



A SAVIOR IS BORN

TO Change THE World

Christmas Eve 2022

December 24, 2022



A Savior Is Born

The first Christmas sermon was preached to a small congregation consisting entirely of shepherds. The preacher was an angel. The message of his sermon? “Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you.”

That is a heavy word: Savior. It says as much about us as it does about this child. If the angel had said “a teacher has been born” or “a mentor has been born,” it would mean that within us exists the potential to fix all that is wrong with the world. It would mean we just need a bit of help: a coach, a mentor, a source of inspiration. But the angel said, “A Savior has been born.” If one needs saving, it means he is totally helpless—completely lost—doomed, without outside intervention. That is how God the Father viewed us: helpless, lost, doomed. So, he sent more than a coach. He sent his only Son to be our Savior.

Not just a helper

Or a teacher...

Not just a mentor

Or a shepherd...but



Acknowledgments

Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

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A Savior

from *Christian Worship*. Words and

Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

Please use the hymnals for any tunes that are unfamiliar or to assist in singing harmony.

Welcome

Hymn

343 Once in Royal David's City

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Once in royal David's city
 stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby
 in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child. | 3 And our eyes at last shall see him
 through his own redeeming love,
for that child, so dear and gentle,
 is our Lord in heav'n above,
and he leads his children on
 to the place where he is gone. |
| 2 He came down to earth from heaven
 who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable,
 and his cradle was a stall;
with the poor and mean and lowly
 lived on earth our Savior holy. | 4 Not in that poor, lowly stable
 with the oxen standing by
shall we see him, but in heaven,
 set at God's right hand on high.
Then like stars his children crowned,
 all in white, his praise will sound. |

Text: Cecil F. Alexander, 1818–1895, abr., alt. Text: Public domain

Stand

Bidding Prayer

Beloved in Christ: In this Christmas season it is our duty and delight to hear again the message of the angels and, in heart and mind, to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us, the Christ-child, lying in a manger.

Let us read and learn in Holy Scripture the story of the loving purposes of God from the first days after our fall, and into the birth and glorious redemption brought to us by this Holy Child. Let us hear how peace was lost, and how peace is restored.

But first, let us pray, for this is good and right.

Heavenly Father, we pray for ourselves and all people who worship you and your Son this holy night. By your holy Word, lead us to say with the angels,
Glory to God in the highest!

We pray for your blessing upon the people of our city, our state, our nation, and our world.
Glory to God in the highest!

We pray for the poor and helpless, the cold and hungry, the sick and sad, that you would give them the joy of your salvation and the comfort of your presence.

Glory to God in the highest!

We pray for unbelievers and enemies of the Church, that through your Law and Gospel you would lead them to recognize your Son as their only hope for eternal life.

Glory to God in the highest!

Finally, we remember before you all those who rejoice with us in heaven, who live in greater light and beauty than we, that multitude which no one can number, who died in faith, and now praise you in your heavenly temple. We confess that we are united with them and with one another.

Glory to God in the highest!

We humbly offer up these prayers and praises in the words that Christ himself taught us.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Be seated

Contemporary Choir

Welcome to Our World

First Lesson

Genesis 3:8–15

The Seed of the woman will crush the serpent's head.

⁸They heard the voice of the LORD God, who was walking around in the garden during the cooler part of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

⁹The LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?”

¹⁰The man said, “I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, so I hid myself.”

¹¹God said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat?”

¹²The man said, “The woman you gave to be with me—she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

¹³The LORD God said to the woman, “What have you done?”

The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

¹⁴The LORD God said to the serpent:
 Because you have done this,
 you are cursed more than all the livestock,
 and more than every wild animal.
 You shall crawl on your belly,
 and you shall eat dust all the days of your life.
¹⁵I will put hostility between you and the woman,
 and between your seed and her seed.
 He will crush your head, and you will crush his heel. (EHV)



Hymn

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 Let the earth now praise the Lord,
 who has truly kept his word
 and at last to us did send
 Christ, the sinner's help and friend.</p> <p>2 What the fathers most desired,
 what the prophets' heart inspired,
 what they longed for many' a year
 stands fulfilled in glory here.</p> <p>3 Abram's promised great reward,
 Zion's helper, Jacob's Lord—
 him of twofold race behold—
 truly came, as long foretold.</p> | <p><i>315 Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord</i></p> <p>4 Savior, hear my welcome cry—
 loud hosannas lifted high!
 King of glory, enter in;
 cleanse my soul of ev'ry sin.</p> <p>5 Crush for me the serpent's head
 that, set free from doubt and dread,
 I may cling to you in faith,
 safely kept through life and death,</p> <p>6 And, when you shall come again
 as a glorious king to reign,
 I with joy may see your face,
 freely ransomed by your grace.</p> |
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Text: Heinrich Held, 1620–1659, abr.; (sts. 1–3, 5–6): tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt. public domain; (st. 4): tr. *Christian Worship*, 2021 © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 719903

Second Lesson

Isaiah 9:2, 6, 7

The prophet foretells the coming of the Savior.

