



Celebrating Our Savior's Birth
Emmanuel Lutheran Church
Christmas Eve Service

Paper Bag Pageant
with Holy Communion
and Candlelighting Service

December 24, 2018



Three great vigils mark the festivals of the year: Easter, Pentecost, and Christmas. At tonight's vigil celebration, we join with Christians throughout the world to celebrate the great mystery of our faith. It is not a baby's birth we celebrate, but Christ who unites himself to our fragile, mortal lives so that we might know he is with us, always offering us life, health, and salvation.

This is why on this night we join with the heavenly host and sing, Glory to God in the highest.

PRELUDE

Carols of the Season

Joyce Finlay, pianist
Martie Miller, flutist

Joy to the World
Let it Snow

Jenna Jakubielski, trumpet

We Three Kings of Orient Are
Angels We Have Heard on High

Anthony Omonte, piano

O Little Town Of Bethlehem
I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

Bianca Omonte, piano

The Angels' Carol

Taryn Stohler & Jenna Jakubielski, vocals

The assembly stands.

PROCLAMATION OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

Many ages after God created the heavens and the earth,
when man and woman were formed in God's own image;
long after the great flood, when God set the rainbow
in the clouds as a sign of the covenant;
twenty-one centuries from the time of Abraham and Sarah;
thirteen centuries after Moses led God's people to freedom;
eleven centuries from the time of Ruth and the judges;
a thousand years from the anointing of David as king;
in the sixty-fifth week as Daniel's prophecy takes note;
in the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad;
the seven hundred and fifty-second year from the founding of the city of Rome;
the forty-second year of the reign of Octavian Augustus;
in the sixth age of the world, all earth being at peace,
Jesus Christ, eternal God, Son of the eternal Father,
willing to hallow the world by his coming in mercy,
was born of the virgin Mary in Bethlehem of Judea.
Today is the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, God made flesh.

Oh, come, all ye faithful,
 joyful and triumphant!
 Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
 come and behold him
 born the king of angels:

Refrain

Oh, come, let us adore him,
 oh, come, let us adore him,
 oh, 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: *Refrain*

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
 born this happy morning;
 Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n!
 Word of the Father,
 now in flesh appearing: *Refrain*

Text: attr. John F. Wade, c. 1711-1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880, sts. 1,3-4; tr. Unknown, st.

GREETING

The grace of the child born for us,
 and the joy of the son given to us
 be with you all.

And also with you.

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 only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen

The assembly is seated.

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Isaiah 9:2-7

Originally, this poem was written to celebrate either the birth or the coronation of a new king in David's line. After the fall of Jerusalem, this poem came to be viewed as an expression of the hope that eventually, God would raise up a new ruler who would possess the qualities described in the text.

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness--
on them light has shined.

³You have multiplied the nation,
 you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
 as with joy at the harvest,
 as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴For the yoke of their burden,
 and the bar across their shoulders,
 the rod of their oppressor,
 you have broken as on the day of Midian.

⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors
 and all the garments rolled in blood
 shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶For a child has been born for us,
 a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
 and he is named

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

⁷His authority shall grow continually,
 and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
 He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
 from this time onward and forevermore.
 The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: Titus 2:11-14

The appearance of God's grace is an invitation for God's people to live a life worthy of the new age inaugurated in Jesus.

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.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Assembly stands.

THE HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-20

The Gospel of the Lord.

May the Living Word dwell in our hearts!

**WELCOME TO EMMANUEL LUTHERAN'S
PAPER BAG PAGEANT**

Narrator: This is the story of the beginning of Jesus' life with its full cast of characters.

The story begins long, long ago – before the coming of Christ in His Glory, when there were many wise people, prophets of Old, who had messages from God. These people, the prophets, had a whole lot to say – about Jesus – and about His birth on Christmas Day!

(The Prophets go to the Podium and stand. Three of the prophets read the prophecies. When they have finished reading, the prophets remain in place during the singing, and then return to their seats.)

Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel

**Oh, come, oh, come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.**

Refrain

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**



Narrator: The night was very still; the stars were very bright. The whole world was at peace, on this the holiest of nights. Then, when the world was least expecting it – When nobody knew God was selecting, a young girl, so meek and so mild to give birth to God’s son.

(The Stars go up and stand in front of the Altar. They twinkle in place during the singing of the next carol and then return to their seats.)

Silent Night, Holy Night!

**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.**



Narrator: There in the stable, with cows and other animals all around, with birds in the rafters and straw on the ground – Mary had her baby, with Joseph standing by. They wrapped the baby in a blanket, so He would be warm and so He wouldn’t cry. He lay in a manger, the cow’s eating place. And great was the love that shone on His face!

