

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

West & East Bay, Central Valley, and Southern California

Member congregations of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (clclutheran.org)

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School Website: ssls.org

December 24, 2022 ✝ Christmas Eve



Welcome to our 2022 Christmas Eve Service!

Thanks to all the volunteers, musicians, and parents who made this evening possible by helping the children learn their pieces and songs. A special thanks goes out to the children who put in their time and effort to make this evening a special occasion.

But an even more special thanks to the holy Child, the Lord Jesus, who has set apart Christmas as a special holy-day!

Welcome & Opening Prayer

(Pastor Luke)

Invocation

We invoke ("call upon") the name of the one true God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

P We begin this Christmas Eve service in the name of the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

G Amen.

Confession and Absolution

We come before our Holy God recognizing that we are sinful and daily need His forgiveness.

P Jesus is the Light of the World, and in Him is no darkness at all.

G **If we walk in the light as He is in the light,
we have fellowship with one another,
and the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin.**

P On this Christmas Eve we celebrate the coming of Jesus, the Light of the World.

G **Dear Jesus, we celebrate Your coming at Your birth in Bethlehem.
We thank You for coming into our hearts by Your gift of faith,
and we look forward to Your coming on the Last Day when You will take us,
and all believers, to be with You forever in heaven.**

P As we meditate on Your manger, Your cross, Your empty tomb, and Your Word, we come before Your throne tonight confessing our sins and asking for Your forgiveness.

**C Lord of heaven and earth, forgive us all our sins.
As we see the world in darkness and in need of Your light,
increase our faith, love, courage, and strength.
Give us Your power to be lights in this world, reflecting Your love. Amen.**

P Our Father in Heaven has been good and merciful to us.
In His love He has given us, His children, the greatest Gift: He sent His Son Jesus,
the Christ Child, whose birth in Bethlehem so long ago we celebrate.
Jesus came as a lowly servant to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins,
and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. By His shed blood
on the cross we are forgiven! In peace and joy let us sing of our salvation!

“On Christmas Night All Christians Sing” LSB 377 v. 1, 2, 4

1 On Christ-mas night all Chris - tians sing To hear the news the
2 Then why should men on earth be so sad, Since our Re - deem - er
4 All out of dark-ness we have light, Which made the an - gels
an - gels bring, On Christ - mas night all Chris - tians sing To
made us glad, Then why should men on earth be so sad, Since
sing this night, All out of dark - ness we have light, Which
hear the news the an - gels bring, News of great joy, news of great
our Re - deem - er made us glad, When from our sin He set us
made the an - gels sing this night: “Glo - ry to God and peace to
mirth, News of our mer - ci - ful King’s birth.
free, All for to gain our lib - er - ty?
men Now and for - ev - er - more. A - men.”

Text and tune: English
Text and tune: Public domain

O Holy Night

Pastor: One of the words that we use consistently in church is the word "holy." Perhaps we use it so much that we may not always realize the significance of the word. It is used throughout the Bible to mean "set apart." For instance, after creating the world in six days the Lord set apart the seventh day – the Sabbath Day – as a holy day. It was intended to be a day set apart for the worship of God and to hear His Word. Throughout the service this evening you will notice that the word "holy" appears in our hymns and in the children's recitations. Other synonyms for holy, such as "sanctified," "cleansed," "consecrated," "hallowed," and "righteous" are also used. Truly Christmas is a special time "set apart" for the worship of the Christ Child born to save mankind. Our hope and prayer is that that all of us will grow in our understanding and appreciate the significance of the word "holy." That is why tonight we will consider the theme for our Christmas Eve service: "O Holy Night."

