

# The Nativity of Our Lord



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## **Grace Lutheran Church**

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**Amen**

# Grace Lutheran Church

*a congregation of Lutheran Church Canada*

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## Nativity of Our Lord

December 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011 – 9 am

**AS WE GATHER:** Today we celebrate the mystery of the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, from whose manger shines forth God's grace in all its splendor.

+ PREPARATION +

### PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

**Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who dwell in it! Let the rivers clap their hands; let the hills sing for joy together.**

*Psalm 98:4, 7-8*

### INVOCATION

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

**And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.**

### HYMN of PRAISE “Glory be to God on High”

[LSB #368]

**Glory be to God on high!  
Him we praise and glorify,  
Him we honor and adore,  
Gracious Lord forevermore.**

**Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

**Lamb of God, who bears our sin,  
Son of God and heaven's King,  
Grant us mercy, grant us peace,  
You, the Lord our righteousness.**

**Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

**Only holy, Jesus Christ,  
Thank You for Your gift of life.  
Gracious Father, Holy Dove,  
Highest glory, deepest love!  
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

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## **PRAYER FOR THE DAY**

Grant, we pray, Almighty God, that the new birth of Your only-begotten Son in human flesh may set us free, who through sin are held in bondage. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**+ WORD +**

## **OLD TESTAMENT** Isaiah 52:7-10 *(The LORD's coming salvation)*

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy. When the LORD returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes.

Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.

The LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

## **EPISTLE** Hebrews 1:4-12 *(The supremacy of God's Son)*

So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"? And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." In speaking of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds, his servants flames of fire." But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom.

You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy." He also says, "In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.

They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed. But you remain the same, and your years will never end."

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

**GOSPEL** John 1:1-18 (*John unfolds the mystery of the Word made flesh.*)

The Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

**Glory to You, O Lord.**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.

Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John testifies concerning him. He cries out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'" From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another.

For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to You, O Christ.**

**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.**

Sages, leave your contemplations, Brighter visions beam afar;  
Seek the great Desire of nations, Ye have see His natal star.  
Come and worship, come and worship, Worship Christ, the newborn King.

Saints before the altar bending, Watching long in hope and fear,  
Suddenly the Lord, descending, In His temple shall appear.  
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 th'eternal Three in One.  
Come and worship, come and worship, Worship Christ, the newborn King.

**SERMON**      The We Witness Jesus' Light – John 1:6-8

**CREED**      Nicene Creed

I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth  
and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all the worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God,  
begotten, not made,  
being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.  
He suffered and was buried.  
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures  
and ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of the Father.  
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,  
whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.  
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life + of the world to come. Amen.

## OFFERING

### PRAYER

*(Historic Nativity Prayers from St. Augustine, and Bernard of Clairvaux, and Robert Louis Stevenson)*

Let the just rejoice, for their Justifier is born.

**Let the sick and infirm rejoice, For their Saviour is born.**

Let the captives rejoice, For their Redeemer is born.

**Let slaves rejoice, for their Master is born.**

Let free men rejoice, For their Liberator is born.

**Let all Christians rejoice, For Jesus Christ is born. Amen.**

Let Your goodness, Lord, appear to us, that we made in Your image conform ourselves to it.

**In our own strength we cannot imitate Your majesty, power, and wonder, nor is it fitting for us to try. But Your mercy reaches from the heavens through the clouds to the earth below.**

You have come to us as a small child, but You have brought us the greatest of all gifts, the gift of eternal love.

**Caress us with Your tiny hands, embrace us with Your tiny arms and pierce our hearts with Your soft, sweet cries. Amen.**

Loving Father, help us to remember the birth of Jesus that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.

**Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.**

Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

**May the Christmas morning make us happy to be Thy children, and the Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen!**

### HYMN

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

[LSB#379]

**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!**

**Highest, most holy, Light of Light eternal,**

**Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;**

**Son 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!**

**Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God In the highest:  
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!**

**Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to Thee be 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!**

**+ SACRAMENT +**

*(continue on p. 160 LSB with the  
Order of Holy Communion)*

**PREFACE**

**SANCTUS**

**PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

**THE WORDS OF OUR LORD**

**PAX DOMINI** *(The Peace of the Lord)*

**AGNUS DEI** *(Lamb of God)*

**DISTRIBUTION and DISTRIBUTION HYMN:**

**“Lo, How A Rose Is Blooming” [LSB 359]**

**POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE** *(Thank the Lord)*

**NUNC DIMITTIS** *(Song of Simeon)*

**POST-COMMUNION COLLECT**

**BENEDICTION**

**CLOSING HYMN** **“Go Tell It on the Mountain” [LSB 388]**

**POSTLUDE**

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