(The Animals come up and stand or sit beside the manger while the congregation sings the next carol and then return to their seats.)

Away in a Manger

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



**The cattle are lowing, the poor baby wakes,
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.**



Narrator: Meanwhile, in a field not too far away, among the rolling green hills, and among rocks which were brown and gray, the trees were all resting, their heads in their hands – In the still of the evening, throughout all the lands. And then, all of a sudden and without any warning – the sky was just like it was in the morning.

(The Trees move to in front of the Altar, and pose like sleeping trees during the singing of the next carol and then return to their seats.)

It Came upon the Midnight Clear

**It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
Peace on the earth, good will to all,
from heav'n's all-gracious king.
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.**

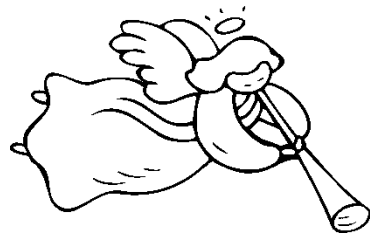


Narrator: The sheep in the field were amazed at the sight! They wondered what was happening in the middle of the night! There they were, doing the sheep things they knew how to do – like eating and bleating and walking to and fro! Then, suddenly, out of nowhere – quite unexpected – these angels appear, just as they were directed by the Angel Gabriel.

*(At this point the **Sheep** stand up and remain in place. They bah and move back and forth but do not leave their seats. They graze where they are during the singing of the next carol.)*

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

**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!**

Narrator: There were the angels, many, many of them all around – in bunches and in clusters and multitudes they sang! They sang out the news of God's glorious event; They told of Christ's birth with great Joy – and then they went. Their voices rang out, over all of the earth – to spread to God's people the wonder of Jesus' birth!

(The **Angels** go to stand at the side around Mary and Joseph and raise their arms while the congregation sings the next carol. The angels then return to their seats.)

Angels We Have Heard on High

**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.**

Narrator: The shepherds who watched their flocks on that night were astonished, overwhelmed, and quivered with fright. When the angels first came to tell the shepherds the news – they stumbled and fell and shook in their shoes! But the angels told them not to be afraid, that they were bringing the shepherds Good News. Go see for yourselves, the angels told the shepherds, that is what you should do!

(The **Shepherds** go to the manger and kneel while the congregation sings the next carol. They remain kneeling through the entire song and then return to their seats.)

The First Noel

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.**

Narrator: And at the same time as the shepherds were hurrying to the manger - in a place far, far away – there were three Kings, each carrying their own special gift, as they traveled on their long, long journey, guided by a great and magnificent star. They traveled for many days over mountains and hills, and for many miles for they knew that the sight they would soon behold would give them the greatest of thrills!

(The **Kings** light their candles and travel to the manger and kneel as the congregation sings the next carol, and then return to their seats.)

We Three Kings of Orient Are

**We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.**

**Oh, star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright;
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light!**



Narrator: Here is the manger, baby and mother and father – with animals of every kind or another. Here are the angels and shepherds, wise men and sheep. Look at the trees, at the stars take a peep. From prophets of old to all of us today – here is the message we are given to say...

(Everyone stands when the narrator names their part and remains where they are and sings the next carol.)

Joy to the World

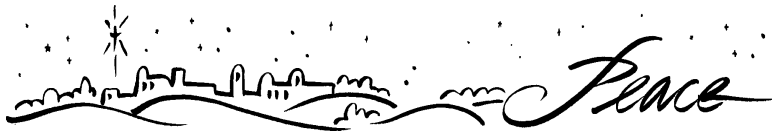
**Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive its King;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.**



Joy to the World

Narrator: Thank you to everyone for making this a great treat. Our pageant is over, our story is complete.

We welcome Jesus into our hearts tonight. May he live in us all, bringing us from darkness to light!



Please remain standing, if you are able.

THE PRAYERS

In joy and wonder, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence

(Each petition ends...Hear us, O God),

Your mercy is great.

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

The Peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

Please greet one another as we share Christ's presence in our midst.

Then ... the assembly is seated.

THE CHRISTMAS OFFERING

(Now we join with Christians all over the world in worshipping God through our giving of our financial resources. If you are a guest, please do not feel obligated to participate in the offering. Instead, we hope that we are able to give something to you on this Holy Night. We welcome you to give only as your heart desires. For members, associate members and friends, the vision and ministry of Emmanuel depends on your giving, and we thank you in advance for your generosity. The time of offering is a significant act of worship, and we now worship God with our tithes and offerings.)

