

**A Thrill of Hope
Lessons & Carols for Christmas
26 December 2021**

Introduction to Worship:

"A Thrill Hope: Lessons and Carols" for Christmas is a worship opportunity for the Virginia Synod to come together and praise the Newborn King! Inspired by the French Christmas carol, "O, Holy Night" (Cantique de Noël), this service explores many of the ways the world is weary, how God comes to us in our weariness, and how we still rejoice. This worship service was created by Pastor Kelly Bayer Derrick and Pastor Colleen Montgomery from the staff of the Virginia Synod.

Participating communities and individuals are invited to make a special contribution to Lutheran Disaster Response to support their ongoing care to those who have been affected by wildfires in the western United States, flooding in Bangladesh, to a cyclone in Mozambique, COVID-19 all around the world. You can give online [here](#).

To stream this service online, congregations will need both OneLisence and Sundays & Seasons. Please be sure to update the bulletin with the appropriate license information.

Gathering Song: Joy to the World (ELW 267)

- 1 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.

- 2 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.

- 3 No more let sin and sorrow grow
nor thorns infest the ground;

he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.

- 4 He rules the world with truth and grace
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

Opening Litany

Refrain from O, Holy Night (Cantique de Noël) written by Placide Cappeau.

L: God proclaims freedom to the captives and brings forth water in the wilderness.

All: A thrill of hope, a weary world rejoices.

L: God walks with us in the shadow of our fear and shows us new paths of righteousness.

All: A thrill of hope, a weary world rejoices.

L: Jesus is born of a woman and comes to earth as Emmanuel, God with us.

All: A thrill of hope, a weary world rejoices.

L: Jesus calls out to all who are weary, to come to him. He will give us rest.

All: A thrill of hope, a weary world rejoices.

L: The Spirit intercedes with our hurting hearts with sighs too deep for words.

All: A thrill of hope a weary world rejoices.

L: The Spirit unites our praise and prayers across the miles and builds us into the faithful, bold,
and serving body of Christ.

All: A thrill of hope, a weary world rejoices.

L: We gather for worship in the name of God, Our Holy Parent, + Jesus, Son of God Among us, and the Holy Spirit, Comforter of All.

All: Amen.

Greeting & Prayer of the Day

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and communion of the Holy Spirit is with you all.

All: And also with you.

Let us pray.

O Holy God, the coming of your Son into our world has graced weary hearts with peace and hope. Call us together from all places, 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.

All: Amen.

First Lesson: Genesis 2.4c-9 (CEB [Common English Bible])

L: In creating, God designs for people, creatures, plants, and the earth to live in harmony. Humanity's connection to creation has many implications. One is that the earth groans under the strain of humanity's greed when we live out of balance with the rest of creation. Another is the seasons' call to intentional living and reminding us of the cycle of death and new life that is each year. This Christmas and winter, we remember that we are of the earth and that our lives are bound to creation itself. We hope for the healing of creation with creation.

L: A reading from Genesis:

On the day the Lord God made earth and sky— ⁵ before any wild plants appeared on the earth, and before any field crops grew, because the Lord God hadn't yet sent rain on the earth and there was still no human being to farm the fertile land, ⁶ though a stream rose from the earth and watered all of the fertile land— ⁷ the Lord God formed the human from the topsoil of the fertile land and blew life's breath into his nostrils. The human came to life. ⁸ The Lord God planted a garden in Eden in the east and put there the human that had been formed. ⁹ In the fertile land, the Lord God grew every beautiful tree with edible fruit, and also grew the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Word of God, Word of Life. **All: Thanks be to God.**

Hymn: Angels from the Realms of Glory (ELW 275)

- 1 Angels, from the realms of glory,
wing your flight o'er all the earth;
once you sang creation's story,
now proclaim Messiah's birth:
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king.

- 2 Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing,
yonder shines the infant light.
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king.

- 3 Sages, leave your contemplations,
brighter visions beam afar;
seek the great desire of nations,
you have seen his natal star.
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king.

