



Christ Lutheran Church
Service of the Word - “Christmas in July”
Wednesday, July 29, 2026

Pastor Jennifer Toburen
Organist, Joe Abate

Prelude & Welcome

Call to Worship

P: In the fullness of time, your Word became flesh to shine through our world’s darkness, to speak peace to all peoples, and to reveal your love throughout the world. For your incarnate Word,

C: We adore you, O God.

P: Hope is a candle that flickers and waves yet offers warmth and life.

C: The darkness shall turn into light, the moon will shine as bright as the sun.

P: Hope is a hand that reaches out in peace.

C: The wolf shall live with the lamb; the leopard shall lie down with the kid.

P: Hope is a song that grows and fills the world with joy.

C: The wilderness and dry land will be glad; the desert rejoices and bloom.

P: Hope is a promise of a baby to be born in a manger stall.

C: A woman shall bear a son and his name shall be Immanuel.

Proclamation

P: Jesus Christ, our savior and shepherd is coming; the One who is Love, overflows and fills us with love; the One who brings healing mends our hearts with mercy and compassion; the Prince of Peace comes to bring light and life for all Creation. The one who will be born in the humble manger as a vulnerable baby is the one who will and the one who has defeated death and the powers of evil, offering to us life and salvation through a gift of abundant grace. These are the gifts of Christmas, the gifts of Easters, the gifts for all time.

C: For all this, we give thanks!

Gathering Hymn:

“All Earth is Hopeful”

ELW 266

All Earth Is Hopeful

Toda la tierra



To - da la tie - rra es - pe - ra al Sal - va - dor

1 All earth is hope - ful, the Sav - ior comes at last!

2 Peo - ple of Is - rael, you heard the proph - et tell:

3 Moun - tains and val - leys will have to be pre - pared;

4 We first saw Je - sus a ba - by in a crib.



y el sur - co a - bier - to, la ob - ra del Se - ñor; es el

Fur - rows lie o - pen for God's cre - a - tive task: this, the

"A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em - man - u - el"; she con -

new high - ways o - pened, new pro - to - cols de - clared. Al - most

This same Lord Je - sus to - day has come to live in our



mun - do que lu - cha por la li - ber - tad, re -

la - bor of peo - ple who strug - gle to see how

ceived him, "God with us," our broth - er, whose birth re -

here! God is near - ing, in beau - ty and grace! All

world; he is pres - ent, in neigh - bors we see our



cla - ma jus - ti - cia y bus - ca la ver - dad. dar - nos li - ber - tad.

God's truth and jus - tice set ev - 'ry - bod - y free.

stores hope and cour - age to chil - dren of this earth.

clear ev - 'ry gate - way, in haste, come out in haste!

Je - sus is with us, and ev - er sets us free.

- 2 *Dice el profeta al pueblo de Israel:* 3 *Montes y valles habrá que preparar;*
"De madre virgen ya viene Emmanuel," *nuevos caminos tenemos que trazar.*
será "Dios con nosotros," hermano será, Él está ya muy cerca, venidlo a encontrar,
con él la esperanza al mundo volverá. y todas las puertas abrid de par en par.

- 4 *En una cueva Jesús apareció,*
pero en el mundo está presente hoy.
Vive en nuestros hermanos, con ellos está;
y vuelve de nuevo a darnos libertad.

Greeting

P: The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **C: And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray.

C: Blessed are you, O Lord, Creator of the universe. We give you thanks for sending your Son to bring light to the darkness that shadows the earth. Prepare our hearts to receive the good news that the Christ is coming. Inspire us to sing your praises in our hearts and lives for the good news that coming! Amen.

First Reading:

Isaiah 61:7-11

Pam Dobbs

The prophet proclaims a hopeful message: God loves justice and will make an everlasting covenant with Israel and her descendants. In response, the prophet sings a joyful song, like Mary many generations later, about God's mercy and salvation.

