

Messiah Lutheran Church



**Celebration of Holy Christmas
Children's Christmas Eve Service**

December 24, 2015



Welcome Visitors!

Welcome to Messiah Lutheran Church! Here, you will find a community thriving on God's mercy and forgiveness, anchored in the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, rejoicing in the historic liturgy of the Church, and learning to live as the family of God. As God's family here in Kenosha, we invite you to join us for worship to grow in God's rich mercies in Christ, and we welcome you to the life of Christ and His Church with open arms!

This Christmas program is a translation and revision of *Liturgie für einen Kinder-Gottesdienst zur Feier der heiligen Weihnacht*, a German children's Christmas program.

The Reverend Friedrich Lochner (1822–1902) originally wrote this program in 1869 for his congregation, Trinity Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Milwaukee. For several decades it was the only children's program used at Trinity Church. As late as 1949 it was hailed as “unsurpassed . . . in spite of the many other [children's programs] that have appeared since then.”

The program's central thought can be summarized in this way. The Christian celebrates Christmas in joyful thanksgiving for the birth of Jesus Christ. God the Father promised this birth in the beginning and repeated His promise down through the ages. It was not the birth of any ordinary man, but God Himself being born a man of the Virgin Mary. This birth of the Son of

God is for our good because, through the life and death and resurrection of Jesus, God offers to all mankind freedom from the guilt of sin and the fear of death.

Throughout the program the children encourage the congregation to take to heart and take comfort in our Lord's birth as the Savior of the nations. In this way this children's program is a suitable preparation for the full Christian Christmas celebration; namely, the Service of our Lord where the benefits of His birth are unmistakably distributed in the Word and Supper of our Christ.

May our Lord Jesus in His Word here presented deepen our understanding, increase our appreciation, and encourage our faithful thanksgiving for His holy and perfect birth.

Translated and Revised by
the Reverend John W. Fenton (1991)

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***Worship Note: All congregational singing is printed in BOLD typeface, choral singing is in ITALICS, and children's is in NORMAL typeface.**

Prelude

On This Still and Silent Night

MLC Choir

+PROCESSIONAL HYMN+

Rise and face processional cross.

O Come, All Ye Faithful

LSB 379

ALL **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:**

CHILDREN *O come, let us adore Him,*

CHOIR *O come, let us adore Him,*

ALL **O come, let us adore Him,
 Christ the Lord.**

ALL **Highest , most holy, Light of Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
Son of the Father Now in Flesh appearing!**

CHILDREN *O come, let us adore Him,*

CHOIR *O come, let us adore Him,*

ALL **O come, let us adore Him,
 Christ the Lord.**

ALL **Sing, Choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God In the highest:**

CHILDREN *O come, let us adore Him,*

CHOIR *O come, let us adore Him,*

ALL **O come, let us adore Him,
 Christ the Lord.**

ALL **Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n!**

Word of the Father Now in flesh appearing!

CHILDREN O come, let us adore Him,
CHOIR *O come, let us adore Him,*
ALL **O come, let us adore Him,**
Christ the Lord.

+OPENING VERSICLES+

P O Lord, open my lips.

C **And my mouth shall declare Your praise.**

P O God, we praise You in the stillness of Zion.

C **And unto You do we pay our vows.**

P Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

C **As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen. Hallelujah!**

P Unto us a Child is born. Hallelujah!

C **Unto us a Son is given. Hallelujah!**

P The Lord be with you.

C **And with your spirit.**

P Let us pray. Lord God, heavenly Father, we give You thanks for Your great grace and mercy that, in Your only-begotten Son, You have come in our flesh and through Him have redeemed us from sin and eternal death; and we implore You, illumine our hearts through Your Holy Spirit that we may be thankful to You for this Your grace and, in all need and anxiety, may be comforted by the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen.**

P Beloved in Christ! When our Savior said, “Out of the mouths of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise”, He wanted to show that, by His grace and mercy, He could produce praise and thanksgiving even in the littlest ones. And when our Lord entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, He was so pleased when little children

greeted Him in the temple singing, “Hosanna to the Son of David.” Therefore, in this time of Christmas joy, it is fitting that our little children also come into His house to speak and sing of God’s sweet and wonderful deeds. So let us joyfully listen to them, mingle our praise with theirs, and pray God that we become as little children; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

+CONGREGATIONAL SONG+

O Come, Little Children

CHILDREN O come, little children, O come one and all,
To Bethlehem haste, to the manger so small,
God’s son for a gift has been sent you this night
To be your redeemer, your joy and delight.

