



Christmas Eve
Candlelight Service

**“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace
to men on whom his favor rests.” ~ LUKE 2:14**



Zion Lutheran Church
Marengo, IL
December 24, 2018
11:00 p.m.

PRELUDE

Bell Choir

CHRISTMAS HYMN:

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

LSB 379

INVOCATION & VERSICLES

P: In the name of the Father and of the ✝ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth, burst into jubilant song with music.

C: **Sing to the LORD a new song, for He has done marvelous things; His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for Him.**

P: The LORD has made His salvation known. He has revealed His righteousness to the nations. He has remembered His love and His faithfulness.

C: **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

CONFESSION

- P: Listen now to God's Word spoken through the prophet Isaiah this night: "Prepare the highway for My people to return." On this Christmas Eve, we prepare our hearts for Jesus by humbly confessing our sins to Him. Therefore we confess our sins together:
- C: **We rejoice, heavenly Father, in the gift of Your Son, Jesus, our Immanuel, God with us. Yet, even in this evening of joy, we cannot escape the truth that it was because of our sin that You had to send Your Son to our broken and sinful world to suffer and die in our place on the cross. Without Your faithful love we would be lost forever because we have failed to do the things we should have done and for doing the things we should not have done. Forgive us not because we deserve this but because Jesus was born for our salvation and took our place on the cross.**

(Silent reflection and confession)

WORD OF FORGIVENESS

- P: Look, your Savior has come! You are not deserted nor are you forsaken. Your God has sought you out. He has found you and redeemed you. With His blood He has bought you back from darkness and has made you His own. Therefore, as a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C: **Amen.**

CHRISTMAS HYMN: *"Let Our Gladness Have No End"* vv. 1-2 LSB 381

CHRISTMAS PRAYER

- P: Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of sin. Lord God, we celebrate this night the birth of Your one and only Son, Jesus. Prepare our hearts to receive the message of His incarnation with renewed joy.
- C: **We give You thanks, Father, that You sought us out even when we were lost in our sin and rebellion. We know that we deserve to be deserted for what we have done, yet we rejoice in what You chose to accomplish on our behalf.**
- P: Receive our praises, Jesus, for You are our joy and salvation. You are our Emmanuel.
- C: **God, be with us now in this place. Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 7:10-14

(God speaks through Isaiah to give a prophecy concerning the virgin-birth of His only Son.)

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

CHOIR ANTHEM:

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

EPISTLE READING

1 John 4:7-16

(St. John speaks about God’s love in our Savior Jesus.)

L: This is the Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God!

CHRISTMAS HYMN

“Let Our Gladness Have No End” vv. 3-4

LSB 381

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 1:18-25

(St. Matthew relates the story of the birth of Jesus Christ.)

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the first chapter.

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

(The Gospel is read.)

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

APOSTLES’ CREED

CHRISTMAS HYMN

“What Child Is This”

LSB 370

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

“Changing Directions”

CHRISTMAS GIFTS (Offering)

OFFERTORY

Adult Choir

CHRISTMAS PRAYERS

P: Father in heaven, on this Christmas Eve, as Your sons and daughters we praise You for all Your goodness. We thank You for the word of the prophets spoken through people like Isaiah, who told us about how Your Son would be given to us.

C: Born of a virgin, He would be called Immanuel, God with us.

P: Mighty God, we adore You for the awesome power You displayed when the Holy Spirit conceived in Mary, Your own Child and Offspring.

C: By Your Spirit bring new life to all who hear the message that You seek them out with Your love that they would never be forsaken.

P: Gracious God, as You honored young Mary calling her to be Your servant, use us as Your servants that Christ may be proclaimed to many hearts.

C: On this Christmas Eve, we present ourselves to You as living sacrifices.

P: Dear Father, we stand amazed at the man, Joseph, who treasured and guarded Your Son and His mother.

C: As he willingly accepted a difficult task, give us the wisdom and strength to follow Your way rather than the ways of man.

P: Your angels, great God, sang Your praises for fulfilling Your plans and promises.

C: Receive our praises for You truly are God most high.

P: That You would choose shepherds to be the first visitors to see Your infant Son is an overwhelming truth to us, good Lord. It proves that You seek out even those who others consider to be unclean and unimportant.

C: With them and all people, we worship You for always having arms that are open to those who struggle with uncleanness of any kind.

P: Wise and all-knowing King, You reign over all the earth.

C: As You guided the Wise Men from a distant place to the Savior's side, guide us by Your Word and Spirit that we would always adore and never leave Him.

P: Now as You sit on Your glorious throne in heaven, along with Simeon and Anna, we celebrate Your great love and the peace You offer.

C: Thank You for offering Your salvation to male and female, young and old alike.

P: These things we pray in the name of our Infant Redeemer, Jesus the Christ.

C: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

(The pastor takes the light from the Christ candle and passes it to the acolytes and assisting ministers. They pass the light on to the congregation. Tip only the unlighted candle. Do not tip the lighted candle to avoid dripping the wax! Hold the candles straight up and the wax will not drip. Thank you.)

As the light is spread throughout the church, the one passing the light says, "Jesus Christ is the light of the world!" to which the one receiving the light responds, "The light no darkness can overcome!"

After the light has filled the church, the pastor says, "Hear once again the Good News: Jesus Christ is the Light of the world!" (Jn. 8:12) to which all respond, "The Light no darkness can overcome!" (Jn. 1:5)

CAROL

"Silent Night"

LSB 363

CHRISTMAS BLESSING

P: May Jesus, the holy child of Bethlehem, bless you and keep you. May this little One who has fulfilled all God's promises smile on you and be gracious to you. May He look upon you with His favor and give you peace on this Christmas Eve and always.

C: Amen.

CHRISTMAS HYMN:

"Angels From the Realms of Glory"

LSB 367

**Angels from the realms of glory, Wing your flight o'er all the earth.
Ye who sang creation's story, Now proclaim Messiah's birth.
Come and worship, come and worship;
Worship Christ, the newborn King.**

**Shepherds in the field abiding, Watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing, Yonder shines the Infant Light.
Come and worship, come and worship;
Worship Christ, the newborn King.**

**All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son,
Evermore your voices raising To the 'eternal Three in One.
Come and worship, come and worship;
Worship Christ, the newborn King.**