⁷Because [the] shame [of God's people] was double,
and dishonor was proclaimed as their lot,
therefore they shall possess a double portion;
everlasting joy shall be theirs.

⁸For I the LORD love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

⁹Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

L: Word of God, Word of Life

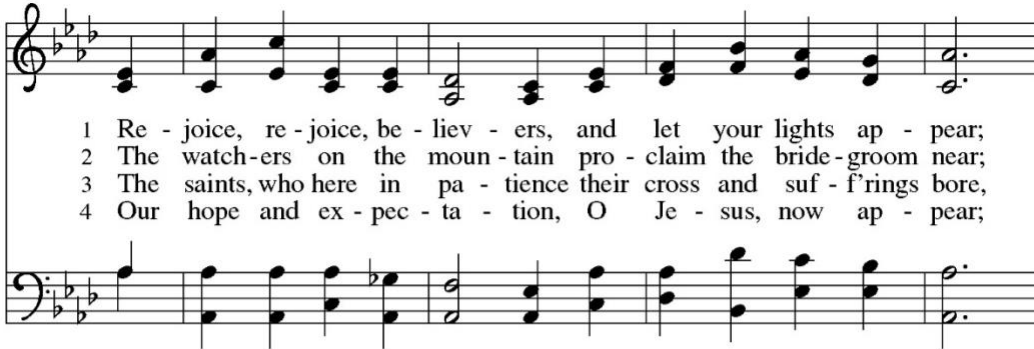
C: Thanks be to God

Response Hymn

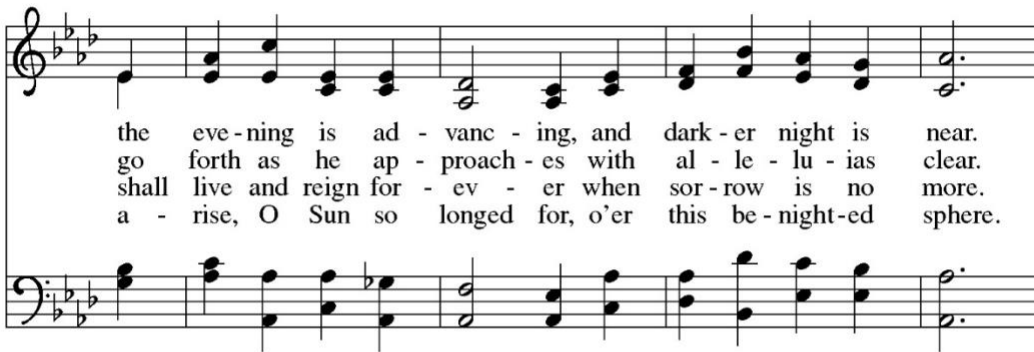
“Rejoice, Rejoice Believers”

ELW 244

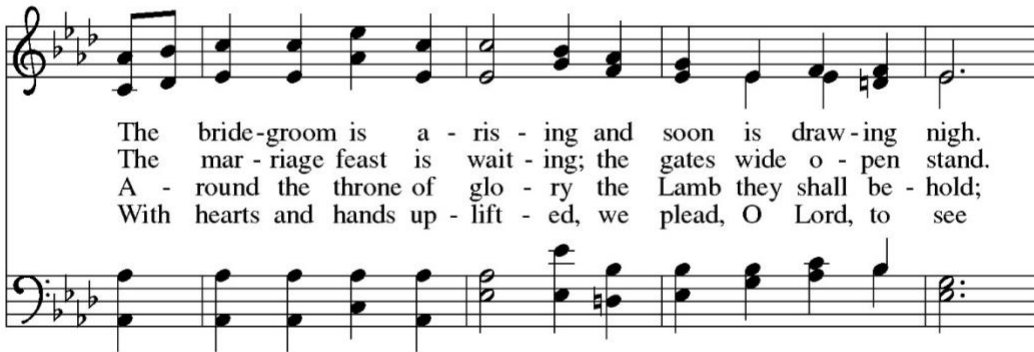
Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers



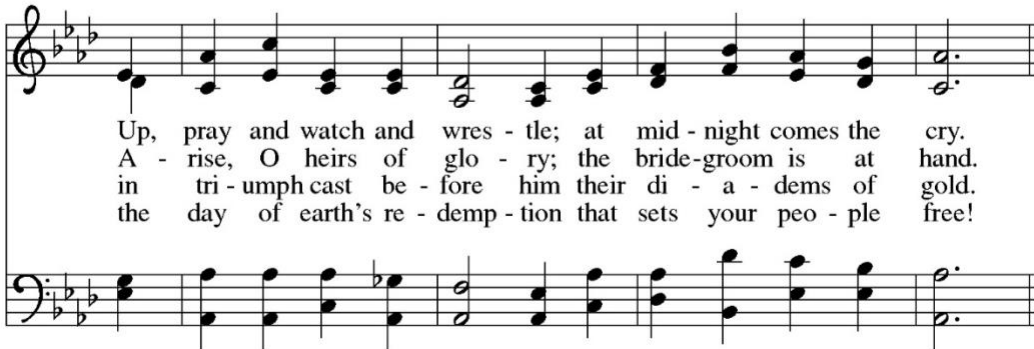
1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear;
 2 The watch-ers on the moun - tain pro - claim the bride-groom near;
 3 The saints, who here in pa - tience their cross and suf - f'ings bore,
 4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;



the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, and dark - er night is near.
 go forth as he ap - proach - es with al - le - lu - ias clear.
 shall live and reign for - ev - er when sor - row is no more.
 a - rise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this be - night-ed sphere.



The bride-groom is a - ris - ing and soon is draw - ing nigh.
 The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the gates wide o - pen stand.
 A - round the throne of glo - ry the Lamb they shall be - hold;
 With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see



Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; at mid - night comes the cry.
 A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the bride-groom is at hand.
 in tri - umph cast be - fore him their di - a - dems of gold.
 the day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple free!

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660–1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823–1907
 Music: HAF TRONES LAMPA FÄRDIG, Swedish folk tune

² 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.
³ You have multiplied exultation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
⁴ 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.
⁵ For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
⁶ 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.
⁷ Great will be his authority,
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.

L: Word of God, Word of Life

C: Thanks be to God

Response Hymn

“What Child Is This”

ELW 296

What Child Is This



1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar-y's lap is sleep-ing?
 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas-ant, king, to own him.



Whom an - gels greet with an-thems sweet while shep-herds watch are keep - ing?
 Good Chris-tian, fear; for sin-ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.
 The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en-throne him.



This, this is Christ the king, whom shep-herds guard and an - gels sing;
 Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
 Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!



P: Let us acclaim the good news of the gospel that fills us with hope and eager longing.
C: **Stir up your power, Lord Christ and come! By the power of the Holy Spirit
open our hearts and minds, O God, to your Word.**

Gospel Acclamation

ELW 254

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
2 Born thy peo-ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long-ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

Music: JEFFERSON, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

P: The holy gospel according to St. Luke, the 1st chapter

C: **Glory to you, O Lord**

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

Luke 1:26-38

Cindy Brookhart

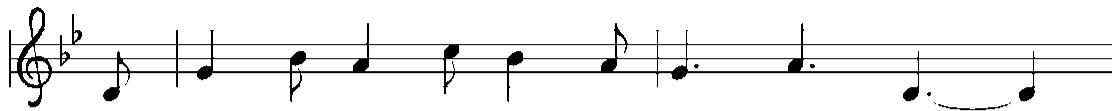
²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him 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 ancestor David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵ The angel said to 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 holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸ Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Response Hymn

"The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came"

ELW 265

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came



1 The an - gel Ga - bri - el from heav - en came,
 2 "For know a bless - ed moth - er thou shalt be.
 3 Then gen - tle Mar - y meek - ly bowed her head:
 4 Of her, Em - man - u - el, the Christ, was born



with wings as drift - ed snow, with eyes as flame:
 all gen - er - a - tions laud and hon - or thee;
 "To me be as it pleas - eth God," she said.
 in Beth - le - hem all on a Christ - mas morn,



"All hail to thee, O low - ly maid - en Mar - y,
 thy son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told.
 "My soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy God's ho - ly name."
 and Chris - tian folk through - out the world will ev - er say:



most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."
 most high - ly fa - vored la - dy." Glo - ri - a!
 Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy.
 "Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."