ALL He’s born in a stable for you and for me,
Draw near by the bright gleaming starlight to see,
In swaddling clothes lying so meek and so mild,
And purer than angels the heavenly Child.

See Mary and Joseph, with love beaming eyes,
Are gazing upon the rude bed where He lies,
The shepherds are kneeling, with hearts full of love
While angels sing loud hallelujahs above.

Kneel down and adore Him with shepherds today,
Lift up little hands now and praise Him as they
Rejoice that a Savior from sin you can boast,
And join in the song of the heavenly host.



+THE PROMISE OF CHRIST'S COMING+

(The children of the congregation tell of the Promise of Christ.)

In the beginning, God our Father promised that Jesus Christ would be born. Right after the fall into sin, God promised a Savior to our first parents, Adam and Eve.

God the Lord said to the serpent: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed. He shall bruise your head under foot and you shall bruise His heel."
Genesis 3:15

God later repeated that same promise to many other people. 2000 years later, to Abraham, God said: "In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."
Genesis 12:3

When the patriarch Jacob blessed his sons, the promise was repeated again: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to Him shall be the obedience of the people."
Genesis 49:10

Moses also repeated the promise when he said: "The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear."
Deuteronomy 18:15

God again repeated the promise when He told David: "When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your Seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish His kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of His kingdom forever."
2 Samuel 7:12-13

The Prophet Isaiah predicted that the Savior would be born of a virgin when he said: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel."
Isaiah 7:14

Isaiah also said this about the coming of Jesus: "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulders. And His Name will be called, Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."
Isaiah 9:6

Finally Malachi, the last of the prophets, spoke about the coming of Christ in the flesh:
“Behold, I send My messenger, and He will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming, says the Lord of hosts.”

Malachi 3:1

+CHILDREN’S SONG+

See Amid the Winter’s Snow

LSB 373

CHILDREN See amid the winter’s snow, Born for us on earth below
See, the gentle Lamb appears, Promised from eternal years.
Hail, O ever-blessed morn! Hail, redemption’s happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem: “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

Lo, within a stable lies He who built the starry skies,
He who, throned in height sublime, Sits amid the cherubim.
Hail, O ever-blessed morn! Hail, redemption’s happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem: “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

CHOIR *Sacred Infant, all divine, What a tender love was Thine,
Thus to come from highest bliss Down to such a world as this!
Hail, O ever-blessed morn! Hail, redemption’s happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem: “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”*

ALL **Teach, O teach us, holy Child, By Thy face so meek and mild,
Teach us to resemble Thee In Thy sweet humility.
Hail, O ever-blessed morn! Hail, redemption’s happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem: “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”**



+CHRIST IS BORN+

CHILD 1 Where was the baby Jesus to be born?

CHILD 2 In Bethlehem, in the land of Judah. For so it is written by the Prophet Micah: “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be ruler in Israel.”

Micah 5:2

CHILD 3 Was Jesus born rich and famous?

CHILD 4 No. Jesus, the only-begotten Son of God, was born in great poverty and humbleness.

CHILD 5 Where does it say this?

CHILD 6 The Holy Evangelist, St Luke, writes this: “And it came to pass in those days, that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her

firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.” *Luke 2*

+CONGREGATIONAL SONG+

Angels We Have Heard On High

LSB 368

ALL **Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And the mountains in reply,
Echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

**Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

**Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

+CHRIST’S BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT+

CHILD 1 How did other people know that Jesus was born?

CHILD 2 St. Luke writes this: “Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

Luke 2:8–11

CHILD 3 How did the shepherds know that the baby was Jesus?

CHILD 4 The angel said, “And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.” *Luke 2:12*

CHILD 5 What happened next?

CHILD 6 “And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!” *Luke 2:13-14*

CHILD 7 What did the shepherds do after they had seen and heard the angels?

CHILD 8 “So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another: Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us. And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.” *Luke 2:12*

CHILD 9 Did the shepherds tell anyone else this news?

CHILD 10 Yes. “Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.” *Luke 2:17-19*

CHILD 11 And what did the shepherds do then?

CHILD 12 “Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.” *Luke 2:20*

+CHILDREN AND CONGREGATIONAL SONG+

A Great and Mighty Wonder

LSB 383

ALL A great and mighty wonder,
A full and holy cure:
The virgin bears the infant
With virgin honor pure!
Proclaim the Savior’s birth:

CHILDREN To God on high be glory and peace to all the earth!

