

And the Word
became flesh
and lived among us,
and we have seen his glory,
the glory as of
a father's only son,
full of grace and truth.

(John 1:14)

Holy Communion

The Nativity of Our Lord

December 25, 2011

Christmas Day

10:00 a.m.



WELCOME TO GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

For all who worship:

In Holy Communion the crucified and risen Christ is present, giving his true body and blood as food and drink. All baptized Christians are invited to the table where Christ is host.

Fellowship pads are located in each pew. All are asked to sign them as the offering is gathered. To better acquaint yourself with others in your pew, please pass the pad back to the center aisle.

Please silence all cell phones and pagers. Thank you.

For the little ones:

Children's resources, including worship bulletins and booster seats, are available in the narthex and from the ushers.

Nursery care is provided for children ages 4 and under. Nursery facilities are located on the lower level, accessible via the elevator or the steps in the atrium. A silent paging system allows the nursery staff to contact parents when needed.

For assistance in worship:

For those who find it difficult to stand during any part of the service, please remain seated and contact an usher if you would like Holy Communion to be brought to you.

Sound enhancement units and **large print bulletins** are available in the back of the church and from the ushers.

As we gather:

There is a perfectly rational explanation for the events behind the prophetic flight of fancy in the first reading. Persia conquered Babylon. Cyrus, king of Persia, decided it was in Persia's interest to treat with kindness the nations mistreated by Babylon. Cyrus allowed the people of Judah to return to their homeland to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple on Mt. Zion.

The prophet knew the rational explanation was superficial. More is happening than meets the eye. The Biblical writers saw God at work in the events of world history. The author of Hebrews explained the Old Testament as God's repeated efforts to be in communion with us. Long ago God attempted that through the prophets. But now God "has spoken to us by a Son." John tells us the eternal Word of God was made flesh and dwelt among us. God is so intent on being in community with us that God comes in our flesh to offer forgiveness and reconciliation. We put him to death. Jesus rose from the dead to continue seeking reconciliation and communion with us. At this Christ Mass Jesus puts himself into our hands and mouths and bodies so that through him we might be part of the community that is God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

✠ GATHERING ✠

PRELUDE: Duet in A Major

Georg Philipp Telemann

Largo—Allegro—Largo—Vivace

We face the processional cross as we sing.

ENTRANCE HYMN: Joy to the World

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
 3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the

ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -

room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
 plains re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
 flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his
 and heav'n and na - ture sing, and

sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.
 heav'n and na - ture sing,

APOSTOLIC GREETING & PRAYER OF THE DAY

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

G **And also with you.**

P Let us pray.

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

G **Amen.**

We sit.

✠ WORD ✠

FIRST READING: Isaiah 52:7–10

⁷How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.” ⁸Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the LORD to Zion. ⁹Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. ¹⁰The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

L The Word of the Lord.

G **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 98

Antiphon by Michael D. Costello

ANTIPHON: All of the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

L Sing to the Lord | a new song,*
for he has done | marvelous things.

G **With his right hand and his | holy arm***
has he won for him- | self the victory.

L The Lord has made | known his victory;*
his righteousness has he openly shown in the sight | of the nations.

G **He remembers his mercy and faithfulness to the | house of Israel,***
and all the ends of the earth have seen the victory | of our God.

L Shout with joy to the LORD, | all you lands;*
lift up your voice, re- | joice, and sing.

G **Sing to the LORD | with the harp,***
with the harp and the | voice of song.

- L** With trumpets and the sound | of the horn*
 shout with joy before the | king, the LORD.
- C** **Let the sea make a noise and all | that is in it,***
the lands and those who | dwell therein.
- L** Let the rivers | clap their hands,*
 and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD, when he comes to | judge the earth.
- C** **In righteousness shall he | judge the world***
and the peo- | ples with equity.

SECOND READING: Hebrews 1:1–12

¹Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. ³He is the reflection of God’s glory and the exact imprint of God’s very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word.

When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. ⁵For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you”? Or again, “I will be his Father, and he will be my Son”? ⁶And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.” ⁷Of the angels he says, “He makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire.” ⁸But of the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of your kingdom. ⁹You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.” ¹⁰And, “In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands; ¹¹they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like clothing; ¹²like a cloak you will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will never end.”

L The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

We stand and sing, facing the procession for the Gospel Reading.

GOSPEL VERSE: John 1:14

Setting by Egil Hovland

The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.
 We beheld the glory of the Father, full of grace and truth.



