

Surprisingly Sacred

CALM



Christmas Day

December 25, 2022



Ascension Lutheran Church

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Ogden, UT 84404

801.782.2810

Welcome to Worship...

Welcome to all God's guests, including those who call themselves "members" of this church named Ascension Lutheran Church more than 50 years ago.

A special welcome to guests who are here for the first time or who call yourselves "visitors" among the people of this community. It is at God's invitation, through worship, the Holy Spirit calls each of us to come to a place of **community**, **communion** and **commitment**. Each of us brings a different lens to worship, and yet, in a worshipping community, these differences become celebrations of diversity.

**Children are always welcome in worship services;
however please know a nursery space is available for
parents who need to tend to their little ones.**

Introduction

Our Christmas decorations have lots of shiny things to remind us that we are called to reflect the sacred each and every day.

"Incarnation" is a word that means that God's presence came to dwell among all people, and we believe this happened in a special way in the birth of Jesus.

All creation has always been imbued with the Creator's brilliance. This season, we have been remembering the call to shine with this holy light.

Surprisingly Sacred—Calm

Welcome to Worship

Solo

Upon this moment,
upon this people,
upon this place,
the holy comes.
And sacred knowing
brings sacred being
for sacred doing of God's plan.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

WA We pray for Comfort this day.

All We pray for Comfort this day.

WA We open to see the Sacred reflected in all things.

All We open to see the Sacred reflected in all things.

WA We open to see each thing that is born

All We open to see each thing that is born

WA as a gift of holy presence.

All as a gift of holy presence.

WA This is the gift of the Christ Mystery,

All This is the gift of the Christ Mystery,

WA lighting the way to Calm.

All lighting the way to Calm.



U-pon this mo - ment, U-pon this peo - ple, U-pon this
 place the Ho-ly comes. And Sa-cred know-ing brings Sa-cred
 be - ing for Sa-cred do - ing of God's plan.

P Living God, Christ Mystery, Spirit of Calm,
 we give you thanks for this physical and online space for gathering.

All As we take in the comfort you offer,
 may we be a reflection of your light,
 expanding the sacred sense of surprise
 into the sacred sense of purpose. Amen

refracting the sacred

As light passes through a medium, it can be redirected in ways that make its brilliance more visible, as in a prism.

As we encounter the message today, we see the world and our own lives and loved ones in a different light, one that invites us to know more deeply the sacred nature of all things.

A Reading from Isaiah, the 52nd chapter

How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,
who brings good news, who announces salvation,
who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices; together they shout for joy,
for in plain sight they see the return of the Lord to Zion.

Break forth; shout together for joy, you ruins of Jerusalem,
for the Lord has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem.

The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Isaiah 52: 7-10 (NRSVUE)

L Word of God, Word of Life.

All Thanks be to God!

Gospel Acclamation

Please stand in body or spirit.

Em - man - u - el, Em - man - u - el,
His name is called Em - man - u - el:
God with us, re - vealed in us!
His name is called Em - man - u - el.

Gospel Reading

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 1st chapter.

All **Glory to you, O Lord.**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

John 1: 1-14 (NRSVUE)

P The Gospel of our Lord.

All **Praise to you, O Christ.**

[You may be Seated](#)

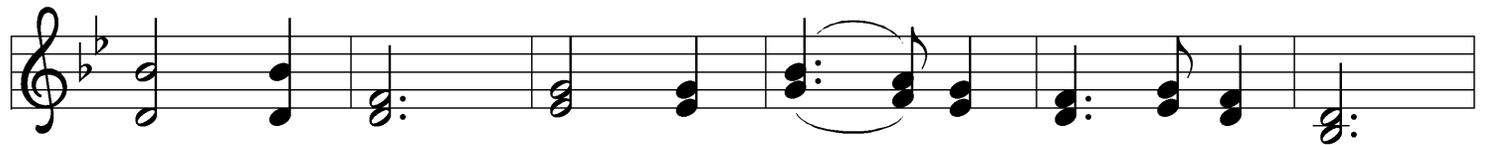
Message

Pr. Debra Jimenez

Silent Night, Holy Night!