ALL **The Word becomes incarnate
And yet remains on high,
And cherubim sing anthems
To shepherds from the sky.
Proclaim the Savior's birth:**

CHILDREN To God on high be glory and peace to all the earth!

ALL **Since all He comes to ransom,
By all be He adored,
The infant born in Bethl'em,
The Savior and the Lord.
Proclaim the Savior's birth:**

CHILDREN To God on high be glory and peace to all the earth!

+THE REASON CHRIST WAS BORN+

ALL **Why did the Son of God become Man?**

CHILD 1 So that He would have flesh and blood like us, and take on our sin. And so that all creation would not be ruined.

ALL **Why was He born so poor and miserable?**

CHILD 2 He came to earth poor so that He might have mercy on us and make us rich in heaven and to be like the dear angels.

ALL **So what has moved the Son of God to become man?**

CHILD 3 His mercy for us miserable men, as we have already said. For we were driven out of heaven and became partners with the devil because of our sin. So Jesus Christ came once again to deliver and help us. That is why we so often sing these words: "O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, who takest away the sin of the world."
John 1:29

ALL **For whose good is Christ born?**

CHILD 4 Christ is born for all poor sinners who receive and confess Him as their Savior. For the angels said that the great peace is good for all people.

ALL **How can we become partakers of this Savior and His complete deliverance?**

CHILD 5 This is how: do not doubt but firmly believe that He became man even for your sake and for your good. For Christ Himself says: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” *John 3:16*

ALL **Meanwhile, what shall we do until He finally carries us from this vale of tears?**

CHILD 6 We shall delight and take comfort in Him and His grace, bless Him, serve Him, and continually call on Him so that He will eternally preserve us in good conscience in His kingdom.

ALL **Where does the Bible say that?**

CHILD 7 In his letter to Titus, St. Paul write this: “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.” *Titus 2:11–14*

+CONGREGATIONAL SONG+

Silent Night

LSB 363

ALL **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,
Heav'nly 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.**

+PASTORAL HOMILY+



+OFFERING+

Mary Did You Know?

MLC Choir

+CLOSING VERSICLES+

P The Word was made flesh. Hallelujah.
C **And dwelt among us. Alleluia!**
P And we beheld His glory. Hallelujah.
C **The glory of the only-begotten Son of the Father full of grace and truth. Alleluia!**
P The Lord be with you.
C **And with your spirit.**

P Let us pray. O God, who has made this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light; grant, we implore You, that, as we have known on earth the mysteries of that Light, we may also come to the fullness of its joys in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end.

C Amen.

P The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face
To shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon
you and + give you peace.

C Amen.

+THE REASON FOR CHRISTMAS+

PASTOR Where does our joyfulness come from on this holy night?

CHILDREN The very gracious birth of our dear Lord and Savior Jesus Christ produces tonight's great joy.

PASTOR Which article of the Creed tells us about our Lord's birth?

CHILD 1 The second article about Redemption where we confess: "I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary."

PASTOR Who is Jesus Christ?

CHILD 2 He is "true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true Man, born of the Virgin Mary." As one person, He is both completely God and completely Man.

PASTOR When did He become man, or when was He born?

CHILD 3 Jesus was born when the time of God's promise was fulfilled, almost 2,000 years ago.

PASTOR How long was the time of God's promise or the time of God's prophecy before Christ was born?

CHILD 4 About 4,000 years.

+CONGREGATIONAL SONG+

Joy to the World

LSB 387

Stand and Face Processional Cross

CHILDREN 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.

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

RIGHT SIDE No more let sins and sorrows grow
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.

All may ring their bells for the last verse.

ALL He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.

+THANK YOU AND MERRY CHRISTMAS+

Thank you for joining us this evening! Please continue the celebration of our Savior's Birth by coming back for our Christmas Eve Midnight Divine Service at 11:00 pm tonight and for our Christmas Day Divine Service tomorrow morning at 10:00 am.

Pastor: Rev. James A. Roemke
Sunday School Director: Becky Noble
Organist: Monica Scholz

VISITORS WELCOME! A special welcome to any visitors and guests who are with us today. Please introduce yourself to the pastor after the service, and we pray that the hearing and receiving of the Word of God in our midst will be filled with joy and thanksgiving!

PRAYERS OF PREPARATION may be found in the opening cover of the hymnals in each pew. Take some time before the service begins in quiet preparation and prayer.

**MERRY
CHRISTMAS**