HOLY GOSPEL: John 1:1–14

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

We face the procession as it returns to the chancel, then sit for the cantata.

CANTATA: Christen, ätzet diesen Tag, BWV 63
(Christians, engrave this day)

Johann Sebastian Bach

*Translation of the German text and notes corresponding to each movement are below.
Background notes for the cantata are found on pages 24 and 25 in this worship folder.*

1. CHORUS

*Christen, ätzet diesen Tag
In Metall und Marmorsteine!
Kommt und eilt mit mir zur Krippen
Und erweist mit frohen Lippen
Euren Dank und eure Pflicht;
Denn der Strahl, so da einbricht,
Zeigt sich euch zum Gnadenscheine.*

Christians, engrave this day
Both in bronze and stones of marble!
Come, quick, join me at the manger
And display with lips of gladness
All your thanks and all you owe;
For the light which here breaks forth
Shows to you a sign of blessing.

The cantata opens with a great movement of general praise and thanksgiving to God. The joyful chorus in the triple meter of a *gigue* dance opens in a more chordal and vertical style than Bach's usually more linear, imitative writing. The orchestra begins impressively, the chorus enters with new material and the orchestra follows by repeating the beginning music. A more flowing middle section for chorus and instruments follows. The final *da capo* direction indicates a return to the beginning for a repetition of the first instrumental-vocal-instrumental section.

2. RECITATIVE (Alto)

*O selger Tag! O ungemeines Heute,
An dem das Heil der Welt,
Der Shilo, den Gott schon im Paradies
Dem menschlichen Geschlecht verbiess,
Nunmehr sich vollkommen dargestellt
Und suchet Israel
Von der Gefangenschaft und Sklavenketten
Des Satans zu erretten.
Du liebster Gott, was sind wir arme doch?
Ein abgefallnes Volk, so dich verlassen;
Und dennoch willst du uns nicht hassen;
Denn eh wir sollen noch
Nach dem Verdienst zu Boden liegen,
Eh muss die Gottheit sich bequemen,
Die menschliche Natur an sich zu nehmen
Und auf der Erden
Im Hirtenstall zu einem Kinde werden.
O unbegreifliches, doch seliges Verfügen!*

O blessed day! O day exceeding rare, this,
On which the world's true help,
The Shiloh, whom God in the Paradise
To humankind's race already pledged,
From this time forth was perfectly revealed
And seeketh Israel now
From the prison and the chains of slavery
Of Satan to deliver.
Thou dearest God, what are we wretches then?
A people fallen low which thee forsaketh;
And even still thou wouldst not hate us;
For ere we should
According to our merits lie in ruin,
Ere that, must deity be willing,
The nature of humankind itself assuming,
Upon earth dwelling,
In shepherd's stall to be a child incarnate.
O inconceivable, yet blessed dispensation!

The text deplores the bonds of sin that bind us but gives thanks to Shiloh (Hebrew for Messiah or Hero) in the coming of the Child Incarnate of God. Strings accompany the florid vocal line in sustained chords. A long, sinuous phrase provides a descriptive setting for *erretten* (to save) referring to the deliverance from the chains of sin that enslave us.

3. ARIA (Soprano & Bass)

*Gott, du hast es wohl gefüget,
Was uns itzo widerfährt.
Drum lasst uns auf ihn stets trauen
Und auf seine Gnade bauen,
Denn er hat uns dies beschert,
Was uns ewig nun vergnüget.*

God, thou hast all well accomplished
Which to us now comes to pass.
Let us then forever trust him
And rely upon his favor,
For he hath on us bestowed
What shall ever be our pleasure.

Bach must have had an outstanding oboist who could negotiate the twists and turns of the descanting solo that soars beautifully above the imitative duet of the singers in this abbreviated *da capo* aria. The text refers to the gift of God that has “come to pass,” without specifically naming the Christ Child.

4. RECITATIVE (Tenor)

*So kehret sich nun heut
Das bange Leid,
Mit welchem Israel geängstet und beladen,
In lauter Heil und Gnaden.
Der Löw aus Davids Stamme ist erschienen,
Sein Bogen ist gespannt,
Das Schwert ist schon gewetzt,
Womit er uns in vor'ge Freiheit setzt.*

Transformed be now today
The anxious pain
Which Israel hath troubled and burdened
To perfect health and blessing.
Of David's stem the lion now appeareth,
His bow already bent,
His sword already honed,
With which he us to former freedom brings.

