

Messiah Lutheran Church  
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Messiah office: Closed December 24 – 31  
Messiah phone messages and emails will be checked daily

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Worship for Christmas Day/ Holy Communion, December 25, 2021  
Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Day

Assisting with Worship: Susan Slind, Cheryl Bauer Hyde, Wayne Hyde.

Prayers for Healing and On-Going Health Concerns:

We pray for comfort and healing for all those who are suffering in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their time of need.



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POINSETTIA'S HONORING THE MEMORY OF LOVED ONES

Ed & Trudy Bowen (Colleen Bowen's parents)

Sulo Koivu (Pastor Fran's Grandpa)

Jolene Mayer (Donna Deobald)

Janet Wahn, John & Barb Meyers (Craig & Sue Meyers' parents)

Judy Haight (Lisa Haight's Mother)

Ervin Bauer (Myrtle Bauer's husband & Cheryl Bauer Hyde's Dad)

Jack & Fran Hyde (Wayne Hyde's parents)





Saskatchewan Synod – 2021 Christmas Greeting Blessings to you all as you prepare to keep Christmas: to celebrate the birth of the Christ into our world—in the birth to Mary in Bethlehem, in coming to earth in a cloud of hope in a time unimaginable, and in the between time—in the many ways the Spirit moves among the people.

Last year, as I recall, my only in-person Christmas gathering to keep Christmas, was a brief gathering of immediate family behind our daughter and son-in-law's house. We gathered around a campfire, coffee in hand, and listened to the Christmas story together. Looking back, our gathering last Christmas resembled the first Christmas more than our 'normal' Christmas celebrations. Like Mary and Joseph we were outside, just a few of us—and like them, we wondered what the future was going to look like—what might God be planning for this broken world?

This year, as we set out to keep Christmas, things are different . . . and not so different. We set out to keep Christmas this year less fearfully with a pandemic that our medical experts are teaching us how to live with. But we will still gather cautiously—following health directives. With the emergence of the latest variant, we may see COVID numbers in some areas of the synod leading us to keep Christmas even more cautiously. But let me say this: Keep Christmas. It may be in a smaller in-person congregation. It may be by video conferencing. It may be that you will decide to gather in the family 'bubble' at home. But, in whatever circumstances, I urge the followers of Jesus to keep Christmas.

With all the uncertainty of Mary and Joseph in a stable in Bethlehem, keep Christmas.

- Listen again to the story (Lk 2.1-20).
- Pray for the world and for each other (or simply say the Lord's Prayer in unison).
- Offer gifts to loved ones (and to those in need beyond our own circles.)

Blessings to you all as you keep Christmas—in familiar and unfamiliar ways—this year of our Lord 2021.  
Peace, Bishop Sid

## GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING SONG: ELW#267 "Joy to the World"

## THE GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
And also with you.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray, All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into our world has brightened weary hearts with peace. Call us out of darkness, and empower us to proclaim the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

## FIRST READING: Isaiah 62:6-12

The prophet invites the people to give God no rest until God re-establishes Jerusalem. In turn, they will receive names full of promise: The Holy People, The Redeemed of the LORD, A City Not Forsaken.

<sup>6</sup>Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have posted sentinels; all day and all night they shall never be silent. You who remind the LORD, take no rest, <sup>7</sup>and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it renowned throughout the earth. <sup>8</sup>The LORD has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm: I will not again give your grain to be food for your enemies, and foreigners shall not drink the wine for which you have labored; <sup>9</sup>but those who garner it shall eat it and praise the LORD, and those who gather it shall drink it in my holy courts. <sup>10</sup>Go through, go through the gates, prepare the way for the people; build up, build up the highway, clear it of stones, lift up an ensign over the peoples. <sup>11</sup>The LORD has proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say to daughter Zion, "See, your salvation comes; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him." <sup>12</sup>They shall be called, "The Holy People, The Redeemed of the LORD"; and you shall be called, "Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken."

Word of God, word of life. Thanks be to God.

## PSALM 97

<sup>1</sup> The LORD is king! Let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad!

<sup>2</sup> Clouds and thick darkness are all around him;  
righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.

<sup>3</sup> Fire goes before him, and consumes his adversaries on every side.

<sup>4</sup> His lightnings light up the world; the earth sees and trembles.

<sup>5</sup> The mountains melt like wax before the LORD, before the Lord of all the earth

<sup>6</sup> The heavens proclaim his righteousness; and all the peoples behold his glory.

<sup>7</sup> All worshipers of images are put to shame, those who make their boast in worthless idols;  
all gods bow down before him.

<sup>8</sup> Zion hears and is glad, and the towns of Judah rejoice, because of your judgments, O God.

<sup>9</sup> For you, O LORD, are most high over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods.

<sup>10</sup> The LORD loves those who hate evil; he guards the lives of his faithful; he rescues them from the hand of the wicked.

<sup>11</sup>Light dawns for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart.

<sup>12</sup>Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous, and give thanks to his holy name!

SECOND READING: Titus 3:4-7

God saves us not because of what we do. Rather, God is a God of mercy and salvation who graciously cleanses us in baptism and renews our lives through the Holy Spirit.

<sup>4</sup>When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, <sup>5</sup>he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. <sup>6</sup>This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup>so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Word of God, word of life. Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: ELW#289 "Angels We Have Heard on High" vs. 1

GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-20

The holy gospel according to Luke. Glory to you, O Lord.

The world's deep night is shattered by the light of God's new day. The glory of God is revealed to poor shepherds, who share the good news with others.

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>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. <sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>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: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" <sup>15</sup>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." <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON: "Where is Your Manger?"

Silence for Reflection

HYMN OF THE DAY: ELW#283 "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Joining our voices with the heavenly host and Christians throughout time and space, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need, praying Merciful God, and responding receive our prayer.

Rejoicing in your Word made flesh among us, we commend these prayers to you, confident of your grace and love made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

## PEACE

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

## MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING HYMN: ELW#294 "In the Bleak Mid-Winter" vs. 1 & 3

OFFERING PRAYER: Let us pray. Gracious God, your Word-made-flesh brings harmony to the earth. As we offer ourselves and these your gifts, prepare us to receive the grace and truth you offer at this table and renew in us the song of your salvation, in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING, ELW, p. 206

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 our thanks and praise.

PREFACE, ELW p. 207

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ.

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 all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, ELW p. 207 (spoken)

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heav'n 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, hosanna in the highest.

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life: Blessed are you for the birth of creation. Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light. Blessed are you for your promise to your people. Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams. Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will. Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

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, Jesus 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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming. Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth. Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever. Amen.

#### 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

Love has come: God's love for all people. Come and eat, for Christ invites you. Thanks be to God.

#### DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION (instrumental music)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION: Let us pray. Emmanuel, God with us, you grace us with life and breath and give us bread for the journey. Send us out in service to this world that you love, telling the amazing news of your coming to be Savior and Lord of all. Amen.

#### SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

#### BLESSING

Grace from God's own heart, peace from the Child in the manger, and strength from the Spirit of life be blessings for you today and forever.

Sung Three-Fold Amen.

#### SENDING SONG: ELW# 290 "Go, Tell it on the Mountain"

#### DISMISSAL

Christ is born! Go tell it on the mountain and everywhere.

Thanks be to God.