²The people walking in darkness have seen a great light. For those living in the land of the shadow of death, the light has dawned.

⁶For to us a child is born. To us a son is given. The authority to rule will rest on his shoulders. He will be named: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷There will be no limit to his authority and no end to the peace he brings. He will rule on David's throne and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from now on, into eternity. The zeal of the Lord of Armies will accomplish this. (EHV)

Hymn

1 Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King;
peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations rise,
join the triumph of the skies;
with th’ angelic host proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

3 Hail, the heav’nly 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 man no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth,
born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

350 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing
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 th’ incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel!
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”



Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt. Text: Public domain

Third Lesson

Isaiah 11:1–9

A Branch from the stump of Jesse will bear fruit.

¹A shoot will spring up from the stump of Jesse, and a Branch from his roots will bear fruit. ²The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him: the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

³He will be delighted with the fear of the Lord. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, nor will he render decisions based on what he hears with his ears, ⁴but with righteousness he will judge the poor, and he will render fair decisions in favor of the oppressed on the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath from his lips he will put the wicked to death. ⁵Righteousness will be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his hips.

⁶The wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the young goat, the calf, the young lion, and the fattened calf together, and a little child will lead them. The cow and the bear will graze together, and their young ones will lie down together. The lion will eat straw like the cattle. ⁸The nursing child will play near a cobra’s hole, and the weaned child will put his hand into a viper’s den. ⁹They will not hurt or destroy anywhere on my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. (EHV)

Hymn

360 Behold, a Branch Is Growing

- 1 Behold, a branch is growing
of loveliest form and grace!
As prophets sang, foreknowing,
it springs from Jesse's race
and now begins to flow'r
in midst of coldest winter,
at deepest midnight hour.
- 2 Isaiah had foretold it
in words of promise sure,
and Mary's arms enfold it,
a virgin meek and pure.
Through God's eternal will
this child to her is given
at midnight calm and still.
- 3 This flow'r, whose fragrance tender
with sweetness fills the air,
dispels with glorious splendor
the darkness ev'rywhere.
True man, and yet true God,
from sin and death he saves us
and lightens ev'ry load.
- 4 O Savior, child of Mary,
who felt our human woes,
O Savior, King of glory,
who conquered all our foes,
bring us at last, we pray,
to the bright courts of heaven
and to the endless day.

Text: German, 16th cent.; (sts. 1–3): tr. Harriet R. K. Spaeth, 1845–1925; (st. 4): John C. Mattes, 1876–1948, alt. Text: Public domain

Fourth Lesson

Micah 5:2–5a

God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

- ² But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
from you, will go out
the one who will be the ruler for me in Israel.
His goings forth are from the beginning,
from the days of eternity.
- ³ Therefore the Lord will give them up,
until the time when the woman who is in labor bears a child.
Then the remaining survivors from his brothers
will return to the people of Israel.
- ⁴ He will stand and shepherd
with the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
They will dwell securely,
for at that time he will be great to the ends of the earth.
- ⁵ This one will be their peace. (EHV)



Hymn

333 O Little Town of Bethlehem

- 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.
- 3 How silently, how silently
the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming,
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.
- 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;
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Immanuel!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835–1893, abr., alt. Text: Public domain

Fifth Lesson

Luke 1:26–35, 38

The angel Gabriel announces to Mary the birth of a son.

²⁶ In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged in marriage to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women."

²⁹ But she was greatly troubled by the statement and was wondering what kind of greeting this could be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, because you have found favor with God. ³¹ Listen, you will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will never end."

³⁴ Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

³⁵ The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

³⁸ Then Mary said, "See, I am the Lord's servant. May it happen to me as you have said." Then the angel left her. (EHV)

Hymn

328 *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came*

- 1 **The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame:
“All hail,” said he to meek and lowly Mary,
“most highly favored maiden.” Gloria!**

- 2 **“I come from heav’n to tell the Lord’s decree:
a blessed virgin mother you shall be.
Your son shall be Immanuel, by seers foretold,
most highly favored maiden.” Gloria!**

- 3 **Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head;
“To me be as it pleases God,” she said.
“My soul shall praise and magnify his holy name.”
Most highly favored maiden, Gloria!**

- 4 **Of her Immanuel, the Christ, was born
in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say,
“Most highly favored maiden.” Gloria!**



Text: para. Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834–1924, alt.; Basque, c. 18th cent. Text: Public domain

Sixth Lesson

Luke 2:1–7

St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governing Syria. ³And everyone went to register, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the town of Nazareth, into Judea, to the town of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was from the house and family line of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, his wife, who was pledged to him in marriage and was expecting a child.



⁶And so it was that while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son, wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. (EHV)

Hymn

340 *Away in a Manger*

- 1 **Away in a manger, no crib for a 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 side until 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 take us to heaven to live with you there.**



Text (sts. 1–2): *The Myrtle*, Boston, 1884; (st. 3): *Vineyard Songs*, Louisville, 1892, alt. Text: Public domain

Seventh Lesson

Luke 2:8–20

The shepherds go to the manger.