In this architecturally symmetrical cantata, movement four forms the central point. (See the background notes on pages 24 and 25 of this folder.) A scholar of the Lutheran liturgy and a noted Bach authority, Robin A. Leaver, points out that at the center of the movement, the music slows to *Andante* for the word *Gnaden* (grace or blessing) in order to draw attention to the importance of this central concept of Lutheran doctrine.



5. ARIA (Alto & Tenor)

*Ruft und fleht den Himmel an,
Kommt, ihr Christen, kommt zum Reiben,
Ihr sollt euch ob dem erfreuen,
Was Gott hat anheut getan!
Da uns seine Huld verpfleget
Und mit so viel Heil belegen,
Dass man nicht g'nug danken kann.*

Call and cry to heaven now,
Come, ye Christians, come in order,
Ye should be in this rejoicing
Which God hath today achieved!
For us now his grace provideth
And with such salvation sealeth,
More than we could thank him for.

The duet matches movement three in shape, except that here the strings instead of an oboe and *continuo* provide the accompaniment. The instruments begin the triple-meter, almost dance-like motion, with a melodic figure picked up by the singers who then imitate and extend it, proceeding sometimes with, sometimes without the strings. *Reiben* (in order or advancing) and *danken* (thanks) are set to the extended duet motion of sweet parallel thirds and sixths.

6. RECITATIVE (Bass)

*Verdoppelt euch demnach,
Ihr heißen Andachtsflammen,
Und schlagt in Demut brünstiglich zusammen!
Steigt fröhlich himmelan
Und danket Gott vor dies, was er getan!*

Redouble then your strength,
Ye ardent flames of worship,
And come in humble fervor all together!
Rise gladly heavenward
And thank your God for all this he hath done!

In this architectural complement to movement two, the singer gives ardent but general thanks to God, accompanied by the punctuating, rhythmic (even “flaming”?) chords of the oboes and strings. Again, the events of the Nativity are not mentioned.

7. CHORUS

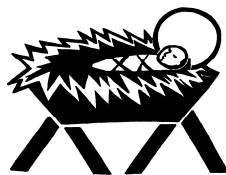
*Höchster, schau in Gnaden an
Diese Glut gebückter Seelen!
Lass den Dank, den wir dir bringen,
Angenehme vor dir klingen,
Lass uns stets in Segen gehn,
Aber niemals nicht geschehn,
Dass uns der Satan möge quälen.*

Highest, look with mercy now
At the warmth of reverent spirits!
Let the thanks we bring before thee
To thine ears resound with pleasure.
Let us e'er in blessing walk,
Let it never come to pass
That we Satan's torments suffer.

The trumpets return to join the other instruments in a spirited concluding chorus that is a complement to the opening chorus. The text offers both praise to God and a plea to be protected from the devil's torments. Each family of instruments announces its presence before the chorus enters; soon a double fugue emerges, sung at first by the choir without accompaniment. The instruments reiterate their beginning announcement twice before the plea to be delivered from Satan is set in rich harmonies that include a tortured line of descending chromatic half-steps at the mention of Satan's torments. The *da capo* repetition of the beginning brings the cantata to a conclusion with the brilliant “announcement” passages for instruments.

SERMON: More Than Meets the Eye

Pastor Bruce K. Modahl
John 1:1–14



We stand.

HYMN OF THE DAY: Of the Father's Love Begotten



1 Of the Fa - ther's love be - got - ten ere the worlds be -
2 Oh, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed, when the vir - gin,
3 This is he whom seers in old time chant - ed of with
4 Let the heights of heav'n a - dore him; an - gel hosts, his
5 Christ, to thee, with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho - ly



gan to be, he is Al - pha and O - me - ga,
full of grace, by the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing,
one ac - cord, whom the voic - es of the proph - ets
prais - es sing; pow'rs, do - min - ions, bow be - fore him
Ghost, to thee, hymn and chant and high thanks - giv - ing



he the source, the end - ing he, of the things that are, that
bore the Sav - ior of our race, and the babe, the world's re -
prom - ised in their faith - ful word; now he shines, the long - ex -
and ex - tol our God and King; let no tongue on earth be
and un - wea - ried prais - es be: hon - or, glo - ry, and do -



have been, and that fu - ture years shall see,
deem - er, first re - vealed his sa - cred face,
pect - ed; let cre - a - tion praise its Lord
si - lent, ev - 'ry voice in con - cert ring
min - ion, and e - ter - nal vic - to - ry



ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
ev - er - more and ev - er - more! A - men

NICENE CREED

P Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

C We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Each petition concludes:

A Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

The prayers conclude:

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.

