

Carols at the Crèche

[St. Thomas Lutheran Church](#)

Bloomington, Indiana

December 24, 2020, 4pm

+Gathering+

Welcome

Greeting

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

And also with you.

Carol of Praise - Angels We Have Heard on High

1 Angels we have heard on high,
singing sweetly through the night,
and the mountains in reply
echoing their brave delight.

Refrain

Gloria in excelsis Deo,
gloria in excelsis Deo.

2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why these songs of happy cheer?
What great brightness did you see?
What glad tidings did you hear? *Refrain*

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

4 See him in a manger laid
whom the angels praise above.
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,
while we raise our hearts in love. *Refrain*

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

God and Father of Jesus, on this holy night you give us your Son, the Lord of the universe and the savior of all peoples, as an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. In the first moments of his life you showed us the paradox of your love. Open us up to the mystery of his powerlessness and enable us to recognize him in this plain-spoken word. This we ask in his name, the one who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

+Word+

Reading: Isaiah 62:6-12

Upon your walls, O Jerusalem,
I have posted sentinels;
all day and all night
they shall never be silent.
You who remind the Lord,
take no rest,
and give him no rest
until he establishes Jerusalem
and makes it renowned throughout the earth.
The Lord has sworn by his right hand
and by his mighty arm:
I will not again give your grain
to be food for your enemies,
and foreigners shall not drink the wine
for which you have labored;
but those who garner it shall eat it
and praise the Lord,
and those who gather it shall drink it
in my holy courts.

Go through, go through the gates,
prepare the way for the people;
build up, build up the highway,
clear it of stones,
lift up an ensign over the peoples.
The Lord has proclaimed
to the end of the earth:
Say to daughter Zion,
'See, your salvation comes;

his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.'
They shall be called, 'The Holy People,
The Redeemed of the Lord';
and you shall be called, 'Sought Out,
A City Not Forsaken.'

Reading: Luke 2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Reflection: “Star Giving,” by Ann Weems from *Kneeling in Bethlehem*

Carol: In the Bleak Midwinter

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign.
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
the Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Angels and archangels may have gathered there,
cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;
but his mother only, in her maiden bliss,
worshiped the beloved with a kiss.

What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

+Blessing+

Blessing the Creche

O Lord our God, with Mary and Joseph, angels and shepherds, and the animals in the stable, we gather around your Son, born for us. Bless us with your holy presence and inspire us to help those who have no place to dwell. Be with us that we might share Christ's love with all the world, for he is our light and salvation. Glory in heaven and peace on earth, now and forever. **Amen.**

Benediction

Beloved, may God bless you, Father, +Son, and Holy Spirit, this night and always.
Amen.

Carol: Silent Night

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!

Dismissal

Go in peace, Beloved. Share the Good News. **Thanks be to God.**