Text: Basque carol; para. Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834–1924

Musie: GABRIEL'S MESSAGE, Basque carol

The Gospel Continues with Luke 1:39-56

Mary Visits Elizabeth

Jean Tota

³⁹ In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰ where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴² and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³ And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴ For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

⁴⁶ And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.

Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name;

⁵⁰ indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly;

⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has come to the aid of his child Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,

⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

⁵⁶ And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

Special Music

"Mary, Did You Know?"

Joe & Christie Caswell

The Gospel Continues with Luke 1:57-58, 67-80

The Birth of John the Baptist

Pastor Jenn

⁵⁷ Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. ⁵⁸ Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

⁶⁷ Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:

⁶⁸ “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.

⁶⁹ He has raised up a mighty savior for us
in the house of his child David,

⁷⁰ as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,

⁷¹ that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.

⁷² Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors
and has remembered his holy covenant,

⁷³ the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,
to grant us ⁷⁴ that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,
might serve him without fear, ⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness
in his presence all our days.

⁷⁶ And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

⁷⁷ to give his people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of their sins.

⁷⁸ Because of the tender mercy of our God,
the dawn from on high will break upon us,

⁷⁹ to shine upon those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

⁸⁰ The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day he appeared publicly to Israel.

Response Hymn:

“Prepare the Royal Highway”

ELW 264

(Sing Verses 1 & 4)

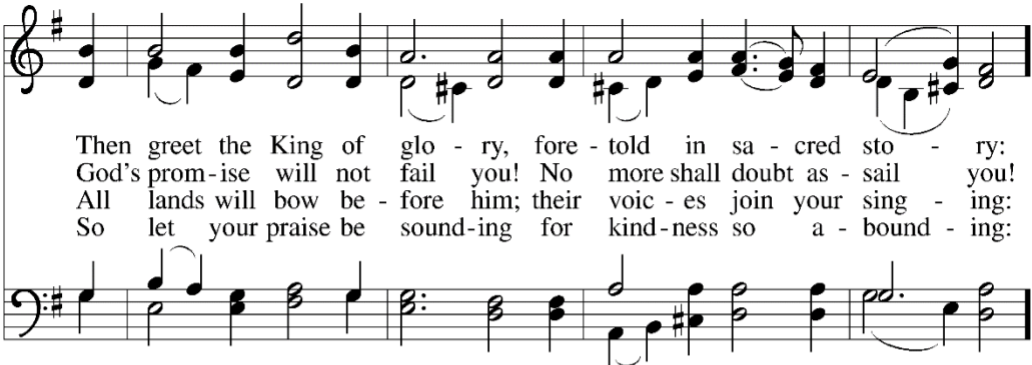
Prepare the Royal Highway



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
 2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!
 3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
 4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.

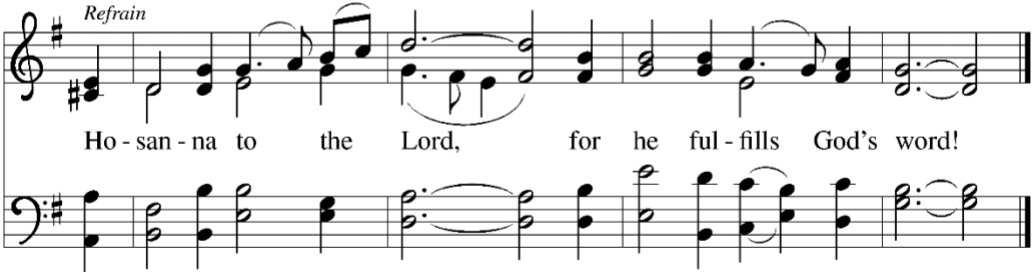


Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
 Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
 Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
 His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
 God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
 All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
 So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:

