



A Children's Christmas Service

PRESERVICE MUSIC

REFORMATION RINGERS

GREETING

**P** The Lord be with you. **C** And also with you.

ENTRANCE HYMN .....“Angels We Have Heard on High” [#368]

<sup>1</sup> Angels we have heard on high,  
Sweetly singing o’er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply,  
Echoing their joyous strains.

*Refrain*  
Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.

<sup>2</sup> Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
Which inspire your heav’nly song? (*Refrain*)

<sup>3</sup> Come to Bethlehem and see  
Him whose birth the angels sing;  
Come, adore on bended knee  
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. (*Refrain*)

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INVOCATION and OPENING SENTENCES

**P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**C** Amen.

**P** From heaven above,  
**C** The angels sing.

**P** On earth below,  
**C** Our praises bring.

**P** Our Lord has come,  
**C** With us to dwell.

**P** Now we go out:  
**C** Good News to tell!

<sup>①</sup>Latin for “Rejoice!” ... So called from the historic Introit for the day, which begins with Phil 4:4

## COLLECT OF THE DAY

**P** Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**A** Amen.

## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH<sup>②</sup> ..... The Third Candle: The Shepherds' Candle

*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. 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.* (St. Luke 2:8-10,15-18 NIV)

**P** As we light the Shepherds' Candle on our Advent wreath, we recall the shepherds outside Bethlehem who heard the news of Jesus' birth and came to worship Him. Remembering their joy and witness, we pray.

**A** Merciful Father, as shepherds of old, bring to us once again the good news that the Savior has come. Then send us abroad to share the news with others; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Amen.

**P** "I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God.

**C** "For He has clothed me in the garments of salvation,

**P** "and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness."

*Isaiah 61:10a*

**C** "Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances."

*1 Thessalonians 5:16-18a*

**P** Three candles are ignited as we prepare to receive the coming Light.

**C** "[He will] bestow on [you] ... a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair." "The one who calls you is faithful, and He will do it." *Isaiah 61:3a; 1 Thessalonians 5:24*

## ADVENT CANTICLE....."Oh, Come, O, Come, Emmanuel" [357:1,4]

<sup>1</sup> 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!

<sup>4</sup> O come, Thou Branch of Jesse's tree, Free them from Satan's tyranny  
That trust Thy mighty pow'r to save, And give them vic'try o'er the grave. (*refrain*)

Text: Psalterium Cationum Catholicarum, trans. John M Neale • Tune: French Processional, 15th cent. •  
Text & music: Public domain

## OLD TESTAMENT READING..... Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 Pew Bible, page 620

*["The LORD has anointed me to bring good news."]*

<sup>②</sup>The Advent wreath contains a number of symbols. The evergreen wreath symbolizes eternal life in Christ. The candles are symbolic of Jesus Christ, the Light of the World. The act of lighting more candles each week anticipates the imminent coming of Christ. The **Prophecy Candle** announces a period of waiting for our Lord. The **Bethlehem Candle** symbolizes preparing to receive the Christ Child. The **Shepherds' Candle** symbolizes sharing of the news of Christ's birth. The **Angels' Candle** symbolizes Christ's final coming on Judgment Day when He will appear in glory with all His angels. The **Christ Candle** is lighted on Christmas Eve. This central candle signifies that the Light of the World, Jesus, has come.

## GRADUAL and VERSE *Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26, alt.; St. Matthew 11:10*

**P** Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!

**C** Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!

**P** Behold, your King is coming to you,

**C** righteous and having salvation.

**P** Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

**C** From the house of the Lord we bless You.

**P** Behold, I send my messenger before your face,

**C** who will prepare your way before you.

## EPISTLE..... 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 Pew Bible, page 988

*["Rejoice always. Do not quench the Spirit."]*

## HOLY ✚ GOSPEL ..... St. John 1:6-8, 19-28 Pew Bible, page 886

*["Make straight the way of the Lord."]*

## HYMN OF THE DAY ..... "Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers" #515 (E)

## AN ADVENT MEDITATION – "Reason For Rejoicing" 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

## HYMN..... "What Child Is This" #370:1,2

<sup>1</sup> 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 and angels sing;

Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The babe, the son of Mary!

<sup>2</sup> 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 he borne for me, for you;

Hail, hail the word made flesh, The babe, the son of Mary!

Text: William C. Dix • Tune: English, 16<sup>th</sup> cent. • Text & music: Public domain

## THE MESSAGE PRESENTED BY THE CHILDREN

## NARRATION - St. Luke 2:1-7

## HYMN..... "Away in a Manger" [#364]

*Children:*

<sup>1</sup>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.