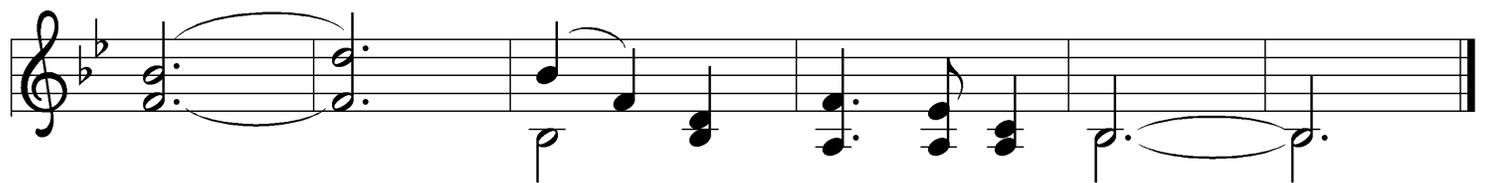
1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,



all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
 at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,



Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
 heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your



peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

Apostles' Creed

P Let us join together with the saints across the ages confessing our faith with the words of the Apostles' Creed.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

refilling the sacred

We are wells of the sacred. God's presence is poured into creation in a never-ending flow of love. We enter a time of prayer that invites us to be refilled in ways that can help us pour out our love throughout the week. All we must do in this moment is open our hearts to the Holy One.

Prayers of Intercession

L 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.



For you, O Lord, my soul in still - ness waits,
tru - ly my hope is in you.

(each prayer petition ends with)

L: God of grace,

All: **You hear our prayer.**

Sharing the Peace of Christ

In our continued physical distancing out of love for the health of one another, we will share the peace of our risen Lord by "speaking" that peace through sign language.

P Christ become Peace with you.

All And also with you.

Offering

[You may be Seated](#)

While we still will not physically pass the offering plates we will continue to have the plates available at the entrance to receive your offerings and will lift them up in thanksgiving before the throne of grace.

(tune: What Child is This)

♪ ♪ **Praise God from whom all blessings flow** ♪ ♪
Praise God all creatures here below
Praise God all heavens and the earth
reflecting the sacred story.

***This, this is Christ the One
who mirrors Peace for all of us.
Haste, haste to bring him laud,
the Word of time eternal.***

Offertory Prayer

P God of our waiting and watching, we offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives to the service of all your people.

All Prepare the way before us as we meet you in this simple meal, through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace.

Invitation to the Table

Christ invites all to his table, for he is the One who is reflected in all things and unites all things. There is a place for you. This Cosmic Banquet of Love is set for a hungry and hurting world. When we take in and take on Christ, we are the Body of Christ sent forth into the world to lay a banquet of love wherever we find ourselves.

Let us open ourselves so that our hearts might be filled completely.

Confession and Assurance

P Maker and Lover of all, forgive us when we are too preoccupied, self-involved, or worried to notice your presence in our lives...

when we are too rushed to allow moments of wonder and awe that lead to hope,

when we are too frightened to imagine those not like us

loved equally by you,

when we gloss over the most ordinary details as a revelation of your joy,

when we fail to stop and reside in peace with you in our depths.

All **Open us, O God,
 free us to reflect the sacred.
 Touch us with your presence,
 we pray in your Holy Name:
 Christ, Anointed One. Amen.**

P Hear this good news:
 God is with us in our distress and in our faltering.
 God is always and already closing the gaps we create.
 Jesus calls us to this table with unfailing and gracious hospitality.
 You are forgiven and freed. You are not alone.

All **We are forgiven and freed. We are not alone.
 Glory to God! Amen.**

The Great Thanksgiving and Words of Institution

P The Holy One be with you

All **And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts

All **We lift them up to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

All **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.
 Your Spirit anointed him to preach good news to the poor,
 to proclaim release to the captives
 and recovering of sight to the blind,
 to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
 and to announce that the time had come
 when you would save your people.

He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners.

