

Big Grove Lutheran Church Big Grove Crow River Grace Parish

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December 24, 2023

Christmas Eve

Welcome in Jesus' name.

We extend a special welcome to guests and visitors.



Lead Pastor Lisa Meshke, pastorlisaanne@gmail.com

Deacon Brenda Handel-Johnson, bhandeljohnson@gmail.com

Secretary, Sue Wiener

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

Prelude/Procession/Bell

Welcome and Announcements

GATHERING

Lighting of Advent Candle “Christ, Be Our Light” ELW #715

v. 5 – Many the gifts, many the people, many the hearts that yearn to belong. Let us be servants to one another, signs of your kingdom come.

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.

Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.

L: Our Savior’s birth is celebrated with bold faith.

C: May our hearts be willing.

L: Like Mary, who showed humble surrender:

C: May our hearts be willing.

L: Like Joseph, who exhibited unconditional trust:

C: May our hearts be willing.

L: Like the shepherds, who displayed awestruck wonder:

C: May our hearts be willing.

L: Like the angels, who sang glorious praise:

C: May our hearts be willing.

L: For all who are willing to receive the gift of the Savior born in Bethlehem:

C: Grant that we might have the peace of Christ as we wait, the love of Christ as we act, and the grace of Christ as we speak.

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.

Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.

Text: Bernadette Farrell, b. 1957

Text © 1993 Bernadette Farrell. Published by OCP Publications Augsburg Fortress. #SB109327

*Prayer

The Christmas Prophecy:

Isaiah 9: 2-7

L: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;

C: Those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined.

L: For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;

C: Authority rests upon his shoulders;

L: And he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

C: Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

L: His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom.

C: He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore.

***Processional Hymn: “O Come, All Ye Faithful”** ELW #283 (v.1-3)

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!

2 The highest, most holy,
light of light eternal,
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father now in flesh appearing! ***Refrain:***

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, 3-4; tr. unknown, st. 2
Augsburg Fortress. #SB109327

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.**

***The Prayer of the Day:**

Almighty God, **you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus’ presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

Hymn: “O Little Town of Bethlehem” ELW #279 (v.1,2,4)

1 O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

2 For Christ is born of Mary,
and, gathered all above
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the king,
and peace to all the earth!

4 O holy child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
oh, come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Immanuel!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893 Augsburg Fortress. #SB109327

WORD

Scripture Reading:

Titus 2:11-14

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

L: Word of God, Word of Life. C: Thanks be to God.

Hymn: "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

ELW #270

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. Augsburg Fortress. #SB109327

Scripture Reading:

Psalm 96

L: O sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

C: Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.

L: Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples.

C: For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods.

L: For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.

C: Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

L: Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

C: Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts.

L: Worship the LORD in holy splendor; tremble before him, all the earth.

C: Say among the nations, "The LORD is king! The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved. He will judge the peoples with equity."

L: Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

C: let the field exult, and everything in it. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy

L: before the LORD; for he is coming, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with his truth.

Hymn: "Joy to the World"

ELW #267 (1,2,4)

1 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.

2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

4 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.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748 Augsburg Fortress. #SB109327

Children's Sermon

***Gospel Acclamation:** "Angels We Have Heard on High" ELW #289

1 Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain:

Gloria in excelsis Deo;
gloria in excelsis Deo.

2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heav'nly song? ***Refrain:***

3 Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn king. ***Refrain:***

Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864 Augsburg Fortress. #SB109327

***Holy Gospel:**

Luke 2:1-20

L: The Holy Gospel according to the Book of Luke.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room. ⁸ Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah,^[b] the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" ¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, ¹⁹ and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

L: The Gospel of our Lord. C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Christmas Eve Homily:

Hymn: "Go Tell it on the Mountain"

ELW #290

Refrain:

Go tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and ev'rywhere;
go tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born!

1 While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light. ***Refrain:***

2 The shepherds feared and trembled
when, lo, above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth. **Refrain:**

3 Down in a lonely manger
the humble Christ was born;
and God sent us salvation
that blessed Christmas morn. **Refrain:**

Text: African American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work Jr., 1872-1925, stanzas, alt.
Augsburg Fortress. #SB109327

***Prayers of the People:**

L: Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

MEAL

***The Great Thanksgiving:**

L: Glory to God in the highest,

C: and peace to God's people on earth.

L: Blessed are you, Prince of peace. You rule the earth with truth and justice.

C: Send your gift of peace to all nations of the world.

L: Blessed are you, Son of Mary. You share our humanity.

C: Have mercy on the sick, the dying, and all who suffer this day.

L: Blessed are you, Son of God. You dwell among us as the Word made flesh.

C: Reveal yourself to us in word and sacrament that we may bear your light to all the world.

***Words of Institution**

***The Lord's Prayer:**

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.

Distribution of Holy Communion: (wine = dark; grape juice = light)

All are welcome to the Lord's Table. Tonight, we commune by continuous station. You will receive a wafer; gluten free wafers are available upon request. You may then choose the light-colored grape juice or the dark colored wine. Children who have not received communion instruction are welcomed to come forward for a blessing

Communion Hymns:

"What Child is This"

ELW #296

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest,
on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud,
the babe, the son of Mary!

2 Why lies he in such mean estate
where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through,
the cross be borne for me, for you;
hail, hail the Word made flesh,
the babe, the son of Mary!

3 So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high,
the virgin sings her lullaby;
joy, joy, for Christ is born,
the babe, the son of Mary!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898 Augsburg Fortress. #SB109327

"I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve"

ELW #271

1 I am so glad each Christmas Eve,
the night of Jesus' birth!
Then like the sun the star shone forth,
and angels sang on earth.

2 The little child in Bethlehem,
he was a king indeed!
For he came down from heav'n above
to help a world in need.

3 He dwells again in heaven's realm,
the Son of God today;
and still he loves his little ones
and hears them when they pray.

4 I am so glad each Christmas Eve!
His praises then I sing;
he opens now for ev'ry child
the palace of the king.

5 And so I love each Christmas Eve,
and I love Jesus too;
and that he loves me ev'ry day
I know so well is true.

Text: Marie Wexelsen 1832-1911; tr Peter A Sveeggen, 1881-1959
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“The First Noel”

ELW #300

1 The first Noel the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain:

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.

2 They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night. **Refrain:**

3 And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went. **Refrain:**

4 This star drew near to the northwest,
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest;
and there it did both stop and stay
right over the place where Jesus lay. **Refrain:**

5 Then entered in those wise men three,
full rev'rently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence
their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense. **Refrain:**

Text: English traditional Augsburg Fortress. #SB109327

“Away in a Manger”

ELW #277

1 Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

2 The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

3 Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay
close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

Text: North American, 19th cent. Augsburg Fortress. #SB109327

***Communion Blessing**

***Communion Prayer:**

Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

SENDING

*During the distribution of light, it is requested that **no lighted candle be tipped or tilted.**
Tip only the unlit candle when lighting your own candle from your neighbor.*

Christmas Eve Candle Reading

***Sending Hymn:** "Silent Night"
(please stand during the 3rd verse)

ELW #281

1 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.

2 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!

3 Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792-1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820-1885
Augsburg Fortress. #SB109327

***Dismissal:**

L: Go and ponder the peace of this glorious night.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Worship Participants:

Preacher and Presider – Pastor Lisa Meshke

Organist – Stacie Hansen