- 4 All creation, join in praising
God, the Father, Spirit, Son,
evermore your voices raising
to the eternal Three in One.
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt., sts. 1-3; *Salisbury Hymn Book*, 1857, st. 4

Second Lesson: Genesis 21.8-21

L: Hagar was an outcast in every way possible at the time she lived. She was a woman, she was enslaved by Abraham and Sarah, and she was not from their country. Rather than trusting God's promises, Sarah and Abraham abuse Hagar through a pregnancy that she could not consent to. We now read Sarah's contempt for Hagar and her son, Ishmael. Yet God continues

to see Hagar and her son and provides for them in the wilderness. Hagar's story gives hope to all those who are outcast today. God sees them and God attends to their needs. Likewise, Hagar shows us that God does hear our individual prayers as well. God sees you and God attends to your needs.

L: A reading from Genesis

[Isaac] grew, and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. ⁹ But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian [Ishmael], whom she had borne to Abraham, playing with her son Isaac.¹⁰ So she said to Abraham, "Cast out this slave woman with her son; for the son of this slave woman shall not inherit along with my son Isaac." ¹¹ The matter was very distressing to Abraham on account of his son. ¹² But God said to Abraham, "Do not be distressed because of the boy and because of your slave woman; whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be named for you. ¹³ As for the son of the slave woman, I will make a nation of him also, because he is your offspring." ¹⁴ So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

¹⁵ When the water in the skin was gone, she cast the child under one of the bushes. ¹⁶ Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot; for she said, "Do not let me look on the death of the child." And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept. ¹⁷ And God heard the voice of the boy; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, "What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid; for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. ¹⁸ Come, lift up the boy and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make a great nation of him." ¹⁹ Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. She went, and filled the skin with water, and gave the boy a drink.

²⁰ God was with the boy, and he grew up; he lived in the wilderness, and became an expert with the bow. ²¹ He lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

Word of God, Word of Life. **All: Thanks be to God.**

Hymn: It Came Upon the Midnight Clear (ELW 282)

1 It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:

"Peace on the earth, good will to all,
from heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.

2 Still through the cloven skies they come
with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heav'nly music floats
o'er all the weary world.

Above its sad and lowly plains
they bend on hov'ring wing,
and ever o'er its babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.

3 And you, beneath life's crushing load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way
with painful steps and slow:
look now, for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing;
oh, rest beside the weary road
and hear the angels sing!

4 For lo! The days are hast'ning on,
by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years
shall come the time foretold,
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendors fling,
and all the world give back the song
which now the angels sing.

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810-1876

Third Lesson: Luke 2.1-7

L: To abide by an imperial command, Mary and Joseph traveled 90 miles from Nazareth to Bethlehem - the ancestral home of Joseph's family. This trip likely took about one month, because they were walking. Walking! Mary was walking 90 miles while 8 months pregnant!

(Hopefully she really did have a donkey to ride on, like in so many Christmas images.) The weariness of travel must have been exhausting - in body, mind, soul, and spirit. So many of us are weary in body, mind, soul, and spirit. So many of us carry trauma in our bodies. We carry illness, injury, grief, and pain. We also carry new life and hope. God accompanies us all on our journeys - helping to carry all that weighs us down, just as Mary carried in her body the holy presence of God with us.

L: A reading from Luke.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ 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. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ 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.

Word of God, Word of Life. **All: Thanks be to God.**

Hymn: Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming (ELW 272)

- 1 Lo, how a rose e'er blooming
from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming
as seers of old have sung,
it came, a flow'r so bright,
amid the cold of winter,
when half-spent was the night.

- 2 Isaiah had foretold it,
the rose I have in mind;
with Mary we behold it,
the virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright,
she bore to us a Savior,
when half-spent was the night.

- 3 This flow'r, whose fragrance tender

with sweetness fills the air,
dispels with glorious splendor
the darkness everywhere.
True man, yet very God,
from sin and death he saves us
and lightens ev'ry load.

4 O Savior, child of Mary,
who felt our human woe;
O Savior, king of glory,
who dost our weakness know:
bring us at length, we pray,
to the bright courts of heaven
and into endless day.

