

Order of Worship – December 27, 2020
A Service of Story and Song

Welcome – Stories by Dr. Ralph F. Wilson, Joyful Heart Renewal Ministries

LBW 67 Away In A Manger

Away in a manger no crib for his 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 poor baby wakes;
But little Lord Jesus no crying He makes.

I love you, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky;
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

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

Tune: American, 19th cent.; Text: American, 1885
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Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

The Cradle, a Christmas Story - Holly

Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. Almighty God,

C: you wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and yet more wonderfully restored it. In your mercy, let us share the divine life of the one who came to share our humanity, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

Message Hymn: WOV 638 Holy Child within the Manger

Holy Child within the manger,
Long ago yet ever near;
Come as friend to ev'ry stranger,
Come as hope for ev'ry fear.
As you lived to heal the broken,
Greet the outcast, free the bound,
As you taught us love unspoken,
Teach us now where you are found.

Once again we tell the story
How your love for us was shown,
When the image of your glory
Wore an image like our own.
Come, enlighten with your wisdom,

Come and fill us with your grace.
May the fire of your compassion
Kindle ev'ry land and race.

Holy Child within the manger,
Lead us ever in your way,
So we see in ev'ry stranger
How you come to us today.
In our lives and in our living
Give us strength to live as you,
That our hearts might be forgiving
And our spirits strong and true.

Words and Music by Marty Haugen
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The Innkeeper's Tale - Jon

Praise Song: Mary's Boy Child

Long time ago in Bethlehem
So the Holy Bible say
Mary's boy child, Jesus Christ
Was born on Christmas Day.

Hark now hear the angels sing
New king is born today
And folks will live for evermore
Because of Christmas Day.

While shepherds watched their flock by night,
They saw a bright new shining star
and heard a choir from heaven sing
The music came from afar.

Hark, now hear the angels sing,
New king is born today,
And folks will live for evermore,
Because of Christmas Day.

Now Joseph and his wife, Mary,
Came to Bethlehem that night,
They found no place to bear her child,
Not a single room was in sight.

By and by they found a little nook
In a stable all forlorn,
And in a manger cold and dark,
Mary's little boy child was born.

Hark now hear the angels sing,
New king is born today,
And folks will live for evermore
Because of Christmas Day

Trumpets sound and angels sing,
Listen to what they say,
That folks will live for evermore,
Because of Christmas Day.

*Words and music by Jester Hairston
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Lessons

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

- ¹⁰ I delight greatly in the LORD;
my soul rejoices in my God.
For he has clothed me with garments of salvation
and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
- ¹¹ For as the soil makes the sprout come up
and a garden causes seeds to grow,
so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness and praise
spring up before all nations.
- ^{62:1} For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
for Jerusalem's sake I will not remain quiet,
till her righteousness shines out like the dawn,
her salvation like a blazing torch.
- ² The nations will see your righteousness,
and all kings your glory;
you will be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will bestow.
- ³ You will be a crown of splendor in the LORD's hand,
a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Galatians 4:4-7

⁴ But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. ⁶ And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷ So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Gospel

P: The Gospel according to... **Luke 2:22-40**

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

²² When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord"), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons."

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit

that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

²⁹ "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you now dismiss your servant in peace.

³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all people,

³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel."

³³ The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, ³⁵ so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

³⁶ There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸ Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹ When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.

After the reading

P: The Gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

LBW 70 Go Tell It on the Mountain

Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and ev'rywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light.

Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and ev'rywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born!

The shepherds feared and trembled
when, lo, above the earth

Rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth.

Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and ev'rywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born!

Down in a lonely manger
the humble Christ was born;
And God sent us salvation
that blessed Christmas morn.

Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and ev'rywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born!

*Tune: African-American Spiritual; Text: John W. Work, Jr.
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Glory On – An Angel's Story – Pastor Pat

Song: LBW 55 Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

Good Christian friends, rejoice
With heart and soul and voice;
Give ye heed to what we say;
Jesus Christ is born today;

Ox and ass before him bow,
And he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!
Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice
With heart and soul and voice;
Now ye hear of endless bliss:
Jesus Christ was born for this!
He has opened heaven's door,
And we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this!
Christ was born for this!

Good Christian friends, rejoice
With heart and soul and voice;
Now ye need not fear the grave;
Jesus Christ was born to save!
Call you one and calls you all
To gain his everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save!
Christ was born to save!

*Tune: German Carol, 14th century; Text: tr. John M. Neale
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God's Shepherd – a Christmas Story - Ann

A Christmas Creed

WE BELIEVE in Jesus Christ and his gospel, born to us all so long ago in Bethlehem of Judea.
WE BELIEVE in Him whose birth glorified Bethlehem, but for whom there was no room in the Inn.
WE BELIEVE in Him whose guiding Star brought together to his Manger the humble Shepherds and the Wise Men.
WE BELIEVE in Him whose light can bring together in his Name the humble and the wise everywhere.
WE BELIEVE in Him who walked among the common people, and who was welcomed by those with open minds and yearning hearts, whom the poor, the oppressed, the discouraged, the sick and afflicted, welcomed and accepted as their Lord and Savior.
WE BELIEVE in Him whose life changed the course of history, over whom kings had no power, whose life humbled the proud, toppled the mighty, and elevated those of low degree.
WE BELIEVE in Him whose love changed human hearts for the better, and whose life and death on the Cross proved that it is more important to serve than to be served, and that the greatest are those who give their lives in service for others.
WE BELIEVE in Him who is the Prince of Peace, whose spirit makes for justice and peace among all peoples, everywhere.
WE BELIEVE that the Christmas spirit - the spirit of Christ - is the spirit that can change the world for the better through the power of the Holy Spirit and the fruits of love, faith and hope.

Passing the Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.
C: And also with you.

Prayers of the Church

A: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

A: ...Lord, in your mercy

C: Hear our prayer.

Prayers are concluded with

P: Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

Lord's Prayer

C: Our Father in heaven, may your name be honored. May your kingdom come. May what you want to happen be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, just as we also have forgiven those who sin against us. Keep us from falling into sin when we are tempted. Save us from the evil one. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen

Benediction

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

Closing Song: **LBW 50 Angels, from the Realms of Glory**

Angels, from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Once you sang creation's story;
Now proclaim Messiah's birth:
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn king.

Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
Watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing
Yonder shines the infant light.
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn king.

Sages, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great desire of nations,
You have seen his natal star.
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn king.

All creation, join in praising
God, the Father, Spirit, Son,
Evermore your voices raising
To the eternal Three in One.
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn king.

*Tune: Henry T. Smart; Text: James Montgomery
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Sending

A: Go in peace.

C: Thanks be to God.

A: Reflect the light of Christ!

C: Yes, Lord, we will!