



...unto us a Son is given

CHRISTMAS DAY

December 25, 2023

(The service starts with the sanctuary lights out and Christmas carols playing.)

P: "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways,

C: but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe." *(Heb. 1:1-2)*

(Lighting of first candle)

P: God was specific enough for us to let us know that:

C: "You, Bethlehem, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one whose origins are from old, from ancient times." *(Micah 5:2)*

(Lighting of second candle)

P: God was generous enough to send Jesus because

C: "He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy." *(Titus 3:5)*

(Lighting of third candle)

P: Isaiah the prophet informs us,

C: "To us a child is born, to us a son is given." *(Isaiah 9:6)*

(Lighting of fourth candle)

P: Of this child incredible things will be, for

C: "the government will be on his shoulders. And He will be called wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." *(Is. 9:6)*

(Lighting of Christ candle)

P: The great news this Christmas day is,

C: "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord!" *(Luke 2:11)*

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

Old Testament reading: Isaiah 52:7-10

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!" Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for Joy. When the Lord returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes. Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the Lord has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God."

(As the baby Jesus is placed in the manger, the lights ascend, and we all sing for Joy!)

Opening Hymn

"Joy to the World"

LSB 387

Prayer of the Day

C: Almighty God, you have made yourself known in your Son, Jesus, redeemer of the world. We pray that his birth as a human child will set us free from the old slavery of our sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, now and forever. Amen

Hymn

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

LSB 361

Gospel reading: Luke 2:1-20

In those days Caesar 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.

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."