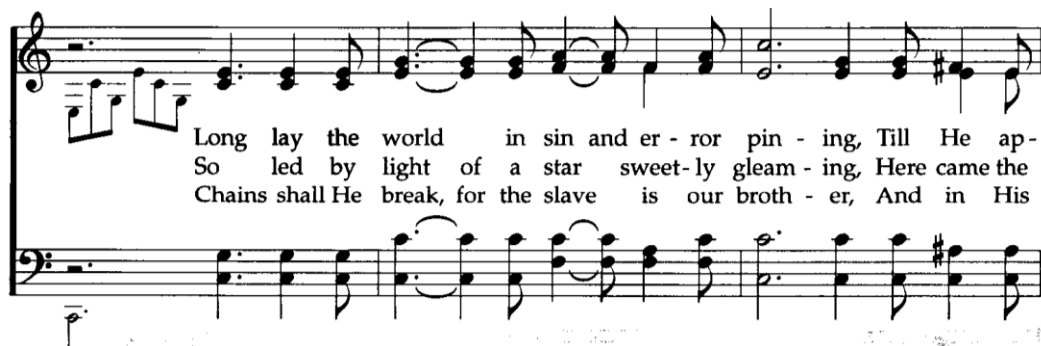
Congregation Hymn: "O Holy Night"

285 Celebration Hymnal

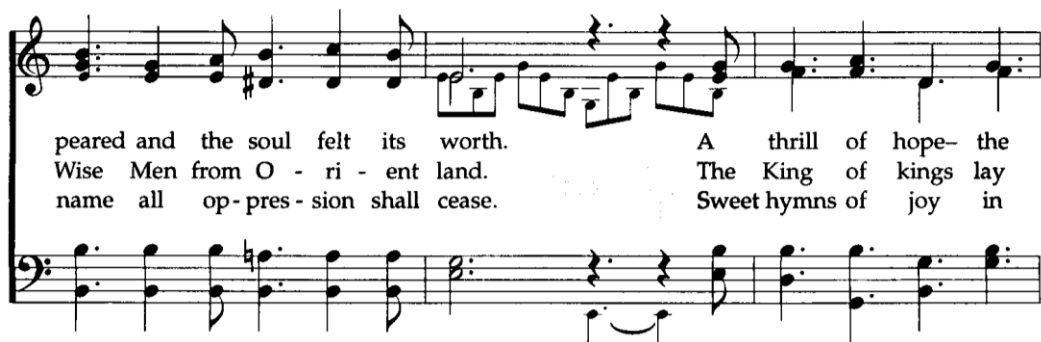
Introduction

1. O ho-ly night! the stars are bright-ly
2. Led by the light of faith se-rene-ly
3. Tru-ly He taught us to love one an-

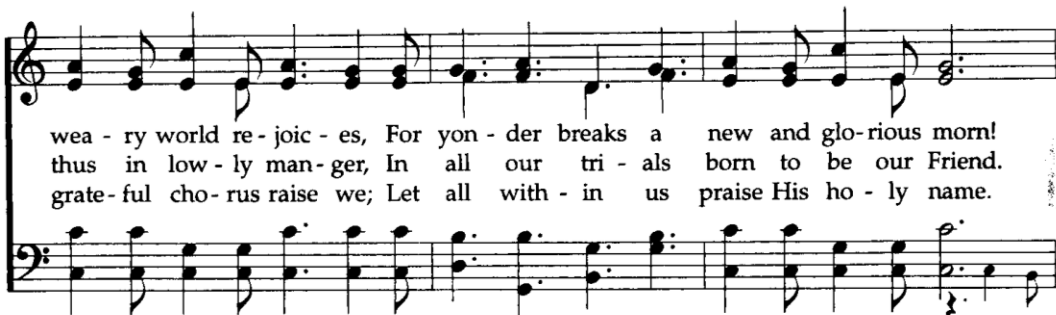
shin-ing; It is the night of the dear Sav-ior's birth.
beam-ing, With glow-ing hearts by His cra-dle we stand.
oth-er; His law is love and His gos-pel is peace.



