

The Vigil Service

Tonight's worship is modeled on the well-known "Service of Lessons and Carols," instituted by Archbishop Benson of Truro Cathedral, England, and modified by The Reverend Milner-White, Dean of King's College, Cambridge. It has been broadcast by the BBC from Cambridge since 1938. A "vigil" service is a service of preparation, in the present case, for communion on Christmas Day (the "Christ Mass"). The vigil services of the ancient church consisted, as ours tonight, of readings from the Bible and the people's response in "hymns, praises and spiritual songs" (Colossians 3:16). May the Word of God tonight inspire you with the Holy Spirit for Christmas peace and holy joy!

Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols



TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL, MENASHA, WI

A SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

THE HYMN OF INVOCATION - *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

LSB 379

THE BIDDING PRAYER (*Stand*)

- P** With joy in response to the good news that a Savior is born, let us pray and praise God and join the heavenly song of angels saying, "Glory be to God on high."
- P** Merciful and loving God, in the birth of Your Son You gave peace on earth. Grant that Your holy Christian Church may rejoice in the gladness of our redemption and treasure all these things in our hearts, that we may join the heavenly song of angels saying,
- C** **Glory be to God on high.**
- P** Give boldness to all pastors of Your Church to proclaim the good news of great joy to all people, that all may join the heavenly song of angels saying,
- C** **Glory be to God on high.**
- P** Grant courage to our President and all in authority over us, especially to those who serve in the armed forces of our nation, that we may live at peace with one another and join the heavenly song of angels saying,
- C** **Glory be to God on high.**
- P** O God, You gave Your Son to be born for us in lowly circumstances. Remember, we pray, those who have little joy: the homeless, hungry, and oppressed. Give hope to the lonely and shut-in of our parish. Grant peace and healing to the sick and suffering and those in the hospital. Guide the journeys of those who travel. Comfort those who mourn. Create a new and contrite heart in the erring, and faith in those who have not heard the good news. May Your love to us flow through our lives and be a blessing to others so that with us they may join the heavenly song of angels saying,
- C** **Glory be to God on high.**

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God!**

THE RESPONSORY HYMN *What Child Is This*

LSB 370

THE SERMON

THE MAGNIFICAT - *My Soul Now Magnifies the Lord*

LSB 934

THE OFFERING

THE COLLECT

- P** O God, because You once caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light, grant that we who have known the mystery of that Light here on earth may come to the full measure of its joys in heaven; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

THE BLESSING

- P** May He who by His incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with the sweetness of inward peace and goodwill; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always.
- C** **Amen.**

THE DISMISSAL

- P** Let us go forth in the Name of the Christ.
- C** **Thanks be to God!**

THE RECESSIONAL HYMN *Silent Night, Holy Night*

LSB 363

✠ *Soli Deo Gloria* ✠

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God!** *(Sit)*

THE RESPONSORY HYMN - *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*

LSB 393

THE FIFTH LESSON *(Stand)*

Luke 2:8-16

⁸ And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. ¹⁰ And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" ¹⁵ 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." ¹⁶ And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God!** *(Sit)*

THE RESPONSORY HYMN - *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

LSB 380

THE SIXTH LESSON

1 John 4:7-11

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

P Lord God, make a manger in the hearts of all who come to Your altar this day, that they may have a share in the life of Him who came to share our humanity and join the heavenly song of angels saying,

C **Glory be to God on high.**

P In the birth of Your Son, O God, You have clothed us with eternal life. We remember with thanksgiving all those who have died in the faith. Unite our voices with theirs that we may join the heavenly song of angels saying,

C **Glory be to God on high.**

P These prayers and praises we humbly offer to Your throne of grace along with the heavenly song of angels; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.** *(Sit)*

THE RESPONSORY HYMN - *Of the Father's Love Begotten*

LSB 384

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

THE FIRST LESSON

Genesis 3:8-15

⁸ And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" ¹⁰ And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid,

because I was naked, and I hid myself.”¹¹ He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”¹² The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.”¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”¹⁴ The LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God!**

THE RESPONSORY HYMN - *It Came upon the Midnight Clear* LSB 366

THE SECOND LESSON Isaiah 9:2-7

² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.³ You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil.⁴ For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.⁵ For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire.⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.⁷ Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God!**

THE RESPONSORY HYMN - *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* LSB 359

THE THIRD LESSON (*Stand*)

Luke 1:26-38

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth,²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary.²⁸ And he came to her and said, “Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!”²⁹ But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be.³⁰ And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David,³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”³⁴ And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?”³⁵ And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.³⁶ And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren.³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.”³⁸ And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God!** (*Sit*)

THE RESPONSORY HYMN - *O Little Town of Bethlehem* LSB 361

THE FOURTH LESSON (*Stand*) Luke 2:1-7

¹ In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.² This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria.³ And all went to be registered, each to his own town.⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David,⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.⁶ And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth.⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.