



Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church and School
Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

CHRISTMAS EVE
CANDLELIGHT SERVICE
DECEMBER 24, 2020



Trinity Ev. Lutheran
Church & School

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church

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Trinity Ev. Lutheran School

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(715) 732-2956

December 24, 2020



*We're glad you've come to worship with us!
If you have any questions or would like someone
to visit you, please contact our pastor. He'll be
happy to meet with you*



Ringing of the Bell Welcome to Trinity!

The Invocation

Pastor: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

The Call to Worship

Pastor: Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you;

People: He is Christ the Lord.

Pastor: Glory to God in the highest,

People: And on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.

Hymn 55 vv.1-2

O Come, All Ye Faithful

1 Oh, come all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to
Bethlehem;
Come and behold him,
Born the King of angels,
Oh, come let us adore him,
Oh, come let us adore him,
Oh, come let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.

2 God from true God and
Light from light eternal,
Born of a virgin, to earth he comes,
Only begotten
Son of God the Father.
Oh, come let us adore him,
Oh, come let us adore him,
Oh, come let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.

Christmas Eve Responsive Reading

Pastor: The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;

People: on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.

Pastor: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God,

People: and the Word was with God.

Pastor: He was with God in the beginning,

People: Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

Pastor: In him was life,

People: And that life was the light of men.

Pastor: The light shines in the darkness,

People: But the darkness has not understood it.

All: The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Christmas Eve Prayer (*In unison*)

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true light. Grant that as we have known on earth the wonders of that light, we may also behold him in all his glory in the eternal blessings of heaven that are yet to come. Fill our hearts with the joy and peace that Jesus, our Savior, alone can give. May the light of our Savior's love shine brightly in this world of sin, that all people may come to believe in him, and worship him as their Lord and Savior. Amen.

Please Be Seated

The Candles of Christmas Proclaim the Savior

Introduction

The Advent wreath is a sermon in symbols.

First, the candles represent Jesus, the Light of the world who came into the darkness of our lives to bring newness of life and hope. As the candles are lighted over the four week period, it also symbolizes the darkness of fear and hopelessness receding and the shadows of sin falling away as more and more light is brought into the world.

Second, The evergreen boughs and the shape of a circle both stand for eternal life. Evergreen, because they stay green all year while other plants shed their leaves. The circle, because it has no beginning and no end.

Third, the Advent wreath has five candles, whose colors are blue for royalty and repentance, pink for the blood shed to save us, and white for purity and righteousness of Christ. The four outer candles represent the period of waiting during the four Sundays of Advent, which themselves represent the four centuries of waiting between the prophet Malachi and the birth of Christ. The center candle stands for Christ, the center of our celebrations and the only hope of mankind.

Tonight, we will look at each of the candles as we light them. We will consider the meaning and the symbolism of each one. And we will hear the voice of our Savior in the Word of our Lord as we seek his grace and his peace on this Christmas Eve.

1 Of the Father's love begotten
Ere the worlds began to be,
 He is Alpha and Omega,
 He the source, the ending he,
Of the things that are, that have
 been,
And that future years shall see
 Evermore and evermore.

2 Oh, that birth forever blessed
When the virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving,
 Bore the Savior of our race,
 And the babe, the world's
 Redeemer,
First revealed his sacred face
 Evermore and evermore.

The Candle of Prophecy

Pastor: The first Advent candle is the *Prophecy candle*. It represents *Hope*. Believers since Adam and Eve hoped for the Savior, and the prophets spoke of him hundreds of years before his birth. It is blue and its color reminds us of the royalty and majesty of the Messiah: God Himself coming to save a sinful world.

Isaiah and Micah prophesied:

Isaiah 7:14 (EHV)

¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give a sign for all of you. Look! The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and name him Immanuel.

Isaiah 9:6–7 (EHV)

⁶For to us a child is born.
To us a son is given.
The authority to rule will rest on his shoulders.
He will be named:

 Wonderful Counselor,
 Mighty God,
 Everlasting Father,
 Prince of Peace.

⁷There will be no limit to his authority
and no end to the peace he brings.
He will rule on David's throne and over his kingdom,
 to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness
 from now on, into eternity.

The zeal of the LORD of Armies will accomplish this.

Micah 5:2 (EHV)

²But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
from you, will go out the one who will be the ruler for me in Israel.
His goings forth are from the beginning, from the days of eternity.

P: We light one candle to signify that there is only one light for the world, one hope, one Savior of all.

1 Oh, come, oh, come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel!

2 Oh, come, O Root of Jesse, free
Your own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell your people save,
And bring them vict'ry o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel!