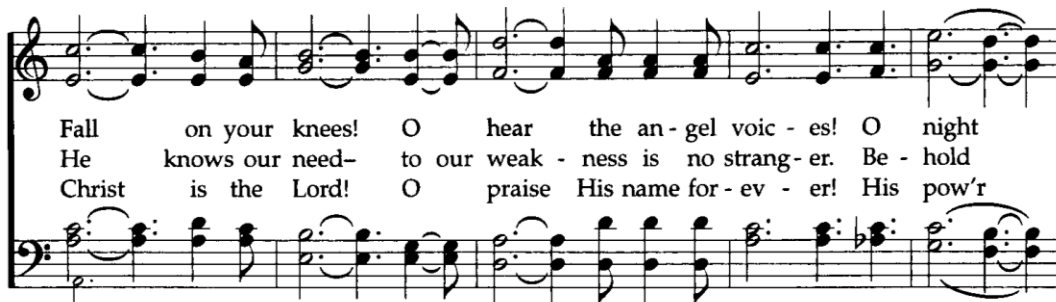
Long lay the world in sin and er - ror pin - ing, Till He ap -
 So led by light of a star sweet - ly gleam - ing, Here came the
 Chains shall He break, for the slave is our broth - er, And in His



peared and the soul felt its worth. A thrill of hope - the
 Wise Men from O - ri - ent land. The King of kings lay
 name all op - pres - sion shall cease. Sweet hymns of joy in



wea - ry world re - joic - es, For yon - der breaks a new and glo - rious morn!
 thus in low - ly man - ger, In all our tri - als born to be our Friend.
 grate - ful cho - rus raise we; Let all with - in us praise His ho - ly name.



Fall on your knees! O hear the an - gel voic - es! O night
 He knows our need - to our weak - ness is no strang - er. Be - hold
 Christ is the Lord! O praise His name for - ev - er! His pow'r

di - vine, O night when Christ was born! O night, O
 your King, be - fore Him low - ly bend! Be - hold your
 and glo - ry ev - er - more pro - claim! His pow'r and

ho - ly night, O night di - vine!
 King, be - fore Him low - ly bend!
 glo - ry ev - er - more pro - claim!

Responsive Reading - *Selected Bible Passages*

Children: Oh worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness!

Congregation: He has kept His promise to our fathers in His holy covenant and raised up a Horn of salvation for us from the house of David, as He promised by the mouth of His holy prophets long ago.

Pastor: Give to the Lord the glory due His name: bring an offering, and come before Him.

Children: Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness!

Congregation: Oh, sing to the LORD a new song! For He has done marvelous things; His right hand and His holy arm have gained Him the victory.

Pastor: For God is the King of all the earth; sing praises with understanding.
 God reigns over the nations; God sits on His holy throne.

Children: No one is holy like the LORD, for there is none besides You,
 nor is there any rock like our God.

Congregation: The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

Pastor: Your testimonies are very sure; holiness adorns Your house, O LORD, forever.

Children: Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at His footstool — He is holy.

Congregation: The LORD reigns; let the peoples tremble! He dwells between the cherubim; let the earth be moved!

Pastor: The King's strength also loves justice; You have established equity; you have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob.

Children: Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

Congregation Hymn: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

LSB 361



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!
2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, And, gath - ered all a - bove
3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly The won - drous gift is giv'n!
4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, De - scend to us, we pray;



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.
Cast out our sin, and en - ter in, Be born in us to - day.



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,
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad tid - ings tell;



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.
O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Im - man - u - el!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835–93 Tune: Lewis H. Redner, 1831–1908 Text and tune: Public domain

1. A Holy Beginning Ruined

Scripture Reading - ***Luke 1:68-72 (NKJV)*** (Zachariah's words of praise)

(Michael S.) ⁶⁸ "Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited and redeemed His people, ⁶⁹ And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of His servant David, ⁷⁰ As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, Who have been since the world began, ⁷¹ That we should be saved from our enemies And from the hand of all who hate us, ⁷² To perform the mercy promised to our fathers And to remember His holy covenant,

Pastor: When God originally created man, He made him in His image. This did not mean that we took on the physical likeness of God. He is spirit and we are flesh and blood. From the Bible we learn that being created in God's image means that we were "created to be like God in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:24 EHV). We were holy, set apart as righteous. But it did not take long for us to ruin this. With the fall into sin, we ruined that holiness and now are the complete opposite: sinful.

Nico: Then God said "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness . . ." So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Genesis 1:26-27

Rachel: The Psalmist teaches that this image of God is righteousness — or holiness — when he says:

As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness. Psalm 17:15

Natalie: Since Adam and Eve sinned, this original holiness was lost.