Choir:

<sup>2</sup>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.

Congregation:

<sup>3</sup>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.

NARRATION

RESPONSE:

From heav'n above,  
 To earth in love!

HYMN ..... “From Heaven Above to Earth I Come” #358:1–2

<sup>1</sup>“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:  
<sup>2</sup>“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.”

NARRATION - St. Luke 2:8–14

HYMN ..... “O Come, All Ye Faithful” #379:1–3

Congregation:

<sup>1</sup>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 (sung by all):*

O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

*Solo or Ensemble:*

<sup>2</sup>Highest, most holy, Light of Light eternal,  
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;  
Son of the Father Now in flesh appearing! (*Refrain*)

Congregation:

<sup>3</sup>Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God In the highest: (*Refrain*)

NARRATION

RESPONSE:

From heav’n above,  
 To earth in love!

HYMN ..... “From Heaven Above to Earth I Come” #358:5–6

Choir:

<sup>5</sup> “These are the signs that you shall mark: The swaddling clothes and manger dark.  
There you will find the infant laid By whom the heav’ns and earth were made.”

Congregation:

<sup>6</sup>How glad we’ll be to find it so! Then with the shepherds let us go  
To see what God for us has done In sending us His own dear Son.

NARRATION – St. Luke 2:15–20

NARRATION

HYMN ..... “Where Shepherds Lately Knelt” #369:1–2

Solo:

<sup>1</sup>Where shepherds lately knelt and kept the angel’s word,  
I come in half-belief, a pilgrim strangely stirred;  
But there is room and welcome there for me,  
But there is room and welcome there for me.

<sup>2</sup>In that unlikely place I find Him as they said:  
Sweet newborn babe, how frail! And in a manger bed:  
A still, small voice to cry one day for me,  
A still, small voice to cry one day for me.

Text: Jaroslav J. Vajda • Tune: Carl F. Schalk • Text: © 1986 Concordia Publishing House • Music: © GIA Publications

NARRATION

RESPONSE:

From heav’n above,  
 To earth in love!

HYMN ..... “From Heaven Above to Earth I Come” #358:13–14

<sup>13</sup> Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled,  
A quiet chamber set apart For You to dwell within my heart.

<sup>14</sup> My heart for very joy must leap; My lips no more can silence keep.  
I, too, must sing with joyful tongue That sweetest ancient cradlesong.

NARRATION

**RESPONSE:**

- From heav'n above,
- To earth in love!**

**HYMN** ..... “From Heaven Above to Earth I Come” #358:15

<sup>15</sup>Glory to God in highest heav'n, Who unto us His Son has giv'n!  
While angels sing with pious mirth A glad new year to all the earth.

**RESPONSE:**

- From heaven above,
- The angels sing.**
- On earth below,
- Our praises bring.**
- Our Lord has come,
- With us to dwell.**
- Now we go out:
- Good News to tell!**
- The angels gave  
*Children: Good News to tell!*
- The shepherds ran  
*Children: Good News to tell!*
- Now we go out:
- Good News to tell!**

**OFFERING and ATTENDANCE REGISTRATION**

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

- Let us pray to the Lord.
- Lord, have mercy.**

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**All** 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.

**BENEDICTION**

- 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.
- Amen.**

**HYMN OF DEPARTURE** ..... “Go Tell It on the Mountain” #388

*Refrain:*

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

<sup>1</sup>While shepherds kept their watching O'er silent flocks by night,  
Behold, throughout the heavens There shone a holy light. *(Refrain)*

<sup>2</sup>The shepherds feared and trembled When lo, above the earth  
Rang out the angel chorus That hailed our Savior's birth. *(Refrain)*

<sup>3</sup>Down in a lonely manger The humble Christ was born;  
And God sent us salvation That blessed Christmas morn. *(Refrain)*

**SILENT PRAYER**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS and SENDING:**

- Go in peace. Serve the Lord.  **Thanks be to God!**

+ + +

**Children and Youth Participating in Today's Service:**

Garrett Bowden	Matthew Jackson
Jessica Bowden	Sara Kimbrough
Jasmine Good	Carson Taylor
Christopher Harris	Hailey Taylor
Kristen Harris	Lexi Werner

**Special thanks** to Mary Bowden, Yanneth Harris, Donna Hughes, Devin and Melanie Jackson and Megan Taylor, for all their help.