The Bethlehem Candle

Pastor: The second Advent candle is the *Bethlehem candle*. It represents *Faith*. Bethlehem was the town of King David. God promised that one of his descendants would reign over God's kingdom forever. Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem to fulfill that promise. Jesus' birth in Bethlehem is a miracle beyond human comprehension. The Son of God took humanity into himself. He is 100% God and 100% man. Then he chose to come into his own creation in humility. God chose to suffer and to die as one of us. The two candles remind us of his two natures.

Luke 2:1–7 (EHV)

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governing Syria. ³And everyone went to register, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the town of Nazareth, into Judea, to the town of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was from the house and family line of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, his wife, who was pledged to him in marriage and was expecting a child.

⁶And so it was that while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son, wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

P: We light two candles to remember the two natures of Christ, he is both God and man, and he came to save us.

Hymn 65 vv.1-2

O Little Town of Bethlehem

1 O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep And dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The ever lasting light.
The hopes and fears Of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

2 For Christ is born of Mary,
And gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, The angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing To God the King
And peace to all the earth.

The Shepherd Candle

Pastor: The third Advent candle is the *Shepherd candle*. It stands for *Joy*. It reminds us that the angel brought the good news of great joy first to shepherds. The shepherds were common people. The shepherds were sinners. Jesus still comes to sinners through Word and Sacrament. The third candle is pink and it reminds us that Jesus shed his blood to pay the price for sinners and that we receive this true body and blood in communion.

Luke 2:8–12 (EHV)

⁸There were in the same country shepherds staying out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock at night. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified! ¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. For behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which will be for all people: ¹¹Today in the town of David, a Savior was born for you. He is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”

P: We light three candles to praise our triune God for coming to bring us the joy of salvation.

Hymn 53 vv.1-2

To Shepherds as They Watched by Night

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|---|--|
| 1 To shepherds as they watched by night
Appeared a host of angels bright;
“Behold the tender babe,” they said,
“In yonder lowly manger laid, | 2 “At Bethlehem, in David's town,
As Micah did of old make known.
It is the Christ, your Lord and King,
Who will to all salvation bring.” |
|---|--|

The Angel Candle

Pastor: The fourth candle is the *Angel Candle*. It stands for *Peace*. It reminds us of the multitude of angels who celebrated that first Christmas. They brought the message of peace and goodwill toward mankind. The shepherds we to see their Savior. Then they went to tell everybody else. They glorified and praised God while Mary treasured it all up in her heart.

Luke 2:13–20 (EHV)

¹³Suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude from the heavenly army, praising God and saying, ¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward mankind.”

¹⁵When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Now let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they had seen him, they told others the message they had been told about this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it were amazed by what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹But Mary

treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

P: We light four candles to remember the message of the angels, that Jesus would bring peace to the four corners of the earth.

Hymn 61 vv.1,3

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

1 Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all you nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With th’angelic host proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! the herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

3 Hail the heav’ly Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Ris’n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that we no more may die.
Born to raise us from the earth,
Born to give us second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

The Christ Candle

Pastor: The final candle is the *Christ Candle*. It stands for *Love*. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” (John 3:16) Its prominence in the center of the circle shows that Jesus is the center of our attention at Christmas and always. The candle is white and stands for the holiness and righteousness of Christ. That righteousness is ours by faith.

John 1:1–5, 11–14 (EHV)

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ³Through him everything was made, and without him not one thing was made that has been made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind. ⁵The light is shining in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

¹¹He came to what was his own, yet his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. ¹³They were born, not of blood, or of the desire of the flesh, or of a husband’s will, but born of God.

¹⁴The Word became flesh and dwelled among us. We have seen his glory, the glory he has as the only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

P: We light the Christ candle to remind us that Christ is the center of our faith, the one who loves us when we are unlovable, our Savior.

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
 Let earth receive her King;
 Let ev'ry heart prepare him room
 And heav'n and nature sing,
 And heav'n and nature sing,
 And heav'n, and heav'n and nature
 sing.

2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
 Let all their songs employ,
 While fields and floods,
 rocks, hills, and plains
 Repeat the sounding joy,
 Repeat the sounding joy,
 Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

The Closing Blessing

Pastor: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: Amen.

Lighting the Candles – Spreading His Light over the World

Ushers - Two ushers will come forward to light large candles from the Pastor's candle. Then they will proceed down the center aisle, light the candle of the person sitting next to the aisle and instructing them to light the candle of the person sitting next to them and passing the fire down the entire pew. During Silent Night, the lights will gradually dim until they are completely off. After Silent Night, bring the lights back up slowly.

CW 60

Silent Night, Holy Night

Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht
Alles schläft, einsam wacht.
Nur das traute hochheilige Paar.
Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar.
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh.
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh.

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!
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!
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.

Please extinguish your candle after the hymn. If you would like to take your candle home with you, feel free. Otherwise, place your candle in the receptacle in the entry way.

**Merry Christmas to you and your family
with God's Richest Blessings!**