flow’ret bright,
Amid the cold of winter, when half-spent was the night.
- 2 Isaiah ’twas foretold It, the Rose I have in mind;
With Mary we behold It, the virgin mother kind.
To show God’s love aright,
She bore to us a Savior, when half-spent was the night.
- 3 This Flow’r, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor the darkness ev’rywhere.
True man, yet very God,
From sin and death He saves us and lightens ev’ry load.
- 4 O Savior, child of Mary, who felt our human woe;
O Savior, King of glory, who dost our weakness know:
Bring us at length we pray
To the bright courts of heaven, and to the endless day.

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The Shepherds Hear the Good News

Luke 2:8–16

- 1 Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With the_angelic host proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”
- 2 Christ, by highest heav’n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come,
Offspring of a virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail the_incarate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel!
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”
- 3 Hail, the heav’n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Ris’n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

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The Sermon

THE APOSTLES’ CREED: THE SECOND ARTICLE AND ITS MEANING

I believe 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 that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood, and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

- 1 **What Child is this who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap, is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard while angels sing;
Haste! Haste to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary.**
- 2 **Why lies He in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,
The cross be borne for me, for you.
Hail! Hail the Word made flesh, the Babe, the Son of Mary.**
- 3 **Then bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh; come peasant, king, to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise the song on high,
The Virgin sings her lullaby:
Joy! Joy, for Christ is born, the Babe, the Son of Mary.**

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THE KYRIE

Mark 10:47

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

The Prayer for Christmas Eve

HYMN – TUNE & TEXT: LSB 358, STANZAS 1–4, 7–8, 13

- 1 **"From heav'n above to earth I come
To bear good news to ev'ry home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
Whereof I now will say and sing:**
- 2 **"To you this night is born a child
Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;
This little child of lowly birth
Shall be the joy of all the earth.**
- 3 **"This is the Christ, our God Most High,
Who hears your sad and bitter cry;
He will Himself your Savior be
From all your sins to set you free.**
- 4 **"He will on you the gifts bestow
Prepared by God for all below,
That in His kingdom, bright and fair,
You may with us His glory share."**

5 **Come here, my friends, lift up your eyes,
And see what in the manger lies.
Who is this child, so young and fair?
It is the Christ Child lying there.**

6 **Welcome to earth, O noble Guest,
Through whom the sinful world is blest!
You came to share my misery
That You might share Your joy with me.**

7 **Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled,
A quiet chamber set apart
For You to dwell within my heart.**

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THE LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9–13

**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.**

THE COLLECT FOR PEACE

Let us pray. O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

THE BENEDICAMUS

[Psalm 103:1]

*Bless we the Lord
Thanks be to God.*

THE BENEDICTION

2 Corinthians 13:14

*The grace of our Lord ✠ Jesus Christ and the love of God
and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all.
Amen.*

HYMN – SUNG A CAPPELLA AFTER ORGAN INTRODUCTION

1 **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.**

- 2 **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!**
- 3 **Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant, beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus Lord, at Thy birth.**

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Preacher: The Rev Peter F. Gregory

Organist: Mary Gregory

Liturgist: Jeremy Henrickson

Acolytes: Louis DiVito, Sim Gregory

Christmas Day Communion 11:00 am

Merry Christmas, friend. You are very welcome here.

Contact us with questions or prayer requests

Office@OurSaviorLCMS.com 978-874-2479 www.oursaviorlcms.com

1 Hager Park Road (Junction 140, 2, and 2A), Westminster, MA 01473