A reflection of this purpose, and anointed as his disciples,
Christ's birth is our awakening,
Christ's suffering is all suffering,
Christ's death and resurrection is the pattern of all things.

P We are his Body in the world—
 the Body of Christ—renewed by water and the spirit.
 He has been, is, and always will be with us,
 One in Three, Three in One, in the power of your Word and Holy Spirit.



All: On the night You were be - trayed You took the bread;__ Af - ter



giv - ing thanks,__ You broke it and said, "This is My__



bod - y, bro - ken for__ you, and as you



eat__ it, re - mem - ber Me; This is My__



bod - y bro - ken for__ you, and as you



eat__ it, re - mem - ber Me." On the



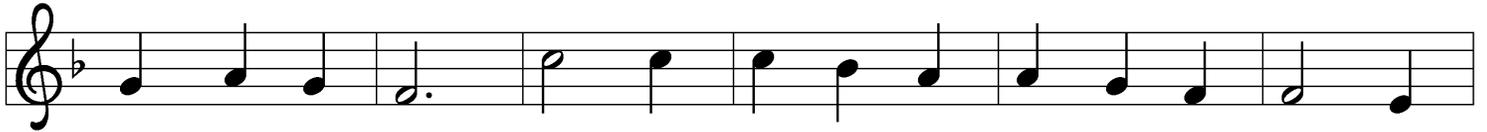
night You were__ be - trayed__ You held the cup;__ Af - ter

giv - ing thanks, You lift - ed it up. "This is My
blood, poured out for you, and as you drink it, re - mem - ber
Me; This is My blood, poured out for you, and as you
drink it, re - mem - ber Me." So, we
thank You for the wine and for the bread; For we
see the life You gave and the blood You shed. And we re -
mem - ber Your won - drous love, You gave Your
bod - y, You shed Your blood; And we re - mem - ber Your won - drous
love, You gave Your bod - y, You shed Your blood.

Love Has Come



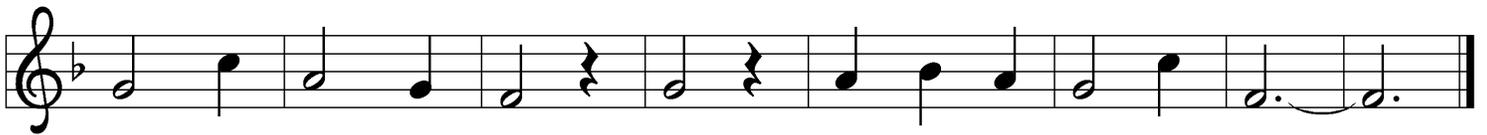
1 Love has come— a light in the dark - ness! Love shines forth in the
2 Love is born! Come, share in the won - der. Love is God now a -
3 Love has come and nev - er will leave us! Love is life ev - er -



Beth - le - hem skies. See, all heav - en has come to pro - claim it;
sleep in the hay. See the glow in the eyes of his moth - er;
last - ing and free. Love is Je - sus with - in and a - mong us.



hear how their song of joy a - ris - es: Love! Love! Born un - to
what is the name her heart is say - ing? Love! Love! Love is the
Love is the peace our hearts are seek - ing. Love! Love! Love is the



you, a Sav - ior! Love! Love! Glo - ry to God on high.
name she whis - pers; Love! Love! Je - sus, Im - man - u - el.
gift of Christ - mas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Text: Ken Bible, b. 1950

Music: UN FLAMBEAU, F. Seguin, *Recueil de Noël's composés en langue provençale*, 1856

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Post Communion Blessing *and* Prayer

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you
and keep you in his grace.

All Amen

P Most High God,
you have come among us at this table.

All By the Spirit's power, form us to be bearers of your word,
sharing gifts of mercy and grace with all,
through Christ Jesus, our host and our guest. Amen.

Stewardship of Life and Ministry Announcements

Anointed to the Surprisingly Sacred

This morning, you are invited to "Christify" your meal, your gifts, and each other simply by making up a "sparkly" hand blessing (like fingers wiggling toward something) on the things in your home, your gathering, under your tree, the people around, and say "you are actually not surprisingly sacred to me... I've known all along that you are a gift."

