

2022 Christmas Eve Service at 5:30 pm
Immanuel Lutheran Church
“The Star of Life” --- Angels Proclaimed His Birth

Opening Prayer

Choir Ensemble: *“He Shall Be Called”*

Invocation: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **C:** *Amen*

Opening Litany:

P In the beginning God said, “Let there be light!” **C:** *“And there was light.” Light that pointed to the Light of the World. A light which brought life to creation!*

P: All of heaven was focused on the coming of the Lord **C:** *The heavenly hosts looked upon all that was to take place with joy and anticipation.*

P: This was not simply an event taking place on earth. **C:** *This was a divine event that affected all of heaven and earth; bringing His light of glory to the earth.*

P: The long promised Messiah was to be born, **C:** *Of this, the Angel Choir was ready to proclaim and also to reveal His glory in heaven.*

P: God would be given praise **C:** *With the voices of a multitude of angels in the earthly sky.*

P: The Father’s Plan of Salvation was being unfolded. **C:** *The angel choirs proclaimed His truth and reflected the wonder of His holy light.*

Confession: **C:** *Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.*

Absolution: **P:** Our Heavenly Father, in His mercy has given His only Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of the Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Offerings brought to the Altar:

P: Heavenly music is perfect, divine, glorious, and centered on honoring the Father and the Son. The Angel choirs sing God's praise and glory, and proclaim the wonder of God's grace coming upon the earth. The Angels in heaven sing songs of everlasting praise, and of which, we will one day hear in person when we join them in His eternal kingdom of heaven.

Hymn: *"O Come, All Ye Faithful"* 379 vs. 1-3

Psalmody: *Psalm 110: 1-4*

P: The Lord says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand. C: *Until I make your enemies your footstool.*"

P: The Lord sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. C: *Rule in the midst of your enemies.*

P: Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power C: *In holy garments;*

P: From the womb of the morning C: *The dew of your youth will be yours.*

P: The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind, C: *"You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."*

ALL: *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.*

Collect: Holy Father, on this night You sent Your only-begotten Son into the flesh to bring the hope and light of salvation to Your people. You placed a "Star of Life" in the sky to announce the wondrous birth of Your Son. Touch our hearts, bless our minds, and enable our voices to bring praise to You as we join the angels in heaven in singing songs of honor and joy for the gift of life You have given to us all. Bless all we do and enable us to uplift and bring goodness to each other; through the Christ-Child, our Lord who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, ever One God, world without end. C: *Amen.*

P: Music has a special place in the life of believers, as well as in the reality of the Angels in heaven. Music provides guidance to all who sing, it helps impart the words into our hearts and minds, and it raises our voices in praise. Music is a gift God created, and is used to bring honor to His Son and proclaim hope to the world. Music uplifts and calms, leads us to rejoice and proclaim, brings joy and humility, and helps us praise and honor our Lord. Music is a gift that uplifts us as we bring blessings to our God.

Choral Ensemble: *"Silent is the Night"*

O. T. Lesson: *Isaiah 7: 10-14* *Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, "Ask a sign of the Lord Your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test". And He said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel."*

Epistle Lesson: *I John 1: 2 - 3* *The Life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us--- that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ!*

P: God has made it so praise and honor from man brings a divine glory to His name. He enables the voices of men and women sharing His Word in song to touch the heart and the soul of His own dear children. Though mortal, He brings an angelic-like tone to their voices and raises their praise to be heard in heaven. When music and Word are placed together, there is a beauty which gives us a small glimpse of the wonder of heavenly song. What a blessing He has given His church through those who possess the gift of music and those whose voice raise up His Word in song.

Choral Ensemble: *"Christmas Sanctus"*

Gospel Lesson: *Luke 2: 1-7* *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.

P: The Unity of Heaven and earth was on display in the manger as the heavenly hosts sang the message of His birth. The Birth of our Lord brought "Peace" between man and God; for He was God--- made man, who came among men to free us all from our sins. Only at His birth had the Father opened the "gates" of heaven and allowed man to view the glories of heaven and hear the voices and music of His angels. Never before, and never again will He reveal them in this way. He placed His Star in the Sky to point to the place where the Christ-Child lay. All done so we could know, and in faith believe- our Lord and Savior is born.

Hymn: *"Joy to the World"* 387 vs. 1-3

Luke 2: 8-15 *And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flock at night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."*

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!"

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem, and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us."

P: The Heavenly Choir came from heaven to earth to announce a birth. How remarkable it would have been to have listened to the Angelic Choir as they sang to the shepherds their heavenly praise. How overwhelmingly joyful it would have been to see the wonder of a glimpse of heaven and the brightness of the light of God's heavenly glory. How awesome it would have been to hear the message of the Birth of our Lord, the only Son of God. The beauty of music on earth can touch us, the beauty of the Angelic Choir will leave us in awe. The perfect love of God proclaimed for all eternity by the perfect choir.

Hymn: *"Angels We Have Heard On High"* 368

Sermon *The Star of Life - The Angels Sing*

Prayers

Lord's Prayer

Blessing of Elements

Distribution Hymn: *"It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"* 366
"From Heaven Above to Earth I Come" 358 vs. 1-5,
"From Heaven Above to Earth I Come" 358 vs. 6-10
"From Heaven Above to Earth I Come" 358 vs. 11-15

Closing Collect: *Holy Father, You have enlightened our hearts and brightened our spirits through the faith which enables us to know our Savior was born in Bethlehem. Guide us Lord with the light of faith, lead us to see the path of grace laid before us by Your mercy, and open our eyes to see the everlasting glory given to our newborn Lord; we pray this in the Christ-Child's name. Amen.*

Hymn: “*Silent Night, Holy Night*” 363 (Acapella)

*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, Heavenly 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.*

P: The Christ-Child came to earth in order to be the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world. **The Christ-Child** came to fulfill the promise of the Father and purchase those lost in sin with His own blood. **The Christ-Child** came to bring glory to the Father and to then sit on His throne in heaven forever and ever. So one day, when we are given the gift of eternal life; we will stand before His throne singing the heavenly songs with all the hosts of heaven.

Choral Ensemble: Benediction- “*May the Lord God with You*” -