Refrain



Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
 Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.
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P: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Reflection

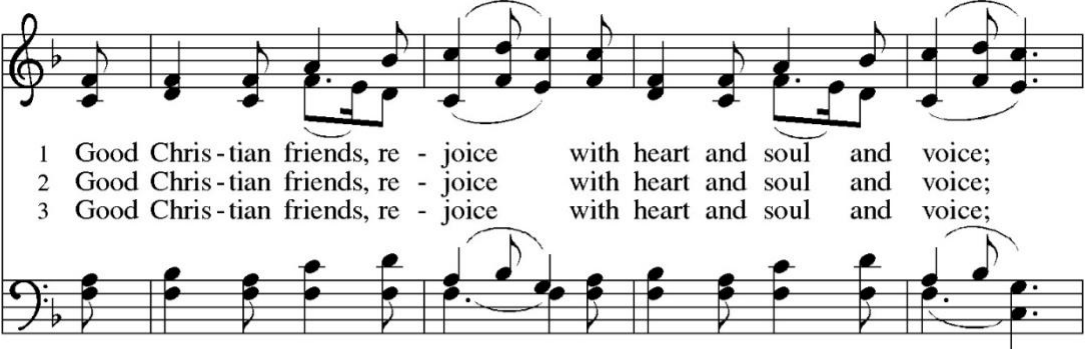
Pastor Jennifer

Reflection Hymn

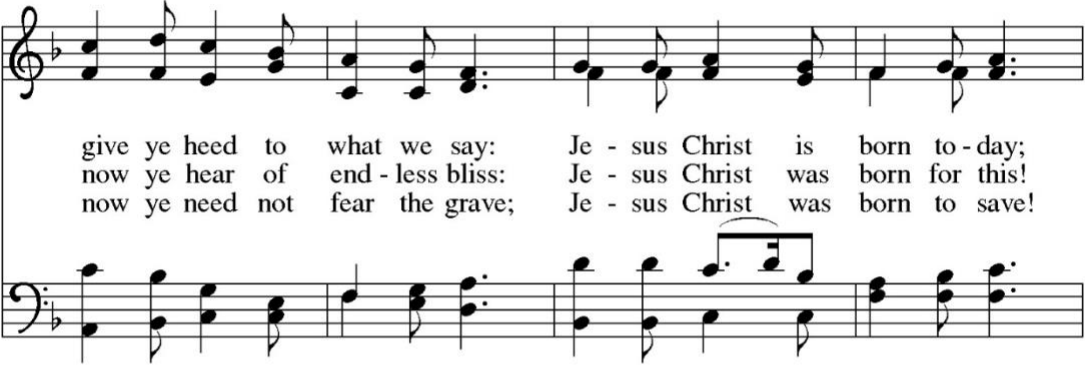
“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

ELW 288

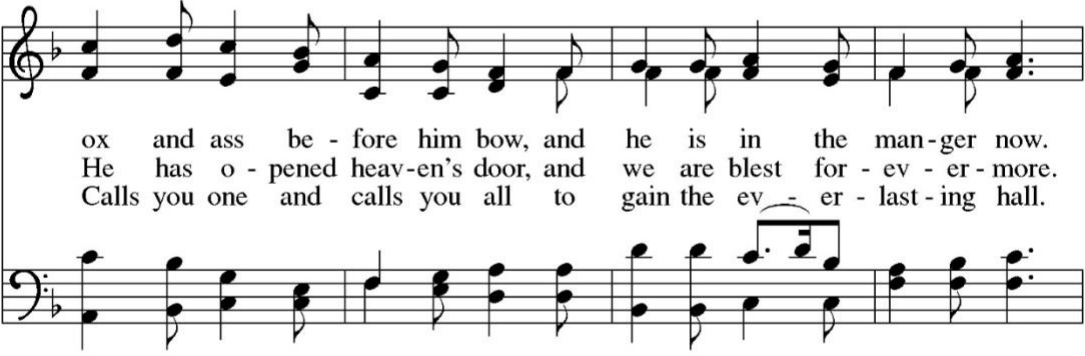
Good Christian Friends, Rejoice



1 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
 2 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
 3 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;



give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to-day;
 now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!
 now ye need not fear the grave; Je - sus Christ was born to save!



ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man-ger now.
 He has o - pened heav-en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.
 Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.



Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!
 Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!
 Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Text: Medieval Latin carol; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866
 Music: IN DULCI JUBILO, German carol, 14th cent.; arr. Robert L. Pearsall, 1795–1856

Prayers of the People:

P: Lord, you are with us in the morning.

C: Let our first thoughts and words be a prayer to you.

P: Lord, you are with us in the midday.

C: Keep us mindful of you as we work and play.

P: Lord, you are with us in the evening.

C: Prepare us for the night watches.

P: Lord, you are with us in the nighttime.

C: We commend our bodies and souls into your care.

P: Jesus said, I am the light of the world.

C: Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness.

P: Be our light in the darkness, O God, and in your great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night. Lord in Your Mercy....**Hear our prayer.**

P: Almighty God, all thoughts of truth and peace come from you. Kindle in the hearts of all your children the love of peace, and guide with your wisdom the leaders of the nations, so that your kingdom will go forth in peace and the earth will be filled with the knowledge of your love. Lord in Your Mercy....**Hear our prayer.**

P: Almighty God, by your gracious providence your servant John the Baptist was born to Elizabeth and Zechariah. Grant to your people the wisdom to see your purpose and the openness to hear your will, that the light of Christ may increase in us. Lord in Your Mercy....**Hear our prayer.**

P: Keep Watch dear Lord, with those who work or watch or weep this night and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, comfort the afflicted, shield the joyous, all for your love's sake. Lord in Your Mercy....**Hear our prayer.**

P: Gracious God, hears our prayers that your love will overflow more and more in our lives, in your church, and in all the world, until all may know the compassion and love of the incarnate One, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, in whose name we worship and pray.

C: Amen.

Offering

Our offering this evening begins with gathering gifts for Toys for Tots. One of the joys of Christmas is in the giving of gifts as a sign and reflection of our gratitude for the blessed gift given to us in the coming of Jesus among us. We share gifts with those we love and those we may not know. As we celebrate the gift and promise of the coming of the Incarnate One into our midst, we rejoice in our ability to share that gift with others.

A plate is also available for monetary donations which will be used to purchase items.

Offering Prayer

O God, you are the source of every blessing. From your hand we receive with joy, the abundance of your good gifts of grace, life, and salvation. We give thanks for the promise of the coming Son, the Savior of the World. With thanksgiving, we gather these gifts with the joy that comes in giving to others. We rejoice as we share these gifts in the name of Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Incarnate One, Beloved Son, you reveal the kingdom of glory to us and teach us to pray....

**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.**

Blessing

P: In this expectant time of waiting and watching with Mary, the words of the angel Gabriel break into our world:

“Greetings! The Lord is with you.

Do not fear, for nothing will be impossible with God.”

May the light of Christ illumine the darkness of this world, binding up that which is broken, and returning our hearts to wholeness. May Christ bring light, comfort, peace, to this yearning world.

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn: “Go Tell It On the Mountain”

ELW 290

Go Tell It on the Mountain

Refrain



Go tell it on the moun - tain, o-ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;

go tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!

1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when, lo, a - bove the earth
3 Down in a lone - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born;

Refrain

be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless-ed Christ-mas morn.

Text: African American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work Jr., 1872–1925, stanzas, alt.
Music: GO TELL IT, African American spiritual

Dismissal

Go in peace. Go in hope. Go in love. Christ is coming.

Amen. Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Service Notes & Acknowledgements:

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