Benediction

Please stand in body or spirit.

P When you see lights twinkle,
when you catch a reflection in a mirror,
when you notice the sunlight dancing on a surface
or a nightlight glowing in the darkness,
let these be signs that the Christ Light is revealed
again and again in and through this world.

Know that your brilliant presence
is pouring more love into a weary world.
God loved us by becoming us.

P This means you are already reflecting the sacred.

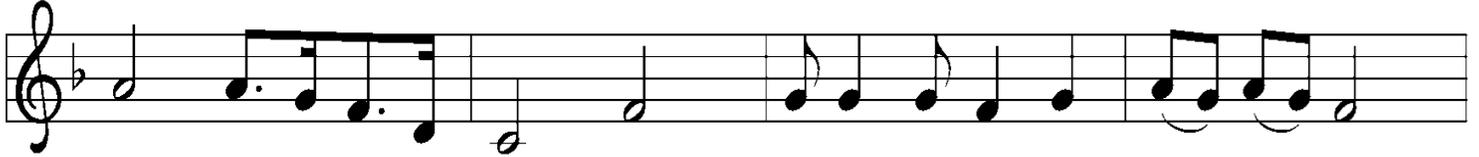
In the name of the Creator, Christ, ✝ and Spirit of Peace.

All Amen

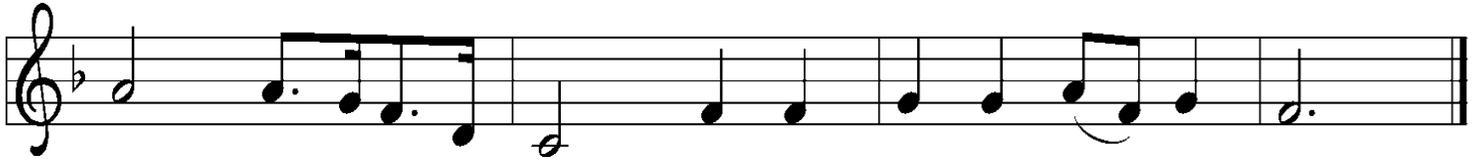
Sending Song

Go Tell It on the Mountain

Refrain



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

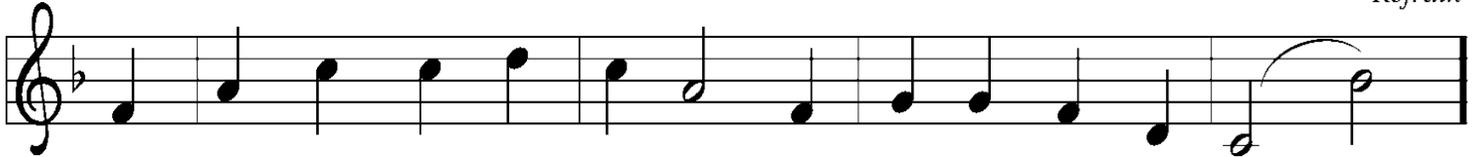


go tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!



- 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.

Dismissal

P Go in peace. Christ is near.

All Thanks be to God.

Front Cover:

Photo by [Evie S.](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Readings for next Sunday,
January 1st
The Name of Jesus

First Reading:

Numbers 6:22-27

Psalm:

Psalm 8

Second Reading:

Galatians 4:4-7

Gospel:

Luke 2:15-21

About our Worship Space

In preparation for the coming of Jesus into our world we have chosen a theme of Reflecting the Sacred for our Advent season.

We too often think that something “sacred” is far away and not available to us.

But what if we saw the presence of the holy in all that has been, is, and always will be—right here—reflected in and through everything and everyone around us?

God’s gift of creation reflects and refracts the light of life throughout heaven and earth.

Just as the seers of old looked to the skies for the light of life and love, our worship space attempts to capture the beauty of the night sky, the lights of the heavens framing the gift of sacrifice that was always present...

before the birth of Jesus...

even before creation itself.

***The cross was no surprise to God, yet he came to us anyway...
as a vulnerable baby...as one of us.***

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