



***A PRAYER SERVICE FOR
CHRISTMAS EVE***

7:00 p.m.

December 24, 2020

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS AND ASCENSION
Northwoods, MO



(Prior to our Service, you may wish to set up a prayer space/table which could include a lit candle or your lit Advent wreath with Christ Candle, a Bible, or a miniature Nativity scene.)

GATHERING MUSIC

(PLEASE SILENCE ALL DEVICES)

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”



A BIDDING PRAYER

Celebrant: BELOVED IN CHRIST, God our Creator has brought us again to the glad season when we celebrate the birth of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Redeemer and Lord. Grant, O God, that even in the midst of darkness, the Light of Christ may shine anew in our hearts this night and that we may joyfully welcome him to dwell with us. We pray that God open our ears that we may hear again the angelic chorus of old. Open our lips that we, too, may sing with uplifted hearts. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, goodwill toward all; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

“Joy to the World”



Opening Acclamation

Celebrant Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

People **Glory to God for ever and ever. Amen.**

Collect for Purity

Celebrant Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you 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 Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

Song of Praise *“Angels We Have Heard on High”*



Celebrant God is with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

Collect of the Day

Celebrant O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

First Reading

Isaiah 9:2-7

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness--
on them light has shined.
You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 96 *Cantate Domino*

- 1 Sing to the LORD a new song; *
sing to the LORD, all the whole earth.
- 2 Sing to the LORD and bless his Name; *
proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.
- 3 Declare his glory among the nations *
and his wonders among all peoples.
- 4 For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised; *
he is more to be feared than all gods.
- 5 As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; *
but it is the LORD who made the heavens.
- 6 Oh, the majesty and magnificence of his presence! *
Oh, the power and the splendor of his sanctuary!
- 7 Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples; *
ascribe to the LORD honor and power.
- 8 Ascribe to the LORD the honor due his Name; *
bring offerings and come into his courts.
- 9 Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; *
let the whole earth tremble before him.

- 10 Tell it out among the nations: "The LORD is King! *
**he has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved;
he will judge the peoples with equity."**
- 11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it; *
let the field be joyful and all that is therein.
- 12 Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy
before the LORD when he comes, *
when he comes to judge the earth.
- 13 He will judge the world with righteousness *
and the peoples with his truth.

Second Reading

Titus 2:11-14

A Reading from Paul's Letter to Titus.

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**



“The First Nowell”



The Gospel

Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)

The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to Luke.

People **Glory to you, O Christ.**

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 Savior, 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 favors!"

[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.]

People The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Handel's "Messiah"



An Affirmation of Faith

**We believe in God, whose love is the source of all life and the desire of our lives
whose love was given a human face in Jesus of Nazareth,
whose love was crucified by the evil that seeks to enslave us all,
and whose love, defeating even death, is our glorious promise of freedom.
Therefore, though we are sometimes fearful and doubting, we trust in God;
and, in the Name of Jesus Christ, we commit ourselves,
in the service of others, to seek justice and to live in peace,
to care for the earth and to share the common wealth of God's goodness,
to live in the freedom of forgiveness
and the power of the Spirit of love;
And in company of the faithful, to be the Church,
for the glory of God. Amen.**

The Prayers of the People

(The Worship Leader and People pray responsively)

You who fashioned this holy night with the radiance of the Word made flesh and filled the air with the song of angels; fashion us, like Mary the God bearer, in to a people who seek the Christ-Child in the face of the outcast, the outsider and the other. Fill our hearts with the song of the angels that we may be makers and pursuers of peace. Christ be our light.

Shine in our hearts.

You who framed the brightness of the first light in creation; dispel the arrogance, animosity and anger that shatters the unity of your holy Church. Fill your faithful people with the radiant light of truth, that we may be made one in faith, hope and love. Christ be our light.

Shine in our hearts.

You who delivered your people from the misery of bondage in slavery to the land of promise; set us free us from enslavement to division, disunity and distrust in our public life and labor. Illumine those in authority with the light of vision, that they may lead the peoples of the nations to greater unity and concord. Christ be our light.

Shine in our hearts.

You who patterned the stars and called the sun in to being, who appointed the moon and chartered the cosmos. Pattern the hearts of people everywhere to see in each other the beauty of the universe and the splendor of creation, that divisions of race, class, gender and ethnicity may dissolve into one common humanity. Christ be our light.

Shine in our hearts.

You who shower comfort and hope to the lowest, the lost and the least; shower the light of compassion on the sick, the sorrowful and the suffering especially those we name silently or aloud. *(Pause)* Help us to be your compassion and hope in the world. Christ be our light.

Shine in our hearts.

You who welcome into the brilliant light of eternity the souls of those who have died; welcome those whose lives have been cut short by violence, warfare and strife. Shine the light of hope on our faithful dead, especially those we now name silently or aloud. *(Pause)* Christ be our light.

Shine in our hearts.

You who delight in the complexity of creation and the splendor of each creature; help us to delight in the diversity of the earth our island home. Inspire your people to care for the earth and its creatures and repent and return when we abuse, misuse and neglect our fellow creatures. Christ be our light.

Shine in our hearts.

Celebrant May Christ, the Morning-Star who knows no setting, find us ever burning with the light of love, the spirit of truth and the wellspring of hope; that following the way of Jesus and filled with the flame of the Holy Spirit, we may be a holy people whose lives and living inspire, incite and inflame your world with compassion and care. Through Jesus the Christ the light of the world. **Amen.** *

The Peace

Celebrant The peace of our Newborn King be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

The Lord's Prayer

**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, for ever and ever. Amen.**

A Prayer for those wishing Communion

In union, O God, with the faithful of your Church where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated, we desire to offer you praise and thanksgiving. We present to you our souls and bodies with the earnest wish that we may always be united to you. And since we cannot now receive you sacramentally, we beseech you to come spiritually into our hearts. We unite ourselves with you and embrace you with all the love of our souls. Let nothing ever separate you from us. May we live in you, and may you live in us, both in this life and in the life to come. Amen.



“Silent Night”



Blessing and Dismissal

Celebrant The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Celebrant Let us go forth rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.
People **Thanks be to God.**

“Go Tell It on the Mountain”



**The Prayers of the People were written by The Rev. Deon K. Johnson, 11th Bishop of Missouri*



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