**Musicians:** Sylvia Frenzel, Aaron Jackson, the Reformation Ringers, and the Choir, Devin Jackson, Music Director.



*From heaven above  
to earth I come*



## **THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT (GAUDETE)**

**December 17, 2017**

**OUR MISSION STATEMENT:** *Steadfast in the Word, Bethlehem Lutheran Church shares Christ and serves people with friendship in His love in all of God's world.*

**WELCOME TO BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH!** We extend a most joyous welcome to all who are worshipping today. We are confident the Lord will reveal Himself to you through this Divine Service so that you may know the joy of His presence in your life. To our guests: If you have any questions about the Christian faith or about Lutheran worship and practice, please ask the Pastor, one of our Elders, or any of our members. God bless you in Christ Jesus!

**AS WE GATHER:** The color of the candle we light this Sunday is pink. It's also the only pink candle on the wreath. Pink is a color of joy. In fact, this Third Sunday in Advent is commonly referred to as "Rejoice Sunday." But don't confuse the joy we celebrate this Advent with a passing happiness. No, the joy we have this Advent is greater. It lasts always. That's what today's Epistle assures us when Paul writes, "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18). Only in Jesus, the coming Savior, can we rejoice in good times and bad times, busy times and quiet times, sick times and healthy times. In Christ, we rejoice always!

**AS WE COME INTO THE SANCTUARY** - let us be sensitive to the needs of those who use the quiet and reverence of the Prelude as a time to prepare their hearts and minds for the Divine Service. **ALSO:** Out of respect for God's House and courtesy for other worshippers, please turn off all cell phones. Please also encourage one another to show respect to God, His Word, our fellow-worshippers, and our Pastor by limiting movement during Scripture Readings, Sermon & prayers. Thank you.

**THE CHANCEL FLOWERS** this Sunday are given to the Glory of God by Michael and Sylvia Frenzel in celebration of their 55th anniversary on Wednesday!

**IN TODAY'S SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON** reading the story of Stephen (Acts 6-7), the first martyr, the children learned how we are crushed by and enraged at the accusations of God's Law, but the Gospel comes to bring peace and quietness with the forgiveness of our sins. Talk with your children and point out that in church we hear from the pastor the same Word of God that Stephen preached: "Lord, do not hold this sin against them."

**SUNDAY MORNING ADULT BIBLE:** "Leviticus: Life in the Blood" -- Holiness. What is it? Leviticus shows how God goes to great lengths not only in defining true holiness, but also in sharing His holiness with his redeemed and ransomed people.

**THE COLOR FOR ADVENT** is blue, the color of hope and anticipation. Royal blue is a reminder that Jesus Christ is the King whose coming fulfilled God's promises of rescue from sin and death. The Advent Wreath is one way we mark this time of waiting, with an additional candle lit each week.

**ADVENT MID-WEEK SERIES:** This year's midweek Advent worship series theme is "God's Advent Family" - Interviews with Bible Characters from the CHRISTmass Story: This Wednesday, December 20th, we meet Mary, the mother of our Lord. Each service is preceded by a fellowship meal. Make sure you put this time of Advent preparation, fellowship and worship on your schedule!

**ADVENT MEALS:** Hamburgers will be provided for our final Advent Midweek supper on December 20th Please bring sides and fixings to accompany the hamburgers. See Megan Taylor if you have any questions.

**THE SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS SERVICE** will be held during Divine Service today.

**BETHLEHEM'S CHRISTMAS DINNER** will be following the Divine Service today. Please stay and enjoy this season of fellowship with our church family.

**YOUTH ACTIVITIES:** On Saturday, December 23rd at 5:00 p.m., the youth plan to go Christmas caroling and on Tuesday the 26th, they will be going to the Gaylord in Grapevine. Everyone is invited. Please see Yanneth Harris for information.

**OUR CHRISTMAS SERVICES SCHEDULE:** On Christmas Eve our Service of Carols, Lessons and Candlelight is at 7 p.m, Sunday, December 24. The Christmas Day Divine Service (with Holy Communion) is Monday at 10:15 a.m..

**FLOWER CHART FOR 2018:** The cost of the Chancel flowers are \$25 PER VASE. Members have the option to purchase one or two arrangements.

**A REMINDER CONCERNING THE CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING:** It is the tradition here at Bethlehem that this offering is divided by the Board of Elders as Christmas gifts to the Pastor, Organists, Pianist, and Church Secretary.

**CHILI FRIDAY:** It's not too early to start thinking about our annual Chili Friday! We are looking for helpers and silent auction donations. Please see Megan Taylor or Donna Hughes if you would like to help.

**NEWSLETTER** - The **DECEMBER** edition of *The Bethlehem Star* newsletter is in your mailbox in the narthex. Make sure you have picked up your copy. Items for the January edition are due in the church office TODAY. Thank you!

