

Christ alone, under grace alone, and to Your glory alone. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Benediction

The congregation sits

Presentations

SILENT NIGHT

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,
Glory streams from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing: Hallelujah!
Christ the Saviour is born,
Christ the Saviour 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.



G R A C E



F A I T H

A
S O L A



S C R I P T U R E

C H R I S T M A S

G L O R Y B E T O G O D



C H R I S T



3

As they offered gifts most rare
At Thy cradle rude and bare,
So may we with holy joy,
Pure and free from sin's alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to Thee, our heavenly King.

4

Holy Jesus, every day
Keep us in the narrow way;
And when earthly things are past,
Bring our ransomed souls at last
Where they need no star to guide,
Where no clouds Thy glory hide.

5

In the heavenly country bright
Need they no created light;
Thou its light, its joy, its crown,
Thou its sun which goes not down;
There for ever may we sing
Alleluias to our King.

The congregation stands

Responsive Prayer:

M: God our Wonderful Counsellor, in Your Word You reveal to us who You are and what we are.

C: Through your Scriptures alone You show us that You are righteous and we are not. You show us that You are love and that we are forgiven.

M: Mighty God, You provide us with certain hope and redeem us from our sin.

C: Through faith alone we hold to your promises, and through Christ alone we receive salvation.

M: Everlasting Father, You rule the universe, the church, and the hearts of Your people.

C: To You alone belongs all glory and praise!

M: Prince of Peace, Your love covers us and fills us and moves us.

C: Through grace alone we receive new life and eternal hope.

M: Faithful God, move us to rejoice in our salvation and to share eagerly this Good News with others.

C: Help us to live for You through Scripture alone, by faith alone, in

Narration:

This message was proclaimed to the simplest of men, the shepherds, but it was also shared with some very important and intelligent men, the Magi from the east. Unfortunately, there is a lot we don't know about the Magi. We don't know exactly when they came to worship Jesus, we don't know how many there were, and we don't know what country they came from.

The Magi may have left their homes on the day Jesus was born, but we know, based on certain facts the Bible gives us, that they didn't arrive in Judea until at least a few months after His birth. Perhaps this shows us the importance of praising Jesus throughout the year, not just on Christmas!

We also are told that the Magi came from the east; however, the Bible doesn't tell us which country. This is a story that every person on earth needs to hear. Matthew recorded this event:

Recitation:

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the One who has been born king of the Jews? We saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him."

On coming to the house, they saw the Child with His mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped Him. Then they opened their treasures and presented Him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh." (Matthew 2:1-2, 11)

Cong. **AS WITH GLADNESS MEN OF OLD**

1

As with gladness men of old
Did the guiding star behold,
As with joy they hailed its light,
Leading onward, beaming bright;
So, most gracious Lord, may we
Evermore be led to Thee.

2

As with joyful steps they sped,
Saviour, to Thy lowly bed,
There to bend the knee before
Thee, whom heaven and earth adore;
So may be with willing feet
Ever seek Thy mercy-seat.



**A "Sola" Christmas
A Children's Christmas Service, St Paul's Lutheran Church,
Greenwood, 2017**

Focusing on the "Solos" of the Reformation

PRELUDE:

THE HAPPY CHRISTMAS COMES ONCE MORE

Processional hymn sung by congregation

1

The happy Christmas comes once more,
The heavenly guest is at the door.
The blessed words the shepherds thrill,
The joyous tidings, "Peace, goodwill."

2

The lowly Saviour meekly lies,
Laid off the splendour of the skies;
No crown bedecks His forehead fair,
No pearl, nor gem, nor silk is there.

3

O holy Child, Thy manger gleams
Till earth and heaven glow with its beams,
Till midnight noon's bright light has won,
And Jacob's Star outshines the sun.

4

Thou patriarchs' joy, Thou prophet's song,
Thou heavenly Dayspring, looked for long,
Thou Son of man, incarnate Word,
Great David's Son, great David's Lord!

5

Come, Jesus, glorious, heavenly guest,
Keep Thine own Christmas in our breast;
Then David's harp-strings, hushed so long,
Shall swell our jubilee of song.

The congregation stands

Invocation:

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Responsive Reading:

M: Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

C: Sing to the LORD, praise His name; proclaim His salvation day after day.

M: Declare His glory among the nations,

C: His marvellous deeds among all peoples.

M: Ascribe to the LORD, all you families of nations,

C: ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

M: Worship the LORD in the splendour of His holiness;

C: tremble before Him, all the earth.

M: Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;

C: let the sea resound, and all that is in it.

M: Let all creation rejoice before the LORD, for He comes,

C: He comes to judge the earth.

M: He will judge the world in righteousness

C: and the peoples in his faithfulness.

Psalm 96 (selected verses)

The congregation sits

Children's Address:

Cong.

