

"YOU WILL FIND A BABY

*wrapped in swaddling cloths
and lying in a manger."*

Luke 2:12



Saint Thomas Lutheran

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www.stl-eastpointe.org

Rev. Mark W. Hetzner, Senior Pastor

Rev. Richard A. VanBriggle, Specific Ministry Pastor

Christmas Eve - 2020

The Anticipation of Christmas

Prelude (4:00)

"Break Forth O Beauteous Heavenly Light"

J. Biery

Call to Worship

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

[LSB 379, vs. 1, 2, 4]

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!**

Highest, most holy, Light of Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes; Son of the Father
Now in flesh appearing! **Refrain**

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**

Opening Dialogue

L: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

L: Tonight we celebrate the faithfulness of our God.

C: **On Christmas he sent His Son to the earth to save us, just as he had promised.**

L: To Adam and Eve, on the very day that they were deceived by Satan, God came to them and said, "I will send my Son to the earth to crush the serpent's head."

C: **Tonight, we celebrate that God did it, just as He promised.**

L: As He called Abraham to leave the land where he lived and the people with whom he lived, God promised Abraham, "All the peoples of the earth will be blessed through you."

C: **Tonight, we and all peoples of the earth are blessed, just as He promised.**

L: Through the prophet Isaiah God promised, "A virgin will conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel – God with us."

C: **Tonight, we celebrate, for to us a child is born, to us a son is given!**

L: And his name is called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

C: **Yes, tonight we celebrate because the Child of the manger is Jesus, our God come to save.**

L: Almighty God, You made this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. Help us on this night to truly celebrate His coming to save us and guide us to walk in the light of Jesus' presence all our days, until we wake to the brightness of His glory in eternity; through your only Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

Call to Listen

"King of Love"

R. Strader

The Christmas Story

Call to Listen

"Angels from the Realms of Glory"

[LSB 367]

Angels from the realms of glory, Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story, Now proclaim Messiah's birth. Refrain

Refrain: Come and worship, come and worship; Worship Christ, the newborn King.

Shepherds in the field abiding, Watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing, Yonder shines the Infant Light. **Refrain**

Saints before the altar bending, Watching long in hope and fear,
Suddenly the Lord, descending, In His temple shall appear. **Refrain**

All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son,
Evermore your voices raising To the_ eternal Three in One. Refrain

The Birth of Jesus Foretold – to Mary

L: Centuries ago there was a young maid named Mary living in the small town of Nazareth. She was engaged to a man named Joseph. One day an angel named Gabriel came to Mary and said:

C: "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!"

L: Mary was greatly troubled by the angel, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be, so the angel said to her:

C: "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High."

L: This troubled Mary. She felt as though it would upset all her plans – and disappoint all of her family and friends. So she said to the angel:

C: "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

L: The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. The holy one to be born will be called the Son of God." And then, the angel gave her a sign to help her to adjust to God's plan:

C: "And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing is impossible with God."

L: As Mary then prepared to go visit Elizabeth and see with her own eyes what God was doing, she said:

C: "I am the Lord's servant. May it be done to me according to your word."

Hymn

"A Great and Mighty Wonder"

[LSB 383, vs. 1 & 4]

A great and mighty wonder, A full and holy cure:
The virgin bears the infant With virgin honor pure! **Refrain**

Refrain: Proclaim the Savior's birth: "To God on high be glory And peace to all the earth!"

Since all He comes to ransom, By all be He adored,
The infant born in Bethl'em, The Savior and the Lord. **Refrain**

The Birth of Jesus Foretold – to Joseph

L: Joseph was the name of the man who was engaged to Mary. When he discovered that, before they came together, Mary was expecting a baby, Joseph was greatly disturbed.

C: However, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, he resolved to divorce her quietly.

L: But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying:

C: “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

L: When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife but knew her not until she had given birth to a son.

C: And tonight, we celebrate that God did send His Son – Jesus – to the earth to save us, just as he promised.

Hymn

“From Heaven Above to Earth I Come”

[LSB 358, vs. 1-3, 13]

“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:

“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.

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

The Birth of Jesus

Luke 2:1-7

In those days Cesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Hymn

“Away in a Manger”

[LSB 364]

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay, The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky, And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care, And take us to heaven to live with Thee there.

The Shepherds and the Angels

Luke 2:8-14

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

Hymn

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

[LSB 368]

Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains. **Refrain**

Refrain: Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be Which inspire your heav'nly song? **Refrain**

Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King. **Refrain**

The Shepherds and the Baby

Luke 2:15-20

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

A Reflection

"God Was – and Is – Not Done Yet"

Anthem

"Savior of Sinners"

R. Strader

The Visit of the Magi

Matthew 2:1-12

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

"But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel."

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

Voluntary (4:00)

"In Silence He Came"

J. Martin

*The Church, as the body of Christ, uses these gifts
to further His mission of bringing the eternal peace of God to all nations*

Offertory

"Emmanuel"

[CH 243]

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, His name is called Emmanuel;
God with us, revealed in us; His name is called Emmanuel.