Text: German carol, 15th cent.; tr. Theodore Baker, 1851-1934, sts. 1-2; Harriet R. Krauth, 1845-1925, st. 3; John C. Mattes, 1876-1948, st. 4

Fourth Lesson: Matthew 2.1-15

L: The Holy Family - Mary, Joseph, and Jesus - faced violence and persecution as King Herod reacted to Jesus' birth with fear and fury and sought to destroy Jesus. Fleeing the terror of Herod's massacre of the innocents, the Holy Family lived as refugees in Egypt. People all over the world still face violence, persecution, fear, and terror every day. Many make the hard choice to flee and seek refuge elsewhere. Just as God cared for the Holy Family through the people of Egypt, God continues to care, through those who still provide refuge, for those who must flee their homes.

L: A reading from Matthew.

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ² asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." ³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴ and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶ 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,

are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.”

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸ Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” ⁹ When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

¹³ Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” ¹⁴ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.”

Word of God, Word of Life. **All: Thanks be to God.**

Hymn: What Child is This (ELW 296)

- 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest,
on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud,
the babe, the son of Mary!

- 2 So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
let loving hearts enthrone him.

Raise, raise the song on high,
the virgin sings her lullaby;
joy, joy, for Christ is born,
the babe, the son of Mary!

3 What child is this who fled that night
From Herod's wrathful order?
As Rachel wept, the family kept
On pressing toward the border.
This, this is Christ our king:
A refugee, a stranger.
Pray, pray for all like him,
The Babe, the son of Mary.

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898, verses 1-2; [Victoria Emily Jones](#) (2016), verse 3. Used with author permission.

Fifth Lesson: John 21:4-14

L: Throughout his life and ministry, Jesus eats with and feeds thousands. Yet this seaside fish breakfast following his resurrection is a meal like no other. Jesus comes to the disciples who are weary with grief and uncertain of what comes next. They eat and then Jesus gives Peter the command to love and feed his sheep. Likewise we come weary with grief and uncertainty to Christ's table, to God's holy word. Jesus nourishes us with his word and himself when we share communion. We may not know what the next chapter of faith looks like for us as individuals or us together as a church, but we trust that God is with us. God will show us the way.

L: A reading from John.

Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵ Jesus said to them, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" They answered him, "No." ⁶ He said to them, "Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. ⁷ That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea. ⁸ But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off.

⁹ When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. ¹⁰ Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.” ¹¹ So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. ¹² Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, “Who are you?” because they knew it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. ¹⁴ This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

Word of God, Word of Life. **All: Thanks be to God.**

Hymn: In a Far Off Place, Jesus Comes (ACS 908)

- 1 In a far-off place, Jesus comes to earth.
 Sheep and cattle grace the site.
 As the angel songs begin,
 like the whisper of the wind,
 nature's hope awakes again;
 Jesus comes.

- 2 For the poor in heart, Jesus comes to earth.
 Humble shepherds start the news.
 For each homeless infant born,
 for the meek and those who mourn,
 for the weary and the worn,
 Jesus comes.

- 3 In our deepest night, Jesus comes to earth:
 radiant star to light our way.
 Summer's heat or winter's chill,
 with a warm and loving will,
 to a world that needs him still,
 Jesus comes.

Text: Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953

Text © 2009 GIA Publications, Inc., giamusic.com. All rights reserved.

Sixth Lesson: Isaiah 35

L: The prophet Isaiah speaks words of hope to the people of Israel who are living as exiles in Babylon. The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. There is no need for fear - God is coming to save! God's coming reign brings hope not just for humanity but also for creation. All earth is hopeful: God's renews creation, the desert will flow with water, the land will rejoice with blossoms. God's recreation is hope for the restoration of humanity, creatures, and all of creation.

L: A reading from Isaiah.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.

They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.

³ Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
"Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God.

He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you."

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;

⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;

⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸ A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God's people;

no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.
⁹ No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.
¹⁰ And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Word of God, Word of Life. **All: Thanks be to God.**

Hymn: All Earth is Hopeful *Toda la tierra* (ELW 266)

ENGLISH

- 1 All earth is hopeful, the Savior comes at last!
Furrows lie open for God's creative task:
this, the labor of people who struggle to see
how God's truth and justice set ev'rybody free.

- 2 People of Israel, you heard the prophet tell:
"A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel";
she conceived him, "God with us,"
our brother, whose birth
restores hope and courage to children of this earth.

