

ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH

25 N. ADAMS STREET, YORK, PA 17404

PHONE: 717-854-7198



December 24, 2020

4:30 P.M.



In Christ, the Babe of Bethlehem, our Healer and our Hope – WE EXTEND A WARM WELCOME AND A BLESSED CHRISTMAS to all of you from the Pastor, Church Council and the staff of St. James as we rejoice in the Holy Birth of the Christ Child.

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

CHRISTMAS EVE

4:30 PM

December 24, 2020

WORDS OF WELCOME

Pastor Reed

OPENING PRAYER

Loving God, help us remember the birth of Jesus,
that we may share in the song of the angels,
the gladness of the shepherds,
and worship of the wise men.



This is the day God has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

JOY TO THE WORLD

Joy to the world! The Lord is come; let earth receive her 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 earth! The Savior reigns;
let all their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy

THE CHRISTMAS STORY OF JESUS' BIRTH

Pastor Edgar Reed

The story is taken from Matthew and Luke.

In the little town of Nazareth lived a young woman named Mary. She was looking forward to getting married. That was exciting enough, but then something happened that was amazing and alarming all at once: an angel appeared to her and told her not to be afraid, saying, "God has chosen you for something very special. You are going to have a baby: God's own son and you are to call him JESUS."

Mary was very surprised and couldn't believe it because she was not yet married. The angel explained, "It is God who will make this happen....and remember.... Everything is possible with God."

"Oh," said Mary, "Then let it be so, I am willing to do whatever God wants me to do."

What the angel had told Mary was true. Mary soon found out she was going to have a baby and when she told her husband-to-be, Joseph, he was very unhappy.

Joseph thought that Mary had not been faithful to him after she had promised to marry him. He was worried and thought he would have to call off the wedding.

But then Joseph fell asleep, and in a dream an angel appeared to him and told him, "You too are part of God's plan, God wants you to take care of Mary and her baby." Joseph listened to the angel and believed Mary. Because Joseph was a good man, he married Mary and cared for her as they awaited the birth of the baby, Jesus.

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light. *Refrain*

Refrain

Go tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and ev'rywhere;
go tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born!

About this time, the emperor in Rome who ruled over Nazareth ordered all the people to return to their hometowns to be counted so that they would be charged a tax. This meant Joseph and Mary would have to go back to Joseph's town of Bethlehem so that their names would be on the emperor's list.

O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

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.



Mary and Joseph went back to Bethlehem and because it was so crowded they couldn't find a place to sleep. Mary was beginning to feel the baby was about to be born. They were very anxious about having a warm place to stay and they knew the baby would soon be born.

The only place they could find to spend the night was a stable with hay in a manger that was used to feed the cows. God had provided a place for them and soon little baby Jesus was born and Mary placed him in the manger as his bed.

SILENT NIGHT [verse 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.

There were shepherds watching after their flocks of sheep out on a hillside not far from the town. Suddenly, an angel appeared to them and told them not to be afraid. The angel said, "Tonight, in Bethlehem, a baby has been born; a king sent by God to save you and all people from their wrongdoings. Go and see! You will find the baby lying in a manger."



Then the sky was full of angels and they were singing for joy. It was like heaven had come down to earth! When the angels vanished back to heaven the shepherds knew what they must do. They hurried off to Bethlehem and found the baby just as the angels had said.

Around the same time, some wise men saw a bright star in the nighttime sky. "It is a special sign," they agreed, "that a new king has been born. We must go and find him!" They followed the star to Jerusalem and asked the king in Jerusalem, whose name was King Herod, if he knew where the new king was to be found.

Now King Herod was a mean man and didn't want a rival king around. His advisers knew the baby king was to be born in Bethlehem. So he talked to the wise men and told them to go there and when they had found the new king to come back and let him know so he could also go and see him.



As the wise men came near the town they saw the star shining over one of the houses. They went inside and saw Mary and the baby Jesus. The star had truly guided them and here was the king! They didn't question that he was only a baby, they knew he was Jesus. They gave him presents of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

The wise men were too smart to go back to King Herod and in a dream an angel warned them to go back to their homes another way.

An angel also spoke to Joseph and told him to take Mary and baby Jesus far away to Egypt because King Herod was coming after them to harm baby Jesus. Joseph led his little family away and they were safe in Egypt until the time was right for them to go back home to Nazareth.

*This is the story of Jesus' birth. He was sent by God to earth as a human and yet divine. He was sent to be our Savior, and he promises that we are his children, and he is our God. Nothing we have done, no matter how bad it might be, will separate us from him. We only have to ask him and he will forgive us. Our lives are changed and we will live forever with him. **AMEN***

PRAYERS OF THE CHILDREN

Let us pray.

God, we ask your blessings this night. God bless our families.
Keep them safe. Make them happy.

Natalie Hoke

All: Hear our prayer.