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned . . . Romans 5:12,14

Shi Teng: Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Psalm 51:2-3

Congregation Hymn: "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

LSB 379



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, Joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
 2 High - est, most ho - ly, Light of Light e - ter - nal,
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, Sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come — ye to Beth - le - hem;
 Born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal He comes;
 Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
 Je - sus, to Thee — be — glo - ry giv'n!



Come and be - hold Him Born the king of an - gels:
 Son of the Fa - ther Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
 Glo - ry to God — In — the — high - est:
 Word of the Fa - ther Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!

Refrain



O come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a - dore Him,



O come, let us a - dore Him, Christ the Lord!

Text and tune: Public domain

2. A Holy Promise Fulfilled

Pastor: Because of our imperfection we human beings fail to meet God's perfect standard of holiness. Without a solution to this problem, we would be doomed to certain eternal destruction. But, in His love, God provided a solution. He promised throughout the Old Testament times that a Holy One would be born to provide the standard of perfect holiness. He made a holy promise that a Savior would be born for us!

Serena: "Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; a King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; now this *is* His name by which He will be called; THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Jeremiah 23:5-6

Vincent: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel. Isaiah 7:14

Shi Xuan: Unto us a Child is born, unto us a son is given. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6

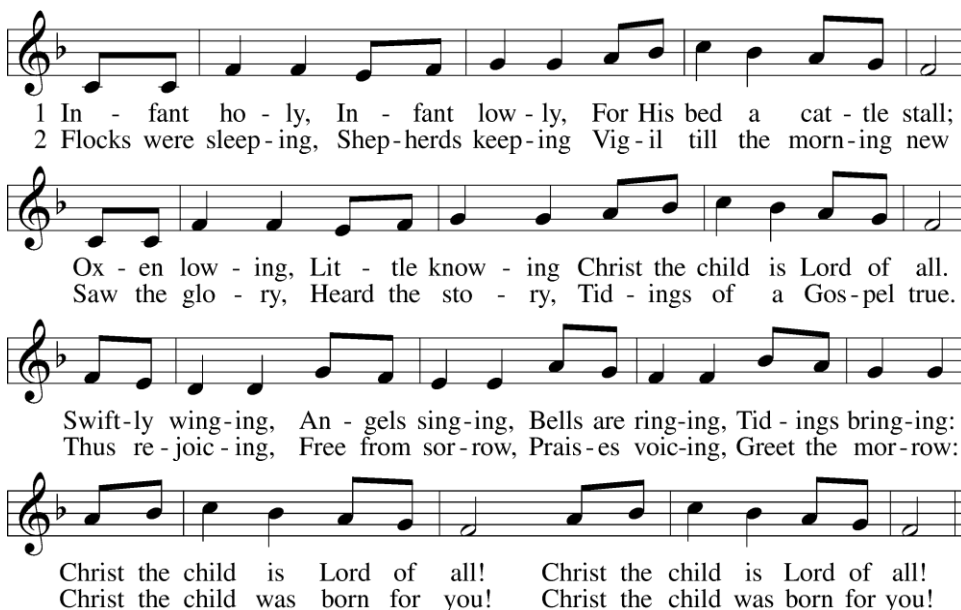
Scripture Reading - *Luke 1:35-38, 46-49 (NKJV)*

(Dan G.) ³⁵ *And the angel answered and said to [Mary], "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God."* ³⁶ *"Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren."* ³⁷ *"For with God nothing will be impossible."* ³⁸ *Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.*

⁴⁶ *And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord,"* ⁴⁷ *And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.* ⁴⁸ *For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.* ⁴⁹ *For He who is mighty has done great things for me, And holy is His name.*

Congregation Hymn: "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

LSB 393



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!

Text: tr. Edith M. G. Reed, 1885–1933, alt. Text and tune: Polish
Text and tune: Public domain

3. A Holy Child Born

Pastor: God remembered His holy promise (or covenant) to unholy mankind. He sent His Holy Son, Jesus Christ, to be born for us. The only way such a perfect birth could take place is by God the Holy Spirit miraculously conceiving within Mary this Holy Child. We now go back to the story where it all took place: The account of the holy birth of Jesus recorded for us in Luke chapter 2.