- 3 Mountains and valleys will have to be prepared;
new highways opened, new protocols declared.
Almost here! God is nearing, in beauty and grace!
All clear ev'ry gateway, in haste, come out in haste!

- 4 We first saw Jesus a baby in a crib.
This same Lord Jesus today has come to live
in our world; he is present, in neighbors we see
our Jesus is with us, and ever sets us free.

SPANISH

- 1 Toda la tierra espera al Salvador
y el surco abierto, la obra del Señor;
es el mundo que lucha por la libertad,
reclama justicia y busca la verdad.

- 2 Dice el profeta al pueblo de Israel:
"De madre virgen ya viene Emmanuel,"
será "Dios con nosotros," hermano será,
con él la esperanza al mundo volverá.

- 3 Montes y valles habrá que preparar;
nuevos caminos tenemos que trazar.
Él está ya muy cerca, venidlo a encontrar,
y todas las puertas abrid de par en par.

- 4 En una cueva Jesús apareció,
pero en el mundo está presente hoy.
Vive en nuestros hermanos, con ellos está;
y vuelve de nuevo a darnos libertad.

Text: Alberto Taulé, b. 1932; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946

Spanish text © 1993 and English text © 1995 Centro de Pastoral Liturgica, admin. OCP
Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.

Creed

L: We confess our faith together in the words of the Nicene Creed.

All: **We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,**

**of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation

**he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Prayers of the People

L: 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.

A brief silence.

L: You come to us in gatherings of your church across the globe. Unite us with those who celebrate your birth even when they are weary and weighed down by grief, loss, poverty, hunger, or injustice. Merciful God,

All: fill us with your hope.

L: You come to us in the diverse splendor of the universe. Grant us the humility to trust our place in the network of creation, that we live in service to you and the natural world. Show us ways to restore creation where it is worn and weary. Merciful God,

All: fill us with your hope.

L: You come to us through relationships of many kinds: families, friendships, communities, and nations. Guide us in these relationships, that we recognize the Christ child in one another and show your love to those most vulnerable. Merciful God,

All: fill us with your hope.

L: You come to us through people whom the world forgets. Women and others who have been cast out, refugees, and creation itself. Send your Spirit to all who are imprisoned, struggling with addiction, unwell, or in any need this day especially those we name aloud, in the comments, or in the silence of our hearts. *(Pause.)* Merciful God,

All: fill us with your hope.

L: You come to us in acts of justice and forgiveness. Open our hearts to forgive one another, without permitting injustice. Supply us with the wisdom to be clothed with love, binding all things together in perfect harmony. Merciful God,

All: fill us with your hope.

L: You come to us in the Virginia Synod, to our congregations, campus ministries, mission starts and explorations. Rekindle your joy in the hearts of all who join in these communities. We pray your blessing for our Global Companion Synod, New Guinea Islands District, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Papua New Guinea. Merciful God,

All: fill us with your hope.

(Additional petitions may be added here.)

L: You come to us through those who have died yet live with you forever. We give thanks for all who have told the story of your love. Merciful God,

All: fill us with your hope.

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

All: Amen.

Lord's Prayer

L: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught:

All: Our Father in heaven,

**hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

Offering Prayer

L: God of hope, we give you thanks for all of the offerings that the people of the Virginia Synod have shared during the Advent season and will continue to share during the Christmas season. Each gift, each act of generosity, each act of service, whether to a local congregation, to organizations like Lutheran Disaster Response and other organizations, or to support the ministry of shared ministry of the Virginia Synod through Mission Support are beacons of hope in a weary world. As we offer ourselves and these your gifts, sustain us through the proclamation of your word and renew in us the song of your salvation, in Jesus Christ our Savior.
All: Amen.

Blessing

L: The God of hope
fill us with all joy and peace in believing,
so that we may abound in hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
through Christ Jesus, the Word made flesh.
All: Amen.

Dismissal

L: Go in peace. Rejoice in Christ our Savior.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sending Song: Go Tell It on the Mountain (ELW 290)

Refrain

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

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

2 The shepherds feared and trembled
when, lo, above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth. *Refrain*

3 Down in a lonely manger
the humble Christ was born;
and God sent us salvation
that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

Text: African American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work Jr., 1872-1925, stanzas, alt.