✠ MEAL ✠

PEACE OF CHRIST

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

We greet one another in the name of the Lord.

As the offerings are gathered, please sign and pass the fellowship pads, located in the center aisle.

We sit.

OFFERING/VOLUNTARY: Lo, How a Rose Is Growing

Richard Hillert

The voluntary serves as the introduction to the hymn.

We stand and sing as the gifts are presented.

OFFERTORY HYMN: Lo, How a Rose Is Growing



1 Lo, how a rose is grow - ing, a bloom of fin - est grace;
4 This flow'r, so small and ten - der, with fra - grance fills the air;



the proph - ets had fore - told it: a branch of Jes - se's race
his bright - ness ends the dark - ness that kept the earth in fear.



would bear one per - fect flow'r here in the cold of
True God and yet true man, he came to save his



win - ter and dark - est mid - night hour.
peo - ple from earth's dark night of sin.

Text: German, 15th cent.; tr. Gracia Grindal, b. 1943

Music: ES IST EIN ROS, *Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengesäng*, Köln, 1599

Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

OFFERTORY PRAYER

- A** Let us pray. Merciful Father,
C we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us—
our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love.
Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING



P The Lord be with you. **C** And al - so with you.



P Lift up your hearts. **C** We lift them to the Lord.



P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

- P** It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory; that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:

Heav- en and earth are full of your glo- ry. Ho - san - na. Ho - san - na.

Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who

comes in the name of the Lord. Ho- san - na in the high - est.

P Holy God, mighty Lord, gracious Father:
 Endless is your mercy and eternal your reign.
 You have filled all creation with light and life; heaven and earth are full of your glory.
 Through Abraham and Sarah you promised to bless all nations.
 You rescued Israel, your chosen people.
 Through the prophets you renewed your promise;
 and, at this end of all the ages, you sent your Son,
 who in words and deeds proclaimed your kingdom
 and was obedient to your will, even to giving his life.
 In the night in which he was betrayed,
 our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
 broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
 Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.
 Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
 and gave it for all to drink, saying:
 This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
 shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.
 For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup
 we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

C Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

P Therefore, gracious Father, with this bread and cup
we remember the life our Lord offered for us.

And, believing the witness of his resurrection,
we await his coming in power
to share with us the great and promised feast.

C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

P Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit,
the spirit of our Lord and of his resurrection,
that we who receive the Lord's body and blood
may live to the praise of your glory
and receive our inheritance with all your saints in light.

C Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

P Join our prayers with those of your servants
of every time and every place,
and unite them with the ceaseless petitions
of our great high priest
until he comes as victorious Lord of all.

C Through him, with him, in him, in the u - ni - ty of the
Ho - ly Spir - it, all hon - or and glo - ry is yours, al -
might - y Fa - ther, now and for - ev - er. A - men



P Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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.

P The gifts of God for the people of God.

C Thanks be to God.

P Come, for all is now ready.

We sit.

AGNUS DEI



C Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; grant us peace.



COMMUNION

Our Lord Jesus Christ welcomes you to this meal of the baptized.

The crucified and risen Christ is present in the Lord's Supper, giving us his true body and blood as food and drink.

We receive communion at the head of the center aisle, receiving the consecrated bread or wafer, and then drinking directly from the chalice or dipping the host into the wine (intinction).

Those communing by intinction should indicate to the pastor that they prefer a wafer.

Those choosing individual cups will find non-alcoholic wine in the center of the tray.

Those with a gluten allergy may ask the pastor for a gluten-free host.



MUSIC FOR THE COMMUNION

HYMN: Let Our Gladness Have No End



- 1 Let our glad - ness have no end, Hal - le - lu - jah!
2 See the love - liest bloom - ing rose, Hal - le - lu - jah!
3 In - to flesh is made the Word, Hal - le - lu - jah!



for to earth did Christ de - scend. Hal - le - lu - jah!
from the branch of Jes - se grows. Hal - le - lu - jah! On this day God
he, our ref - uge and our Lord. Hal - le - lu - jah!



gave us Christ, his Son, to save us; Christ, his Son, to save us.

Text: Bohemian carol, 15th cent.; tr. unknown
Music: NARODIL SE KRISTUS PÁN, Bohemian carol, 15th cent.

