

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
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The Festival of Christmas – 2012

CALL TO WORSHIP:

P: Welcome, sisters and brothers, in the name of the newborn King, the Child sent by God to bring light into a dark world.

C: We welcome you, dear pastor, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

(We greet one another in the joy of the Lord who is born for us, with the words, “Blessed Christmas! The Lord has come!”)

HYMN: *Go tell it on the mountain (LSB 388)*

INVOCATION:

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

C: Amen.

P: Dearly beloved, today our Saviour is born. Let us rejoice, for sadness should not have any place in this, the birthday of life itself. Death and its fear have been swallowed up; life now offers the promise of eternal joy and happiness. No one is omitted from this joy—all share the same cause for rejoicing and celebration. Because no one is free from sin, our Lord came to free us all.

Let the saint rejoice for the palm of victory is near. Let the sinner be glad – hearing the promise of forgiveness. Let the unbeliever take heart – God has summoned His world to life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION:

C: Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and

eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways, to the glory of Your holy name.

P: To all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God. 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. As a called and ordained servant of the Word, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

INTROIT *Psalm 98:1-4; antiphon: Isaiah 9:6*

P: For to us a child is born,

C: to us a Son is given;

P: and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called

C: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

P: Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for He has done marvelous things!

C: His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for Him.

P: The LORD has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations.

C: He has remembered His steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

P: Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;

C: break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

COLLECT FOR THE DAY:

P: Grant, almighty God, that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in human flesh may set us free, who through sin are held in bondage; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with

You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Isaiah 52:7-10

P: This is the Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

EPISTLE LESSON: Hebrews 1:1-6

P: This is the Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

HOLY GOSPEL: *The Gospel is read in the midst of the congregation, symbolizing Christ's presence among His people.*

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

C: Glory to You, O Lord!

John 1:1-14

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

NICENE CREED: (See the inside, back cover of the hymnal)

HYMN OF THE DAY: *Savior of the Nations (LSB 332)*

SERMON: *“Merry Christmas” – John 1:1-14*

OFFERING: We join in singing, *What Child is This (LSB 370)*

OFFERTORY PRAYER:

P: Your true Light has come into the world--

C: The Light that enlightens everyone ... the Light that enlivens us.

P: Accept these gifts—signs of our inexpressible gratitude.

C: And help us to reflect your grace.

P: Through Jesus Christ, the Light, our Lord.

C: Amen.

PRAYERS:

After each petition:

P: Light of the world,

C: hear our prayer, and shine into our darkness.

+ SACRAMENT +

PREFACE

P: The Lord be with you. [*2 Timothy 4:22*]

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts. [*Colossians 3:1*]

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. [*Psalm 136*]

C: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE

P: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; for in the incarnation, the Word became earthly, human flesh so that we may be your children, by Your holy will and not our own. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS (*LSB p. 161*)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

P: Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth, for you have had mercy on us children of men and given your only- begotten Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. We give you thanks for the redemption you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Send your Holy Spirit into our hearts that he may establish in us a living faith and prepare us joyfully to remember our Redeemer and receive him who comes to us in his body and blood.

C: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER: (See the inside, back cover of the hymnal)

P: Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD *Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24;
Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25*

P: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said:

“Take, eat; this is My + body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying:

“Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My + blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

P: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. [*1 Corinthians 11:26*]

C: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. [*Revelation 22:20*]

AGNUS DEI (*LSB p. 163*)

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS: "Angels from the realms of glory" [*LSB 367*]
"O come, all ye faithful" [*LSB 379*]

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE: Thanks the Lord (*LSB p. 164*)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:

P: O Holy Word made flesh, as You have come among us in bread and wine, may You speak to our hearts words of grace and love, that we may be strengthened to serve You as we speak Your word to others. You live and rule with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

C: Amen.

BLESSING:

P: May the Good News of Christmas be a blessing to you throughout the year.

C: May we demonstrate to the world the faith God gives us.

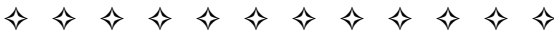
P: May we share with people everywhere the love, the compassion, the fatherly care of our gracious God.

C: May we experience the hope He offers us in these troubled times.

P: May the blessing of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit go with you as you joyously celebrate the birthday of your Saviour, Jesus Christ.

C: Now may the Lord watch between us while we are absent from one another. Amen.

HYMN: *Joyful, joyful we adore thee* (LSB 803)



WELCOME THIS BLESSED DAY as we rejoice in the wondrous gift our God has given to us. May the fullness of His grace rest on you today that you may have a very blessed and faith-filled Christmas. We also pray that God would surround you with His love now and throughout the new year.

PASTOR SCHOLZ AND SANDY: “Once again we welcome into our hearts and homes God’s surprising Christmas gift, God-with-us, sent from heaven itself. As you place the Lord Jesus into the center of your celebrations, may His birth, life, death, and resurrection bring you comfort and peace, until He returns to take you to Himself. Sandy and I thank God for your ongoing love and support of the Gospel here at Faith and at Grace. We wish you and your loved ones a Blessed Christmas and a Joyous New Year!”

PASTOR CASTILLO, MAYRA, OSMAYRA AND OSCAR thank you for your kind greetings, gifts and cards of love this Christmas season. Your expressions of love for us give wonderful testimony to the love of God at work in our church and its people. In the joy of His love, we wish God’s richest blessings to all of you this Christmas and every day of the new year.

May God fill your home and heart with His peace and joy today and always!