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Our Response to the Good News

Confession of Faith

(Luther's explanation to 2nd Article)

- L: With Mary and Joseph, shepherds and magi, and the entire church throughout the ages, we confess our faith in the child of the manger:
- C: 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.**

The Christmas Prayer

- L: Heavenly Father, we rejoice this night that you keep your promises and that you have provided your own dear Son, who has opened the door to paradise through his birth, death and resurrection from the dead.
- C: We rejoice that your Son, who became like us, now is changing us to be more like him.**
- L: We rejoice that nothing can separate us from your love – not sickness, death, anything!
- C: We pray that you would come to those who need to know your closeness and your healing presence.**
- L: O holy Child of Bethlehem, reveal yourself to them, we pray.
- C: Cast out our fear and empower us to share your love with all.**
- L: O Christ, our Head, strengthen your body, the Church, so that with our lives rooted in you, we may draw the attention of the world away from the many calamities, fears, and follies that distract and deceive, and toward you and your promises.
- C: Amen.**

God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his one and only Son into the world so that we might live through him. Love consists in this: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, if God loved us in this way, we also must love one another. No one has ever seen God. If we love one another, God remains in us and his love is made complete in us.

Ceremony of the Candles

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

The candles are electric. **Please do not turn yours on until you are given the specific instruction to do so.** And then leave it turned on until you place it on the tray in the lobby on your way out after communion.

The Word Became Flesh

John 1:1-5, 12-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God - children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Prayers

L: In the Child of the manger we find life, and that life is the light of the world.

C: **Tonight we celebrate his birth.**

L: He has made us to be the light of the world.

C: **Tonight we celebrate that he has come to save us.**

L: Open the eyes of our hearts, Lord Jesus

C: **That by faith we may see you.**

L: Knowing that You are among us, give us the courage and commitment we need to go into your world and be among the hurting, the forgotten, the lonely and the dying.

C: **Let the light of this night radiate through us into the lives of the people we meet daily. Use us to share your light with them.**

L: To You, O Lord, we commend all who are in any need, all who struggle through his night in which we take such delight, all who live in loneliness or fear, and all who have not acknowledged You as Savior and King as we pray as You have taught us:

C: **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**

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 Thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

The Sacrament of Christ’s Body and Blood

Words of Institution

Pre-Communion Canticle

“Now Sing We, Now Rejoice”

[LSB 386, vs. 1 & 2]

Now sing we, now rejoice, Now raise to heav’n our voice;
He from whom joy streameth Poor in a manger lies;
Not so brightly beameth The sun in yonder skies.
Thou my Savior art! Thou my Savior art!

Come from on high to me; I cannot rise to Thee.
Cheer my wearied spirit, O pure and holy Child;
Through Thy grace and merit, Blest Jesus, Lord most mild,
Draw me unto Thee! Draw me unto Thee!

Distribution

“Joy to the World”

[LSB 387}

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
Let ev’ry heart prepare Him room And heav’n and nature sing,
And heav’n and nature sing, And heav’n, and heav’n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found, Far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love.



EASY WAYS TO SUPPORT THE STL MISSION There is a variety of ways to give your support to the mission of STL. For many the easiest is to simply mail in a check or drop your offering off at the church.

If you prefer electronic giving, STL offers multiple options:

- Text "GIVE" to 1-586-800-2233
- Visit: <https://www.stl-eastpointe.org/2015/07/13/mission-support/>
- Go to <https://www.elexiogiving.com/app/giving/stthoms>
- Through your Pay Pal account
- Scan this Quick Response (QR) code

These will connect you to our on-line giving form, where you can have your mission support offering automatically taken from your checking account or use your credit or debit card (STL is charged extra fees for debit and credit card transactions). **You can even set up recurring giving with many of these options!** IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, OR DESIRE ASSISTANCE, PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE (586-772-3370).

Christmas Morning Communion @ 9:30 a.m.

"Includes a special message for the children"

**New Year's Eve Worship
5:00 p.m.**

**Undecorate the Church - January 9th
9:00 a.m. until finished**

**Clothing Closet Open - January 9th
11 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

Virtual Sunday School

Find information on THE FLOCK at www.STL-eastpointe.org.

Mission Support 2021



This year you will be assigned the same envelope # for offering envelopes as you had in 2020. Your box of envelopes is in your mail slot/box. If you do not have a mail slot/box, you will find them in the west entrance of the church. If you did not have envelopes in 2020 and would like some for 2021, please visit the table in the west entry way and sign up following the directions on the table. Remember you can always donate electronically – go to www.stl-eastpointe.com for more information and options. (or see today's worship bulletin) If you have any questions, contact Linda, in the church office.

Office will be closed from December 25th – January 4th

**Please be aware that the alarm will be set when office is closed,
and no activity is scheduled for the building!**

Call to arrange for time in the building!

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