



Service of the Word
For **Christmas Day**

Presented by



Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Prelude: Three Festive Carols

Michael Kuhnert, organ, and John Schwartz, piano; Trinity Lutheran Church, Quakertown

Welcome and Introduction

Bishop Patricia A. Davenport

Gathering Song: “O Come, All Ye Faithful”

Kingdom Choir of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Exton

1 O come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to
Bethlehem;
come and behold him,
born the king of angels:

Refrain:

O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!

3 Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven
above!
Glory to God
in the highest:

Refrain

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711-1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880, sts. 1, 3

Apostolic Greeting

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

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into our world has brightened weary hearts with peace. Call us out of darkness and empower us to proclaim the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Readings

Isaiah 62:6-12 *God comes to restore the people.*

Psalms 97 *Light dawns for the righteous and joy for the honest of heart.*

Titus 3:4-7 *Saved through water and the Spirit.*

John 1:1-14 *The Light comes into the world.*

The Sermon: “God’s Downward Bent”

The Rev. Dr. Robert H. Linders

Theologian-in-Residence

St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Doylestown

Hymn of the Day: “Hark, the Herald Angels Sing!”

Choir of St. John’s Lutheran Church, Spinnerstown

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 angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain

Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king!"

2 Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,

offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail, incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel! *Refrain*

3 Hail the heav'n-born 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 each child of earth,
born to give us second birth. *Refrain*

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.

Prayers of Intercession

With wonder and thanksgiving for Christ’s coming into the world, we pray for the church, the life of the earth, and the whole human family.

A brief silence is kept.

The church in every land makes a joyful noise to herald your coming, O God. We give thanks for poets, musicians, and hymn writers who give voice to our praise, and for all who lead the church’s worship. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

This day dawns with new hope for all living things, and from ocean depths to mountain peaks the earth rejoices. Inspire in us an urgent zeal to protect the planet and renew its resources (*local environmental concerns may be named*). God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Bring heavenly peace to this world and an end to armed conflict. Raise up leaders in every nation who will honor human rights and establish equal justice for all people. Give courage to all who speak out against oppression and advocate for the powerless. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Guard the lives of any in danger, especially those who work to protect others. Lead any who are in desperate circumstances to sanctuary, help, and safety. Grant rest to the weary and soothe those who are troubled. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Bless all who gather to worship on this holy day. Be present at our tables and celebrations, and watch over those who travel. Sustain charities, outreach ministries, and food pantries that give generously to people in need (*local organizations may be named*). God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

In Christ we have beheld your glory, full of grace and truth. We give thanks for those in every generation who reflect the light of Christ. May their witness shine forth in our time. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Pondering the mystery of eternal love made flesh in Christ Jesus, we commend all for whom we pray to the mercy of God. **Amen.**

Hymn: “Jesus, What a Wonderful Child”

Choir and musicians of Reformation Lutheran Church, Mt. Airy

Jesus, Jesus

Oh what a wonderful child

Jesus, Jesus

So lowly meek and mild

New life, new hope

New joy He brings

Won't you listen to the angels sing

Glory, glory, glory

To the newborn King

He was herald by the angels

Born in a lowly manger

The virgin Mary was His mother

And Joseph was His earthly father

Three wise men came from afar

They were guided by a shining star

Just to see King Jesus where He lay

In a manger filled with hay

Prayer for Light

Let us pray: O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

Anthem: "To Thee, My Heart I Offer"

Choir of St. John's Lutheran Church, Phoenixville

Sending

Christ the Savior is born!
Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude: "Christmas Praise"

*Michael Kuhnert, organ, and John Schwartz, piano; Trinity Lutheran Church,
Quakertown*

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