

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2025

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

- One In the weeks leading up to this night, we have been a people in waiting.
Hopeful waiting, joyful waiting, active waiting –
waiting that looks each day in anticipation of the Spirit of Jesus
already at work and unleashed in our world.
- Two And already four candles glow – candles of hope, peace, joy and love.
- One They glow in expectation of the hope we long for;
glow in longing of the peace we so desperately need;
glow in wonder of the love of God come to us in the Child of the manger;
in expectation of Jesus who has promised to come again.
- Two Now this night, we light the Christ candle,
giving thanks for Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us.
Jesus, who has come, who is come, and who will come again.
- One From this light, from one single, burning flame,
we are ignited with hope, ignited for peace,
burning with joy, ignited in love.
- Two For on this night Love is born, into our hearts, into our lives, into our world.

"O Come, All Ye Faithful" v 1-2 ELW 283



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;



come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:
Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!

Refrain



Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,
O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.
O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray, Holy God,
in the blazing light of a Bethlehem sky, your light shatters our darkness.
In a manger bed of hay and straw, love is born in unexpected places.
In the song of angels, good news comes to unlikely shepherds.
And in the wonder of this holy night, our hearts are stirred.
Gracious God, be born anew in us.
Invite us again to a stable:
to come and see, to fall and worship,
and to rise and tell of Jesus Christ, born in life for us all. Amen.

“O Come, All Ye Faithful” v 4 ELW 283

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!

We hear the story of this holy night through the gospel of Luke.

She gave birth to her firstborn

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered.

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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 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 for them in the inn.

"O Little Town of Bethlehem" v 1-3 ELW 279



O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
For Christ is born of Mar - y, and, gath - ered all a - bove
How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is giv'n!



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by;
while mor-tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won-d'ring love.
So God im-parts to hu - man hearts the bless-ings of his heav'n.



yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light.
O morn-ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
No ear may hear his com - ing; but, in this world of sin,



The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
and prais - es sing to God the king, and peace to all the earth!
where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.

Glory to God in the Highest

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

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: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

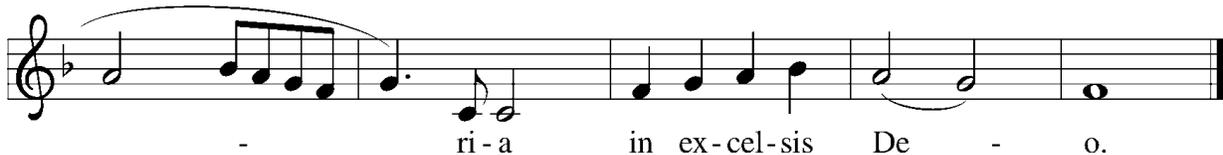
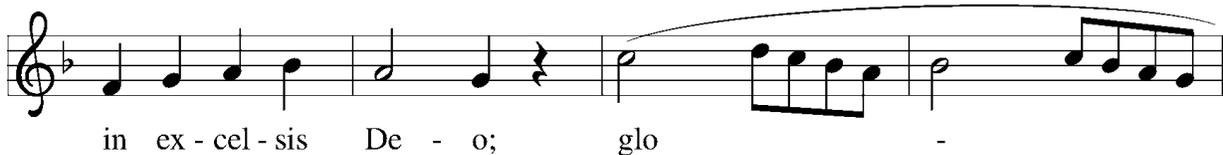
"Angels We Have Heard on High" ELW 289



1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;



and the moun-tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.



Let Us Go to Bethlehem

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." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

CANDLELIGHT CAROLS

"Silent Night" ELW 281



Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,
 1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,



ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.
 all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
 at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,



Hold - er Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher
 Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
 heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your



Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh.
 peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

"Away in a Manger" ELW 277



1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for his bed, the lit - tle Lord
2 The cat - tle are low - ing; the ba - by a - wakes, but lit - tle Lord
3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay close by me for -



Je - sus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked
Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes. I love you, Lord Je - sus; look
ev - er and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil - dren in



down where he lay, the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
down from the sky and stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.
your ten - der care and fit us for heav - en, to live with you there.

SERMON

"Infant Holy, Infant Lowly" ELW 276



1 In - fant ho - ly, in - fant low - ly, for his bed a cat - tle stall;
2 Flocks were sleep - ing, shep - herds keep - ing vig - il till the morn - ing new



ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know - ing Christ the child is Lord of all.
saw the glo - ry, heard the sto - ry, tid - ings of a gos - pel true.



Swift - ly wing - ing, an - gels sing - ing, bells are ring - ing, tid - ings bring - ing:
Thus re - joic - ing, free from sor - row, prais - es voic - ing, greet the mor - row:



Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

PRAYERS

Prince of Peace,
on this day of celebration, we pray for peace in our troubled world.
Inspire the leaders in places of conflict and each us here
to work towards reconciliation and harmony among all people.
O Holy Child of Bethlehem, **descend to us, we pray.**

Bless those in need,
and may the message of God coming to the earth to bring light into the darkness
be central to our lives; may we shine in the dark places.
O Holy Child of Bethlehem, **descend to us, we pray.**

We pray for all those who are alone or feeling isolated this Christmas,
may they find comfort in the company of friends and family
and in the warmth of your love.
We ask your blessing upon families gathered together this week,
that they may cherish the moments of togetherness
and strengthen their bonds of love.
We pray for families that are separated at this time of year –
Gracious God, bring Your comfort.
O Holy Child of Bethlehem, **descend to us, we pray.**

We pray for those in need,
that they may experience the generosity and kindness of others
during this season of giving.
We remember those who are ill or suffering,
may they find healing and solace in Your loving presence,
especially during this season.
In a moment of silence, we bring before you our own prayers
for those we love,
for those in need.
[Hold a time of silence]
O Holy Child of Bethlehem, **descend to us, we pray.**

Lord, receive our prayers. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

We pray together as Jesus taught us:

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.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

"I am so Glad Each Christmas Eve" v 1,2,5 ELW 271



Jeg er så glad hver ju - le - kveld, ti da blev Je - sus født;
I am so glad each Christ-mas Eve, the night of Je - sus' birth!
The lit - tle child in Beth - le - hem, he was a king in - deed!

And so I love each Christ-mas Eve, and I love Je - sus too;



da lys - te stjer - nen som en sol, og eng - ler sang så sødt.
Then like the sun the star shone forth, and an - gels sang on earth.
For he came down from heav'n a - bove to help a world in need.

and that he loves me ev - 'ry day I know so well is true.

In the beginning was the Word

John 1:1-5, 10-14

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

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

BLESSING

Merry Christmas, my friends!

God has spoken a most joyful word of grace, mercy and peace.

**Mary gave birth to her first-born son,
wrapped him in bands of cloth,
and laid him in a manger.**

Go out into this day rejoicing in your kinship with God's Son.

**Glory to God in the highest,
and to earth peace and goodwill.**

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary,
the faithfulness of Joseph,
the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the determination of the magi,
and the peace of the Christ Child, now and forever. **Amen.**

"Joy to the World" v 1, 2, 4 ELW 267



Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their

He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and

na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
plains re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing

ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.

love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

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