Scripture Reading - *Luke 2:1-12 (KJV)*

(Mark G.) *And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. ² (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) ³ And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. ⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) ⁵ To be taxed with Mary his espoused*

wife, being great with child. ⁶ And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. ⁷ And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. ⁸ And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. ¹⁰ And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

Children Song: "Away in a Manger"

LSB 365

- 1 *Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.*

- 2 *The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.*

- 3 *Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And take us to heaven to live with Thee there.*

Text (sts. 1-2): Little Children's Book, 1885, Philadelphia; (st. 3): Vineyard Songs, 1892, Louisville, alt.
Text: Public domain

Scripture Reading - Luke 2:13-20 (KJV)

(Timothy B.) ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, ¹⁴ Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. ¹⁵ And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from

them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. ¹⁶ And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. ¹⁷ And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. ¹⁸ And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. ¹⁹ But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

Congregation Hymn: "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

LSB 380



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King;
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3 Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righ-teous-ness!



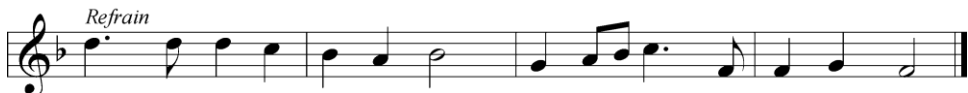
Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
Late in time be - hold Him come, Off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with heal - ing in His wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God-head see, Hail the in-car - nate De - i - ty!
Mild He lays His glo - ry by, Born that man no more may die,



With the an - gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Je - sus, our Im - man - u - el!
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec - ond birth.



Refrain
Hark! The her-ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–88, alt.
Tune: Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–47
Text and tune: Public domain

4. A Holy Act Completed

Pastor: Upon His birth in this sin-stained world, our Savior began to live His perfect life. He was “set apart,” or “holy,” from all others before Him or after Him. But the main purpose of His life was to complete the holy act that His Father sent Him to accomplish: To save us from our sins by redeeming us with His holy, precious blood and His innocent suffering and death. By giving His life as the holy sacrifice on the cross, we unholy people now stand before God declared as righteous and holy. We are justified, which means that God has declared us to be “innocent,” “not guilty” of all sins! This means that we are now God’s saints—literally, His “holy ones!” Listen now to the Scriptures that tell us how this wonderful act has now made us holy in God’s sight.

Natalie: [The Lord] who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began . . . 2 Timothy 1:9

Serena: But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His own marvelous light . . . 1 Peter 2:9

Nico: ...we have been sanctified – that is, made holy – through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Hebrews 10:10

Rachel: If we confess our sin, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9

Congregation Hymn: "Once in Royal David's City"

LSB 376



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y Stood a
2 He came down to earth from heav - en, Who is
3 For He is our child - hood's pat - tern, Day by
4 And our eyes at last shall see Him, Through His
5 Not in that poor, low - ly sta - ble With the

low - ly cat - tle shed, Where a moth - er laid her
God and Lord of all, And His shel - ter was a
day like us He grew; He was lit - tle, weak, and
own re - deem - ing love; For that child so dear and
ox - en stand - ing by Shall we see Him, but in

ba - by In a man - ger for His bed: Mar - y
sta - ble, And His cra - dle was a stall; With the
help - less, Tears and smiles like us He knew; And He
gen - tle Is our Lord in heav'n a - bove; And He
heav - en, Set at God's right hand on high. Then like

was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
poor and mean and low - ly Lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
feels for all our sad-ness, And He shares in all our glad-ness.
leads His chil-dren on To the place where He is gone.
stars His chil-dren, crowned, All in white, His praise will sound!