HYMN: Infant Holy, Infant Lowly



1 In - fant ho - ly, in - fant low - ly, for his bed a cat - tle stall;
2 Flocks were sleep - ing, shep - herds keep - ing vig - il till the morn - ing new



ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know - ing Christ the child is Lord of all.
saw the glo - ry, heard the sto - ry, tid - ings of a gos - pel true.



Swift - ly wing - ing, an - gels sing - ing, bells are ring - ing, tid - ings bring - ing:
Thus re - joic - ing, free from sor - row, prais - es voic - ing, greet the mor - row:






Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

Text: Polish carol; tr. Edith M. G. Reed, 1885–1933, alt.
Music: W ŻŁOBIE LEŻY, Polish carol

HYMN: From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

Concertato by Michael D. Costello

1.  **From heav'n above to earth I come
To bring good news to ev'ryone!
Glad tidings of great joy I bring
To all the world, and gladly sing:**
2.  **To you this night is born a child
Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;
This newborn child of lowly birth
Shall be the joy of all the earth.**
3.  **This is the Christ, God's Son most high,
Who hears your sad and bitter cry;
He will himself your Savior be
And from all sin will set you free.**

4. **Choir** The blessing which the Father planned
The Son holds in his infant hand,
That in his kingdom, bright and fair,
You may with us his glory share.
5. **C** **These are the signs which you will see
To let you know that it is he:
In manger-bed, in swaddling clothes
The child who all the earth upholds.**
6. **Choir** 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.
7. **C** **Look, look, dear friends, look over there!
What lies within that manger bare?
Who is that lovely little one?
The baby Jesus, God's dear Son.**
8. **Choir** Welcome to earth, O noble Guest,
Through whom this sinful world is blest!
You turned not from our needs away!
How can our thanks such love repay?
9. **C** **O Lord, you have created all!
How did you come to be so small,
To sweetly sleep in manger-bed
Where lowing cattle lately fed?**
10. **Choir** Were earth a thousand times as fair
And set with gold and jewels rare,
Still such a cradle would not do
To rock a prince so great as you.
11. **C** **For velvets soft and silken stuff
You have but hay and straw so rough
On which as king so rich and great
To be enthroned in humble state.**
12. **Choir** And so, dear Lord, it pleases you
To make quite plain to me this truth,
That all the world's wealth, honor, might,
Are naught and worthless in your sight.

13. **C** **O dearest Jesus, holy child,
Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled,
A holy shrine, within my heart,
That you and I need never part.**
14. **Choir** My heart for very joy now leaps;
My voice no longer silence keeps;
I too must join the angel-throng
To sing with joy his cradle-song:
15. **C** **“Glory to God in highest heav’n,
Who unto us his Son has giv’n.”
With angels sing in pious mirth;
A glad new year to all the earth!**

We stand.

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING & PRAYER

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C **Amen.**

A Let us pray.

Gracious God, in this meal you have drawn us to your heart,
and nourished us at your table with food and drink, the body and blood of Christ.
Now send us forth to be your people in the world,
and to proclaim your truth this day and evermore;
through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C **Amen.**



✠ SENDING ✠

BENEDICTION

P Almighty God: Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN: Good Christian Friends, Rejoice



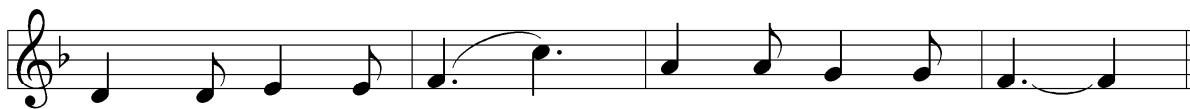
1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
2 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
3 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;



give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;
now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!
now ye need not fear the grave; Je - sus Christ was born to save!



ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.
He has o - pened heav - en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.
Calls you one and calls you all to gain his ev - er - last - ing hall.



Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Text: medieval Latin carol; tr. John M. Neale, 1818–1866, alt.
Music: IN DULCI JUBILO, German carol, 14th cent

DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

G Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE: *Giga* (Good Christian Friends, Rejoice)

Norman Dello Joio

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LET US PRAY. . .

. . . for the sick and those recovering from illness.