⁸ There were in the same country shepherds staying out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to 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 behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which will be for all people: ¹¹ Today in the town of David, a Savior was born for you. He is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” ¹³ Suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude from the heavenly army, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward mankind.”

¹⁵ When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Now let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they told others the message they had been told about this child. ¹⁸ And all who heard it were amazed by what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart.

²⁰ And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. (EHV)

Choir

Song of the Shepherds

Eighth Lesson

Matthew 2:1–12

The Magi are led by the star to Jesus.

¹ After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, when Herod was king, Wise Men from the east came to Jerusalem. They asked, ² “Where is he who has been born King of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” ³ When King Herod heard this, he was alarmed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ He gathered together all the people’s chief priests and experts in the law. He asked them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵ They said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, because this was written through the prophet: ⁶ You, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are certainly not least among the rulers of Judah: because out of you will come a ruler, who will shepherd my people, Israel.”

⁷ Then Herod secretly summoned the Wise Men and found out from them exactly when the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. When you find him, report to me, so that I may also go and worship him.” ⁹ After listening to the king, they went on their way. Then the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them, until it stood still over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced with overwhelming joy. ¹¹ After they went into the house and saw the child with Mary, his mother, they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² Since they had been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they went back to their own country by another route. (EHV)

Hymn

346 Angels We Have Heard on High

**1 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.**



**2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heav’nly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo;
gloria in excelsis Deo.**

**3 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.**

Stand

Ninth Lesson

John 1:1–14

St. John unfolds the great mystery of the incarnation.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ³Through him everything was made, and without him not one thing was made that has been made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind. ⁵The light is shining in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶There was a man, sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as an eyewitness to testify about the light so that everyone would believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light.

⁹The real light that shines on everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, yet his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. ¹³They were born, not of blood, or of the desire of the flesh, or of a husband's will, but born of God.

¹⁴The Word became flesh and dwelled among us. We have seen his glory, the glory he has as the only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. (EHV)

Be seated

Hymn

354 O Come, All Ye Faithful

- 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:
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!
- 2 God from true God, and Light from Light eternal,
born of a virgin, to earth he comes!
Only-begotten Son of God the Father:
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!
- 3 Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest:
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!



4 **Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n!
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

Text: tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–1880, alt.; John F. Wade, c. 1711–1786 Public domain



Connect Card

Please take a moment now to fill out a Connect Card.

Offering

Moved by God's love in Christ, we offer him our first and best gifts, purely out of thanks to him. Guests, please don't feel obligated to take part in the offering. We're just happy you're here as our guest to hear and take to heart the message of Jesus. If the gospel message has moved you to give and you would like an electronic option, you can scan this QR code with your mobile phone. It will connect you with our website's giving page.



Musical Offering

Stand

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray. O God, you make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of your only Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive him for our Redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him when he shall come to be our judge, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Blessing

May he who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with such joy that comes from the forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the + Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always.

Amen.

Lighting of Candles

The ushers will come to your pew and light the candle nearest the center aisle. Please then light the candle next to you until all the candles are lit in the pew. Remember to tip the unlit candle and leave the lit candle vertical. When all the candles are lit, the lights will be dimmed and we will join to sing the hymn.

Hymn

337 *Silent Night, Holy Night*

- 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 thy holy face
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Text: tr. John F. Young, 1820–1885; Franz Joseph Mohr, 1792–1848. Text: Public domain

Be seated



News & Announcements

After December 25, the secular world is done with Christmas. But for the Church, the season of Christmas has just begun. For twelve glorious days—The Twelve Days of Christmas—we will ponder the nativity of the Son of God. We will celebrate what that nativity means. A Savior is born!



Holiday Worship Schedule

Dec. 25 ~ Christmas Day Service at 9:30 am

Dec. 31 ~ New Year's Eve Service at 6:30 pm

Jan. 1 ~ Sunday Service at 9:30 am

Jan. 5 ~ Epiphany Service at 6:30 pm



(Please note that there is only one service on Dec. 25 & Jan. 1, even though they are Sundays.)

Our regular Sunday schedule resumes on Jan. 8 with worship services at 8:00 & 10:30 am. Bible study and Sunday School (for 3K-6th grade) are at 9:15-10:15 am. Bring the whole family!

Learn more about this Savior and what the Bible teaches about him at *Foundations of the Christian Faith*, a series of workshop beginning in January. We will meet on Saturdays, Jan. 21, Feb. 4, Feb. 18, and Mar. 4 from 8:30 am – 12:30 pm. Snacks and lunch will be provided. Please contact the church office if you are interested.

Thank you to everyone who helped make our Christmas Eve celebration special including our musicians, vocalists, technology team, ushers, greeters, decorating committee, cleaning crew, and office volunteers.





www.stpaulswr.org

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