Text: Cecil F. Alexander, 1818–95, alt.
Tune: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805–76
Text and tune: Public domain

5. A Holy Life Lived

Pastor: Jesus' death on the cross paid for all of our sins. We are forgiven and set free from the guilt of our sins, and from sins power over us. His saving work has made us His holy temple, and has given us the assurance that we will one day be in heaven with Him! In response, He wants us to live a joyful, holy life for Him, meaning that our lives are now "set apart" and dedicated to Him. He has taught us to do so in the Lord's Prayer when we pray, "Hallowed (or, "holy") be Thy name." How is His name hallowed or kept

holy? Listen to Martin Luther's explanation: *"God's name is kept holy when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we as children of God also live a holy life according to it. Help us do this, dear heavenly Father."*

Rachel: Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.
1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Vincent: ...put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. Ephesians 4:24

Shi Xuan: Jesus said: "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." John 17:17

Choir Song: "Where Shepherds Lately Knelt"

6. A Holy Ending Begun

Pastor: As children of God declared holy through Jesus Christ, a holy ending awaits us after this life. We are called to eternal glory in heaven! Listen joyfully to our promising holy future:

Serena: You were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance... Ephesians 1:13-14

Shi Teng: And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying... Revelation 21:4

All Children: And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. John 17:3

Pastor: What a holy night this is! Our holy savior was born to bring holiness to us by His death on the cross. We pray that He would send His Holy Spirit to each one of us so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and live a holy life here in time and hereafter in eternity!

Offering *We offer our gifts to the Lord, remembering that He has first given to us that we might have to give to Him.*

✠ ***The offering plate is located on the table in the entryway.***

The offering from tonight's service will go to

Mountain View Community Services Agency (CSA) & our church body's general fund. ✠

Christmas Prayer (Pastor)

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.

Benediction – ("Blessing." Based on 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13 and Numbers 6:24-26)

Pastor: Now may the Lord . . . establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

Congregation: 
☐ A-men, a-men, a - men.

Announcements

Candle Lighting

✠ ***The hand-held candles are located on the table in the entryway.*** ✠

Recessional Hymn: "Silent Night"

LSB 363

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,
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 Thy ho - ly face
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 Thy
peace, Sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
born! the Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
birth, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Text: Franz Joseph Mohr, 1792–1848; tr. John F. Young, 1820–85
Tune: Franz Xaver Gruber, 1787–1863
Text and tune: Public domain

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tomorrow – *Christmas Day* - **St. Stephen – West** (Mt. View): **Worship – 10am**

St. Stephen – East Bay (Hayward): **Worship – 1pm**

Online Worship Service - <https://www.sslcwest.org/worship.html>

Note: Our Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services will be posted online, but it could take a bit longer than normal to get the services uploaded, edited, and posted. We will send out an email notification when the services are posted online.

Thank you! – Thank you to our students for bringing us the Christmas Gospel message tonight!
We also thank all those who helped with our worship service this evening:



Participants: Rachel Blank, Serena Stefanek (8th grade),
Natalie Lang; Shi Teng Wong (7th grade),
Nicholas Merlitti; Shi Xuan Wong (5th grade)
Vincent Lang (4th grade);
Nolan Gullerud (TK)

Directors: Mikkela Hammond, Principal; Leslie Horrillo

Readers: Michael Slattengren; Dan Gullerud; Mark Gullerud; Timothy Blank

Music: Barb Gullerud

The Advent Wreath



The Advent wreath is rich in symbolism, and as such it aids our worship as it reinforces our hope in the ultimate coming of our Lord. The wreath is covered with evergreen. Just as this species of tree is always green, so our hope for eternity is always alive because it rests upon the living Christ. The wreath is also in the form of a circle, which has no beginning and no end. What better way to picture that our life with God is everlasting.

The lighted candles are symbolic of the light of Christ and His Gospel, which alone can lift us out of our sin & spiritual darkness. The 4 Advent candles remind us of the 4000 years of waiting for Christ by the Old Testament world. The 3 purple candles are the color for repentance. The rose candle is the color for **joy**. Each of the 4 candles has been assigned a special name with special significance: **Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.**

The Christ Candle is the white candle in the center, and is lit on Christmas Eve. It signals that He Who is the Light of the world has been born.

The light these candles put forth seems small; so does the gospel at times. But to those in lonely darkness, it is the powerful light which shows the way to Heaven.