Paul Bouman	Karen Kress
Hans Dumpys	Colin Krueger
Virginia Folgers	Marilyn Krautstrunk
Carolyn Gillespie	Cindy Rohlfig
Sharon Kluge	Walt Martin
Robert Anzinger (<i>friend of Sandy and Mike Rollheiser</i>)	Dennis Laux (<i>son of Ruth</i>)
Marianne Archelaus (<i>friend of Susan Schumacher</i>)	JoAnn Lehmann (<i>mother of Dan, grandmother of Felicia Niermann</i>)
Ed Augustin (<i>brother of Scott Schwar</i>)	Dorothy and Willard Licht (<i>parents of Kay Bowers</i>)
Sandra Bergersen (<i>daughter-in-law of Barbara Rinnan</i>)	Laura Liu (<i>friend of Al Swanson</i>)
Christina Bixby (<i>daughter-in-law of Sandy and David Lentz</i>)	Kozene Loften (<i>friend of Patricia Anderson</i>)
Les Brucker (<i>son-in-law of June Froehlig</i>)	Cheryl Luchetta (<i>friend of Joan Koerber</i>)
Scott Bruner (<i>friend of Grace</i>)	Paul Markese (<i>father of Cari McKee</i>)
Gordon Condon (<i>brother of Kathleen Sosa</i>)	Lisa Marotz (<i>niece of Dan and Deanna</i>)
Lynn Cottrell (<i>cousin of Adrienne and Ron Rott</i>)	Richard Millett (<i>friend of Susan and Ed Schumacher</i>)
James Crone (<i>son of Valerie, grandson of Fred and Eunice Spurgat</i>)	Garry Neumann (<i>friend of Roberta and Mike Gillespie</i>)
Marva Dawn (<i>friend of the congregation</i>)	Martha Noble (<i>friend of Chuck and Ellyn Levell</i>)
Brian (<i>brother of Deborah Dockter</i>)	Cindy Offermann (<i>daughter-in-law of Don and Verna</i>)
Janice and Wayne Ebert (<i>parents of Chrissy Nelson</i>)	Elaine Maxwell Olmsted (<i>aunt of Tom Maxwell</i>)
Joe Faddoul (<i>nephew of Dennis Gross</i>)	Steve Olmsted (<i>cousin of Tom Maxwell</i>)
Scott Falknor (<i>friend of Greg Rohlfig</i>)	Maria Paganis (<i>relative of Carol Prinz</i>)
Marlene Faust (<i>cousin of Adrienne and Ronald Rott</i>)	Waldemar Pawluk (<i>brother of Karen Danford</i>)
Eleanora Foss (<i>grandmother of Grace students Alexander and Anastasia Melani</i>)	Susan Prather (<i>cousin of Adrienne and Ronald Rott</i>)
Jim Graham (<i>friend of Al and Irmgard Swanson</i>)	Robert Reuter (<i>father of Beth Reyes</i>)
Dan Guerrero (<i>friend of Grace</i>)	Florence Rigburs (<i>aunt of Ackli Howell</i>)
Ruth Heck (<i>sister of Marilyn Busse</i>)	Esther Rollheiser (<i>mother of Mike</i>)
Jody Keithly (<i>sister of Terry VanderWell</i>)	Dirk Schnittker (<i>brother of Paul</i>)
Donald Kline (<i>father of Sandy Rollheiser</i>)	Darlene Spitzer (<i>friend of Carol Prinz</i>)
Vernice Krout (<i>mother of Dan and Susan</i>)	Cammy Sproul (<i>friend of Mary Copersmet</i>)
	Phyllis Throwbridge (<i>sister of Dennis Gross</i>)

. . . for those serving in the armed services.

Joe Barone (<i>son-in-law of Mary and Mark Copersmet</i>)	Jon Jungemann (<i>son of Jackie</i>)
Reid Beveridge (<i>son-in-law of the Schnacks</i>)	Paul Keller (<i>friend of Merrily Smith</i>)
Benjamin Brackley (<i>son of Claudia Beguin</i>)	Mary Lemburg (<i>sister of Vicci Jackle</i>)
Amy Crowley (<i>daughter of Deb</i>)	Robert Lemburg (<i>brother-in-law of Vicci Jackle</i>)
David Danford (<i>son of John and Karen</i>)	Rusty Robb (<i>grandnephew of Margaret Kruse and Roberta Gillespie</i>)
Michael Gross (<i>nephew of Martha Rohlfig</i>)	Donald Saylor (<i>nephew of the Maxwells</i>)
Nicholas Henry (<i>son-in-law of Margo Bonebrake</i>)	Christopher Vogel (<i>cousin of Jennifer Staples</i>)
Joel Jungemann (<i>son of Jackie</i>)	

. . . for our homebound members.