God bless our brothers and sisters.
Let them grow strong and healthy.
Keep them safe and out of danger

Ryan Kramer

All: Hear our prayer.

God bless the children who are sick, hungry, and homeless. **Jacob Drawbaugh**
Take away] their pain, send them food, and help them find a safe home.

All: Hear our prayer.

And finally, thank you gracious God
for everything you bring to the table,
especially during these unprecedented times.
This includes: our loving family,
our great health, and so much more.

Ben Brodbeck

All: Thank you God for everything. AMEN

+ PEACE IS SHARED

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

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace and may say:

Peace be with you, or similar words.

+ LORD'S PRAYER

[P] Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**[C] 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.**

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 th'angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!" Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king!"

CLOSING PRAYER

Pastor Reed

Let us pray. Let us go forth rejoicing in the love of the child, Jesus, who was born so many years ago, and pray that He might be born over and over again in our hearts. Help us to give to others in every way that we can with our grateful hearts, as He would have us give. **AMEN**

AWAY IN A MANGER

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 you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay.
close by me forever and love me I pray.
Bless all the dear children, in your tender care,
And fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

DISMISSAL Go in peace. Live and love in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Pastor Reed**
Thanks be to God!



WE GIVE THANKS to God for Pastor Reed, the St. James Children, and all who have participated in our Christmas Eve worship.

TO ALL who have assisted in the adorning of the church for the Advent and Christmas seasons, your efforts and special touches give joy and praise to our Lord Jesus Christ, and to all who worship with us through in-person and live streamed services. Thank you!!!





*The lovely poinsettias adorning the chancel are placed by
the following persons:*

TO THE GLORY OF GOD and

Four, To the Glory of God and the birth of our Savior! Merry Christmas! By Anita and Rick Ashton

One, In honor of our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren by Judy & Mike Cooper.

One, In memory of our parents by Judy & Mike Cooper.

One, In memory of my parents, Mr. & Mrs. William J. Norris, by Phyllis Stevens-Ehrhart.

One, In memory of my sisters, Betty J. Starner and Helen G. Goheen, by Phyllis Stevens-Ehrhart.

One, In memory of my husband, Ronald G. Herman, by Phyllis Ehrhart-Herman.

One, In memory of Bill Knaub by Carol Knaub

One, In memory of Mary Kathryn Racine by Carol Knaub.

One, In honor of Nancy Laird and Pat & Dick Mummert by Jeff & Steph Laird.

One, In memory of Dick Laird and Tina Hoff. We love and miss you both! By Jeff & Steph Laird.

One, In loving memory of Dick Laird by Nancy Laird.

One, In loving honor of Jeff & Heath Laird and their families by Nancy Laird.

One, in honor of our children, Tom, Chris & Amanda, Natalie & Brian and our grandchildren, Casey, Becca, Isabelle, and Isaac by Deb & Jim Meckley.

One, In memory of our beloved Tina Hoff by Pat & Dick Mummert.

One, In memory of my husband, Don, and my parents, H. E. & Sadie Oliver, by Rosemary Rafferty.

One, In honor of my son and his family, Don, Jeanne, Colton and Garrett by Rosemary Rafferty.

One, In memory of Charlotte Leppo by Janice Sewell.

One, In memory of my dear wonderful friend, Tina Hoff, by Janice Sewell.

One, In loving memory of Luciele Heiss, who courageously fought the cancer battle. God be with you, by Norma & Dave Smith.





THE SANCTUARY CHRISTMAS TREE

is given to the Glory of God and in celebration of the upcoming birth of our Savior, Jesus.

Tree has been presented and sponsored by
Jim, Deb, & Tom Meckley and
Natalie, Brian Casey & Rebecca Becker

THE EVERGREEN WREATHS on the Adams Street entrance doors have been placed to the Glory of God and in memory of our father, Philip E. Kern, Sr. and our step-father, Henry H. Williams, by Philip E. Kern, Jr. and Family and Vicki Besore and Family.



THE EVERGREEN WREATHS placed on the doors at the front side of Adams Street (near Pastor’s office) are placed to the Glory of God and in loving memory of William & Matilda Meckley, Dale & Edith Moose, and Kenneth & Dorothy Stough (2nd “Parents” to us) by Jim & Deb Meckley & family.

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POINSETTIA DISTRIBUTION

If we have in-person worship on Sunday, December 20th plants may be picked up **following the Service**.

If service is live-streamed pick-up dates will be Monday & Wednesday, December 21st and 23rd, 9am – 12 noon. Plants may also be left in the sanctuary for in-person or live-stream worship on December 27th. Pickup times thereafter will be Monday and Wednesday, December 28th & 30th, 9am – 12 noon.

Please make sure your name is checked off on the pickup list when you have your plant(s).

If you have any questions, please call the church office (717) 854-7198. Leave a message if no answer. Answering machine is checked regularly throughout the day when office is closed.

