



St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church & School

(Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod)

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"Jesus Is The Light Of The World"

On Christmas Night All Christians Sing CW 338

1 On Christmas night all Christians sing
to hear the news the angels bring,
on Christmas night all Christians sing
to hear the news the angels bring,
news of great joy, news of great mirth,
news of our merciful King's birth.

2 When sin departs before his grace,
then life and health come in its place,
when sin departs before his grace,
then life and health come in its place;
angels and saints with joy may sing,
all for to see the newborn King.

3 All out of darkness we have light,
which made the angels sing this night,
all out of darkness we have light,
which made the angels sing this night:
"Glory to God and peace to men
now and forevermore. Amen."

Invocation

P: Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD;

C: let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

P: Let us come before him with thanksgiving

C: and extol him with music and song.

P: For God so loved the world

C: that he gave his one and only Son,

P: that whoever believes in him shall not perish

C: but have eternal life.

P: Send forth your light and your truth,

C: let them guide me;

P: let them bring me to your holy mountain,

C: to the place where you dwell.

Prayer

P: Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true light. Grant that as we have known on earth the wonder of that light, we may also behold him in all his glory in the life to come; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

The People Who in Darkness Walked *CW 381*

**1 The people who in darkness walked
have seen a glorious light;
the heav'nly dawn broke forth on those
who dwelt in death and night,
who dwelt in death and night.**

**2 To us a child of hope is born,
to us a son is giv'n,
and on his shoulders ever rests
all pow'r in earth and heav'n,
all pow'r in earth and heav'n.**

**3 His name shall be the Prince of Peace,
the Everlasting Lord,
the Wonderful, the Counselor,
the God by all adored,
the God by all adored.**

**4 His righteous government and pow'r
shall over all extend;
on judgment and on justice based,
his reign shall have no end,
his reign shall have no end.**

**5 Lord Jesus, reign in us, we pray,
and make us yours alone,
for you are with the Father and
the Spirit ever one,
the Spirit ever one.**

I. The Prophecy Candle

Scripture Readings (Prophecies of the Savior)

P: The first promise of the Savior was given in the Garden of Eden after Adam and Eve were tempted by the devil and sinned against God. By their sin Adam and Eve, and their descendants became enemies of God. But speaking to Satan God gave sinners a promise: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers;

C: he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

P: Later God narrowed his promise to the family of Abraham. He promised him: "I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand of the seashore...

C: and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed."

P: Still later, God made it clear that the promised Savior would come from the family of King David. The prophet Jeremiah wrote: "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is right in the land.

C: In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness."

P: Through his prophets God gave his people more information about the coming Savior. Isaiah predicted the miraculous birth of the Savior when he wrote:

C: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel."

P: Isaiah also foretold the wonderful person and work of the promised Savior. He wrote: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders.

C: And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end."

P: Through the prophet Micah God even informed his people where the Savior would be born. Micah wrote: "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah,

C: out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."

P: Over the years of Old Testament history God repeated his promise to send the world a Savior. Sometimes through people who are familiar to us like the patriarch Jacob who said: "The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,

C: until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his."

P: At other times God used people we don't know so well to remind his people of his promise. Such a man was the heathen sorcerer Balaam, who said: "I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near.

C: A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel."

P: The last promise of the Savior was given through the last prophet of the Old Testament, Malachi, who wrote: "But for you who revere my name,

C: the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings."

P: There is a message for us in the many promises God fulfilled when his time was right. St. Paul says it this way: "For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ.

C: And so through him the "Amen" is spoken to the glory of God."

Once in Royal David's City CW 343

**1 Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.**

**2 He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall;
with the poor and mean and lowly lived on earth our Savior holy.**

**3 And our eyes at last shall see him through his own redeeming love,
for that child, so dear and gentle, is our Lord in heav'n above,
and he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.**

**4 Not in that poor, lowly stable with the oxen standing by
shall we see him, but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high.
Then like stars his children crowned, all in white, his praise will sound.**

II. The Bethlehem Candle

Scripture Reading I Corinthians 1:26-31

Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. ²⁷But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. ²⁸He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, ²⁹so that no one may boast before him. ³⁰It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. ³¹Therefore, as it is written: “Let him who boasts boast in the Lord.”

Song of Mary Luke 1:46-55

P: My soul praises the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

C: for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant.

P: From now on all generations will call me blessed,

C: for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name.

P: His mercy extends to those who fear him,

C: from generation to generation.

P: He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;

C: he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

P: He has brought down rulers from their thrones

C: but has lifted up the humble.