Audrey Brown	Maybelle Good
Kathleen Cartier	Mary Grebner
Constance Coon	Martha Leininger
Monte Cross	Rosemary Lipka
Christopher Davis	Harriet Napolitan
June Froehlig	

. . . in celebration of
the birth of Logan Thomas Denison
(son of Jennifer and Michael, grandson of Pat and Thom Heinz)

. . . for those who mourn the death of
Leroy Cohrs *(former member of Grace)*
Paul Grotelueschen *(former member of Grace and faculty member of Concordia)*
Rev. Arnold Ludwig *(brother of Irene Brandt)*

. . . for Grace member seminary students

Leslie Bimler
Amy Gillespie
Daniel Heim

. . . for encouragement.

Paul Eichwedel in Dixon Correctional Center

LEADING WORSHIP TODAY

The Rev. Kelly K. Faulstich	Presiding Minister
The Rev. Bruce K. Modahl	Preaching Minister
The Rev. Michael D. Costello	Cantor
Roberta Gillespie	Deacon
Joe Luther	Assisting Minister
Rhea Sprecher and Dan Luther	Lectors
Katarina Modrich and Jayne Kernodle	Crucifer/Bible Bearer

Grace Senior Choir
Susan Krout-Lyons, soprano
Karen Brunssen, mezzo-soprano
Jonathan Busarow, tenor
Douglas Anderson, baritone

Noah Lambert, Candice Horton, Jonathan Weber, and Annie Grapentine, trumpets
Christine Janzow Phillips, Meg Busse, and Nancy Hagen, oboes
Dianne Ryan, bassoon
Kyle Bellin, timpani

Betty Lewis, Paul Zafer, and Lou Torick, violin I
Carol Yampolsky, Karen Nelson, and Ralph Boyd, violin II
Naomi Hildner and Diane Mayne, viola
Victoria Mayne, cello
John Floeter, double bass
Laura Zimmer, organ/continuo

BACKGROUND OF THE CANTATA

Christen, ätzet diesen Tag (Christians, engrave this blessed day) probably was first performed on Christmas Day in Weimar in 1714. It was first heard in Leipzig on December 25, 1723, as the beginning of much festive music for this, Bach's first Christmas as Cantor at St. Thomas in Leipzig.

Although the cantata text does not describe the events of the Christmas narrative, its music is some of Bach's most exuberant! It was the first of six cantatas composed by Bach for the various festivals that made up the Christmas season in Leipzig: Christmas Day, Second and Third Christmas Days, The Circumcision of Christ (New Year's Day), the Sunday after the Circumcision, and the Epiphany of Our Lord. He also composed his great *Magnificat* and other liturgical music for this season of the church year. To understand this outburst of glorious music performed within just thirteen days, it is helpful to examine the sober Advent context from which it arose.

The spirit of the four weeks of Advent in eighteenth-century Leipzig was grounded in the penitential cleansing of one's sinful life in preparation for the reception of the coming Christ Child. Such an attitude was reinforced by the dark and often damp days of December that preceded the twenty-fifth. The cold weather was felt in most homes and certainly penetrated the poorly heated and lighted churches. Also, by modern standards, towns were relatively quiet. Of course, there were no automobiles, no radios, televisions, or telephones, no amplified sound of any kind. Religious leaders, with the concurrence of civic officials, articulated the somber, penitential mood of the season. During Advent there were to be no weddings, social affairs, or parties. Pastors encouraged people to examine their lives, to ask for forgiveness, and amend their sinful ways. The Advent lessons read in church, as well as the sermons, prayers, and hymns, drew attention to the coming judgment and the end of all things as motivation for the penitential preparation for Christ's coming. To reinforce the sobriety of the season, the organ was not played in services and no special music or cantatas were performed during Advent.

With the coming of December 25 in Leipzig all of that changed. While the days may have continued to be cold and the daylight hours short, spirits were revived at the thought of the imminent arrival of the newborn Savior. Social restrictions were relaxed and spirits were revived. Christmas trees were lighted and, for the next twelve days especially, joyful music, hymns, and cantatas were to resound in church. It is in this atmosphere that the joyful themes of Cantata 63 were heard on Christmas Day in 1723.

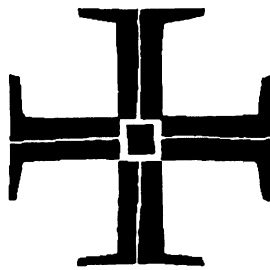
The Epistle for Christmas Day was Isaiah 9:2–7, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light,” or Titus 2:11–14, “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all.” The Christmas Gospel was St. Luke 2:2–7, relating the familiar account of Jesus’ birth. The Hymn of the Day, not found in the cantata, was “All praise to you, eternal Lord,” (LBW 48).