OFFERTORY MUSIC

Joyce Finlay, pianist

What Child Is This

English Carol/arr. Davis

Martie Miller, flutist

The assembly stands.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Good and loving God,

we rejoice in the birth of Jesus,

who came among the poor

to bring the riches of your grace.

Bless the gifts we offer this day,

and let them be blessing for others.

With the trees of the field,

with all earth and heaven,

we shout for joy

at the coming of your Son. Amen

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times
and in all places offer thanks and praise to you,
O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord.

In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh
you have opened the eyes of faith
to a new and radiant vision of your glory;
that, beholding the God made visible,
we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see.
And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might:
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

THE COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

Invited to the Lord's Table are all baptized Christians who celebrate with us the Real Presence of Christ in the Sacrament. The Communion is administered by intinction, that is, the bread is handed to the communicant and the communicant dips the bread into the wine. If you are not able to take the wine, simply take the bread. Children are invited to come forward for a blessing. If you do not wish to partake of the Sacrament, simply remain seated when your row is directed to come forward. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request.

COMMUNION MUSIC

Joyce Finlay, pianist

Silent Night

arr. Davis

Martie Miller, flutist

The assembly stands.

THE COMMUNION BLESSING

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen**

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Great and gracious God,
we thank you that in this holy meal
the true Light has come to dwell in us.
As we return into the world you love,
may we take to all people
the good news of Jesus Christ,
in whose name we pray. **Amen**

CELEBRATION IN CANDLELIGHT

A Reading from John 1:1-5

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.² He was in the beginning with God.³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

Pastor--Jesus Christ is the Light of the world.
His light scatters the darkness.

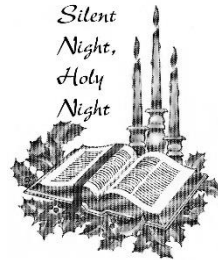
**Congregation--Come, Lord Jesus, illumine our hearts.
that we may carry your light to a fallen world.**

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

The Pastor will pass the light to the ushers who in turn will light the candle of the worshiper at the end of each pew. As you receive the light, please pass it on to the person next, or close to you, until all candles are lighted. While the light is being passed, the congregation will sing Silent Night.

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



BLESSING

Holy Incarnate Majesty,
Holy Incarnate Word,
Holy Abiding Spirit,
one God, + bless you now and forever. **Amen**

Please extinguish your candle.

SENDING HYMN: *Go Tell It on the Mountain*

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.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace carry the story of Jesus in your hearts and share it with your neighbor..

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE *God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen*

Joyce Finlay, pianist

arr. Davis

Martie Miller, flutist

Wrappings

May we all remember...

Along with the brightly wrapped gifts under our Christmas trees, there is the story of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem, which as recorded in scripture comes in somewhat stranger wrappings. The wrappings of a crude inn's stable, and Mary's wrapping of her child in swaddling clothes, as was the Palestinian way of securing a newborn.

Amid all of the strange wrappings of our lives today ... our poverty, emptiness, and imperfect lives, God still comes to open our eyes to the gift of Christmas—turning our hearts not just to the wrappings, but to things that truly matter, and to the needs of others. As we gather, we remember that the birth of the Christ child is for all people, including the lowly and marginalized people of the world.

Let us not forget this in our joy on this glorious night, that there are many in our world who have no brightly wrapped presents: like the nursing home resident, alone and forgotten; the homeless person, concerned only for the next meal; the addict, lost in a world of pain and denial; or the teenager, rejected by his parents and on the street. May we remember them in our prayers and through our actions, especially at this time of year.

May we also be a people who see and appreciate the gifts in whatever wrapping they come in, and sometimes not what we expect. And, may we continue to embrace the awesome gift of Christmas – God's love for this world, filled with all its beauty.

**Christ is born. God is among us.
And the world is wrapped in hope!**



*Emmanuel Lutheran Church wishes you a
Blessed Christmas and Happy New Year!*

*Please join us for Sunday Services here at
Emmanuel Lutheran Church*

Sunday morning:

December 30, 2018

7:45, 9:30, 11:00 a.m. (Sanctuary)

10:00 a.m. (Contemporary in the Family Life Center)

With Holy Communion

*Please visit our website at www.naplesemmanuel.org for
information about our different ministries*

¡Feliz Navidad!

You are also invited to our Pebblebrooke location:

Emmanuel Community Church

15205 Collier Blvd., Suite 201 & 202 Naples, 34119

Phone: 239-213-0535

Sunday morning Bilingual Service at 11:00 a.m.

Please visit our website at www.naplesemmanuel.org for information about our different ministries