P: He has filled the hungry with good things

C: but has sent the rich away empty.

P: He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful

C: to Abraham and to his descendants forever, even as he said to our fathers.

Where Shepherds Lately Knelt CW 345

1 Where shepherds lately knelt and kept the angel's word,

I come in half-belief, a pilgrim strangely stirred;

but there is room and welcome there for me,

but there is room and welcome there for me.

**2 In that unlikely place I find him as they said:
sweet newborn babe, how frail! And in a manger bed:
a still, small voice to cry one day for me,
a still, small voice to cry one day for me.**

**3 How should I not have known Isaiah would be there,
his prophecies fulfilled? With pounding heart I stare:
a child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me,
a child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me.**

**4 Can I, will I forget how Love was born, and burned
its way into my heart—unasked, unforced, unearned,
to die, to live, and not alone for me,
to die, to live, and not alone for me?**

III. The Shepherd Candle

Scripture Reading Romans 10:5-17

Moses describes in this way the righteousness that is by the law: “The man who does these things will live by them.” But the righteousness that is by faith says: “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ (that is, to bring Christ down)⁷” or “Who will descend into the deep?” (That is, to bring Christ up from the dead).⁸ But what does it say? “The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming:⁹ That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.¹¹ As the Scripture says, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.”¹² For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him,¹³ for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

¹⁴How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?¹⁵ And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

¹⁶ But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?" ¹⁷ Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night CW 336

1 While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
all seated on the ground, an angel of the Lord came down,
and glory shone around.

2 "Fear not," said he, for mighty dread
had seized their troubled mind; "Glad tidings of great joy I bring
to you and all mankind.

3 "To you, in David's town, this day,
is born of David's line a Savior, who is Christ the Lord;
and this shall be the sign:

4 "The heav'nly Babe you there shall find
to human view displayed, all humbly wrapped in swaddling
clothes and in a manger laid."

5 Then suddenly in heav'n's bright sky
appeared a shining throng of angels, praising God, who thus
addressed their joyful song:

6 "All glory be to God on high,
and on the earth be peace; to those on whom his favor rests
goodwill shall never cease."

IV. The Angel Candle

Scripture Reading Hebrews 2:10-18

In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering. ¹¹ Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers. ¹² He says, "I will declare your name to my brothers; in the presence of the congregation I will

sing your praises.” ¹³ And again, Here am I, and the children God has given me.” ¹³ And again, “I will put my trust in him.”

¹⁴ Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil— ¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. ¹⁶ For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants. ¹⁷ For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

V. The Christ Candle

The Christmas Story in Word and Song

P: And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, everyone to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the house and lineage of David,) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

**♪ O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**

**♪ O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Immanuel!**

P: And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 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.

♪ 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.

♪ 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 cradle till morning is nigh.

♪ 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.

P: And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. 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. And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be for all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes 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, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

♪ Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;
with th' angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

♪ Hail, the heav'nly Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that man no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

P: 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. And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the babe, lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

♪ **Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, prepare a bed, soft, undefiled within my heart, made clean and new, a quiet chamber kept for you.**

♪ **My heart for very joy must leap; my lips no more can silence keep. I too must sing with joyful tongue that sweetest ancient cradle song:**

♪ **Glory to God in highest heav'n, who unto us his Son has giv'n, while angels sing with pious mirth a glad new year to all the earth!**

Offering

Litany of Light

P: Arise, shine, for your light has come,

C: and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.

P: See, darkness covers the earth

C: and thick darkness is over the peoples,

P: but the LORD rises upon you

C: and his glory appears over you.

P: For you were once darkness,

C: but now you are light in the Lord.

P: For God, who said,

C: "Let light shine out of darkness,"

P: made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light

C: of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

P: You are all sons of the light and sons of the day.

C: We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.

P: You are the light of the world.

C: A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.

P: Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl.

C: Instead they put it on its stand,

P: and it gives light to everyone in the house.

C: In the same way, let your light shine before men

P: that they may see your good deeds

C: and praise your Father in heaven.

Service of Candle Lighting

(The pastor will light a candle from the Christ candle, and with it light the candles of the ushers. The ushers will then light the candle of the first person in each pew. Light will then be passed from worshiper to worshiper. Remember that the lighted candle remains upright and the unlighted candle is tipped to be lighted. Make every effort to keep candles vertical to avoid spilling wax.)

Silent Night, Holy Night CW 337 sts. 1-3

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

Lord's Prayer

Blessing

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: Amen.

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*Our celebration of the Savior's birth continues with our
Christmas Day service at 9:00 tomorrow morning.*