On its way to becoming a beloved Leipzig Christmas cantata, the present work has a curious pre-history. Musicological research, including dating of manuscript paper, suggests that it was composed in Weimar, probably for Christmas, 1714. The cantata is unusual as Christmas music in that the chorus texts are of a general laudatory nature, and that only the recitatives relate directly to the Nativity. There is some evidence, but no solid proof, that the cantata also might have been performed in Halle for a 1717 Reformation Festival with a text appropriate for that occasion. It seems clear that the authorship of the Reformation version of the text (which may have preceded the Christmas adaptation) may have been the Halle pastor, Johann Michael Heineccius, while the poet of the Christmas text remains unknown. Bach must have liked the Christmas version, for it was scheduled for other later performances in Leipzig.

As a whole, the seven movements of the cantata are shaped to form a grand arch that reaches its climax in movement four, a recitative. Duet arias are placed on either side of this central recitative, and these, in turn, are flanked by recitatives. To complete the structural arch, one of Bach’s favorite formal designs, large choruses mark the beginning and the end of the work. Thus, the cantata comes to a conclusion without the customary chorale.

The festive nature of the cantata is signaled by the size of the orchestra, one of the largest specified by Bach: 4 trumpets and timpani, 3 oboes, bassoon, strings (2 violins, viola, cello), *basso continuo* (keyboard and bass) four-part chorus, and soprano, alto, tenor, and bass solos.

Carlos Messerli



*Poinsettias in the Chancel are given
to the glory of God by members of Grace Lutheran Church.*

Fern Bernhardt	
Ruth & Ed Borg	
Nancy & Bruce Cordes	In honor of God's blessings
John & Susan Curran	In memory of loved ones
Clyde & Karin Danganan	In honor of our parents
Clyde & Karin Danganan	In memory of Emmy Danganan
Stacy & Arlo Deibler	In memory of Ina Jensen
Janel Dennen	In memory of Eric & David Dennen
Hans & Donna Dumpys	In honor of our granddaughter Liv Grace
Edith Ewert	
Ken & Virginia Folgers	In memory of our parents
Roselyn Gieschen	In honor of grandkids
Roberta Gillespie	
Bill & Sharon Hoisington	In memory of our parents
Gary & Ackli Howell	
The Hoyem Family	In memory of Paul and Ruby Hoyem
The Hoyem Family	In memory of William and Richard Napolitan
Krista, Gary & Abra Kaplan	In memory of Richard and Janet McAuliffe
Krista, Gary & Abra Kaplan	In memory of Gordon Pollock
David & Sharon Kluge	
Brigitte, Steve, Lauren & Alexandra Kocheny	In honor of our parents
John & Loretta Lattyak	
Dan Luther & Cathy Ruggeri	In memory of our grandparents
Daniel & Lori Mathesius	In honor of U.S. Military
Judie McDonnell	In memory of my parents Walter & Arnita Seidel
Menet Family	In honor of God's blessing
Carlos & Susan Messerli	In memory of Pr. Luther Roehrs
Bruce & Jackie Modahl	In memory of Ellen & Oscar Modahl and Robert Pearson
Graham Putnam	In memory of Velma M. Putnam
Steve & Chandler Roskam	In memory of Jack Roskam
Albert & Adrienne Rott	In memory of Lydia Backus and Al & Sylvia Rott
John & Marge Sanger	In memory of Emma Sanger and Robert & Lucille Truppo
Stephen & Gick Schmidt	In memory of our parents
Ed & Susan Schumacher	In honor of Grace prayer chain
Julie & Bill Steve	
Al & Irmgard Swanson	In memory of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred M. Swanson and Mr. and Mrs. David C. Krubsack
Claudia & Jeff Wood	In memory of Mike Meyer

SERVICES DURING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON

December 31	Holy Communion at 7:30 p.m.
January 1	Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.
January 6	Holy Communion at 7:30 p.m.

The ornaments on the Jesse Tree in the chancel are traditional symbols that remind us of events and ideas related to the coming of the Messiah. Jesse was the father of David, an ancestor of Jesus. You can read more about these traditional Jesse Tree ornaments in an article on the Grace web site. Go to gracriverforest.org and scroll down to Church News & Events at the bottom of the page. Then click on Jesse Tree.

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