**NEW PORTALS OF PRAYER** devotion booklets for January through March are on the shelf in the narthex. Make sure you have one and pick up an extra copy for a friend!

**STEWARDSHIP VIEWPOINT:** (1 Thessalonians 5:18) "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." Christians express their thanks to God in many ways: in prayer, in giving to the Lord, in acts of service to others, in faithful living in their daily callings. Everything we do to honor God in our lives is a means of returning thanks for the Lord's many gifts to us.

**LIFE QUOTES:** "The hinge of history can be found on a Bethlehem door." *Evangelist J. John* • [www.lutheransforlife.org](http://www.lutheransforlife.org)

**ABOUT THE COVER:** St. John wrote that John the Baptist came to bear witness about the true light. John the Baptist believed in God and the coming Savior, and he was sent to tell others about the light that Jesus brings to dispel the darkness of sin. We have a God-given purpose in life as children of God. We are to tell others about the light of God's forgiveness through Christ Jesus, our Savior.

<b><u>OUR STEWARDSHIP LAST WEEK</u></b>			
<b><u>OFFERINGS</u></b>		<b><u>ATTENDANCE</u></b>	
General Offering	\$3242.30	Sunday School	37
[ <u>Needed per week:</u>	\$2,668.00]	Divine Service	69
Building Fund	\$20.00	Communion	63
[ <u>Needed per week:</u>	\$350.00]	Advent II (12/13)	44
Advent I	\$567.00		
Scholarship Fund	\$100.00		

<b>OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY THIS WEEK</b>	
<b>Sunday (12/17)</b>	<p><b>Advent 3</b>  <b>Children’s Christmas Service</b>  <b>Sunday School &amp; Bible Classes</b>  <b>9:00 AM</b>  <b>10:15 AM</b>                      Acolyte: Matthew Jackson                      Pianist: Sylvia Frenzel                      Altar Guild: Lori Fortner &amp; Dot James                      Duty Elder: Gil Daughtrey                      After Church: Holiday Dinner / Evangelism Meeting / Newsletter items due</p>
<b>Wednesday (12/20)</b>	<p><b>5:15 PM</b> <b>Choir Practice</b>  <b>6:00 PM</b> <b>Advent Meal</b>  <b>7:00 PM</b> <b>Advent Midweek III</b>                      Acolyte: Jessica Bowden                      Organist: Mary Bowden                      Duty Elder: Gil Daughtrey</p>
<b>Saturday (12/23)</b>	<p><b>5:00 PM</b> <b>Youth Christmas Caroling</b></p>
<b>Sunday (12/24)</b>	<p><b>Advent 4</b>  <b>Christmas Eve</b>  <b>Sunday School &amp; Bible Classes</b>  <b>9:00 AM</b>  <b>10:15 AM</b> <b>Divine Service (Setting 1)</b>                      Acolyte: Christopher Harris                      Organist: Aaron Jackson                      Altar Guild: Lori Fortner &amp; Dot James                      Duty Elder: Gil Daughtrey  <b>7:00 PM</b> <b>Service of Carols and Candlelight</b></p>

**IN THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH:**

**National Leadership and Military:** including members Kyle Lawson and Kyle Shepherd, as well as Robert Garcia [Juanita’s son], and Jeremy Stafford [Marcy Hogan’s nephew]

**Health needs - Members:** **Danny Howard** (12/17), George Nelson, Marjorie Smith (now at TruCare), Ann Worsham (12/10); **Friends:** **Dalton Durbin** (12/17), **Eva Ludwig** (12/17), **Marie Sala** (12/117) [Sandy Teets step-mom], Joan Smith (12/3) [Dorothy Jackson’s niece]

**Homebound - Members:** Dorothy Jackson, Martha Kaudelka, Ardelle Samford, Johnnie Weaver ... **Friends:** Benjamin Garcia

**Celebrating this week: Birthdays:** Calvin Taylor ... **Wedding Anniversaries:** Michael & Sylvia Frenzel

**NOTE:** New prayers requests are in **BOLD**. Prayers submitted will stay on the prayer list for two weeks unless updated. Please inform the Pastor and the Church Office regarding the status of submitted prayers so we may be timely and up-to-date in petitions to our gracious God.

**TO ADD PETITIONS TO OUR PRAYER CHAIN CALL LEA ROSIER AT (903) 729-1879 or (903) 391-5678**

www.belctx.org  
info@belctx.org

Rev. David L. Adler,  
Pastor

**BETHLEHEM EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
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Sunday School: 9:00 AM  
 Adult Bible Class: 9:00 AM  
 Divine Service: 10:15 AM

*“To Give Light to Those who Sit in Darkness”*