JOY TO THE WORLD

1

Joy to the world! the Lord is come;

let earth receive its King;

let every heart prepare Him room,

and heaven and nature sing,

and heaven and nature sing,

and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Narration:

After you have opened your gifts, do you keep quiet about them? Or do you tell all your friends what you have received? When the shepherds saw God's gift to the world, they did not keep the news to themselves. They spread the word so that others could experience God's grace too!

Recitation:

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the Baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen Him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this Child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. (Luke 2:15-20)

Children.

WHILE BY MY SHEEP

1

While by my sheep I watched at night,
glad tidings brought an angel bright:

How great my joy (great my joy)!

Joy, joy, joy (joy, joy, joy)!

*Praise we the Lord in heaven on high
(Praise we the Lord in heaven on high)!*

2

There shall be born, so he did say,
in Bethlehem a Child today:

3

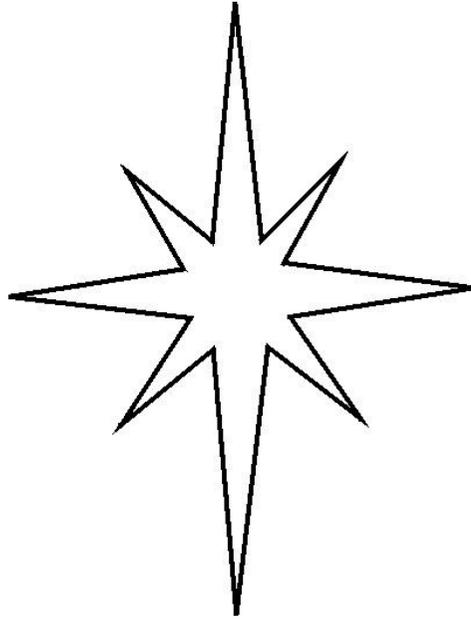
Look for this Child within a stall,
this Child who shall redeem us all:

4

Christ-child, God's gift to me, be near,
then shall my heart be filled with cheer:

2
Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come,
Offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
Hail, the incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with us to dwell,
Jesus our Immanuel:

3
Hail, the heaven-born Prince of peace!
Hail, the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Risen with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that we no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth:



Part Four: By Grace Alone (*Sola Gratia*)

Narration:

In the not too distant future, many of you will be opening your Christmas gifts. What did you do to earn those gifts? The moment we do something to earn them, they are no longer gifts. Out of love for us, God gave the most precious gift on that first Christmas night - the Saviour who lived a perfect life and suffered and died to pay for our sins. Our sinful nature wants nothing to do with God and His precious gift. Despite that fact, God loves us still. God's love is undeserved. That is GRACE! The apostle Paul reminds us:

Recitation:

It is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

2
Joy to the earth! the Saviour 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 sins and sorrows 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.

Introduction:

Narration:

We all know how important a solid foundation is for a building. A building with a weak foundation may stand for a time, but eventually it will topple. Today, we once again hear the account of the birth of Jesus. Why do we set aside time to do this every year? The answer is that this is an important brick in the foundation of our faith. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 3:11, "*No one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.*"

As we close out the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, we are reminded how God used Martin Luther to restore to the church the true teachings of Scripture. We can summarise those teachings in five short statements: By Scripture Alone, By Faith Alone, Through Christ Alone, To God's Glory Alone, and By Grace Alone. These phrases form the foundation of the Lutheran Church, and because they are rooted in Scripture, they form the foundation of the Christian faith.

Part One: By Scripture Alone (Sola Scriptura)

Narration:

When the earth was new, and people lived for hundreds of years, information was passed down from one generation to the next by word of mouth. Many generations were able to talk directly with Adam and Eve about the Garden of Eden, their fall into sin, and God's promise of a Saviour. As the first people began dying and the number of generations increased, it became necessary to record God's promises. God tells us through His disciple Peter how this took place:

Recitation:

Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:20-21)

Narration:

So how do we know that the Baby whose birth we are celebrating is our Saviour? Because Scripture tells us. That news can be found nowhere else but in God's Word. God gave His people prophecies - pictures of coming events - so they would recognise the Messiah when He came.

Recitation:

"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will crush your head, and you will crush His heel." (Genesis 3:15)

Recitation:

"The Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a Son, and will call Him Immanuel." (Isaiah 7:14)

Recitation:

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me One who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times." (Micah 5:2)

IMMANUEL - GOD WITH US

Recitation:

God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:9-11)

Narration:

The angels gave us a good example when they praised God after telling the shepherds the news of Jesus' birth.

Recitation:

There were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; He is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a Baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favour rests." (Luke 2:8-14)

Cong.

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

1

Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful, all you nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim:
Christ is born in Bethlehem.

*Hark! the herald angels sing
glory to the new-born King.*



gave birth to her firstborn, a Son. She wrapped Him in cloths and placed Him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. (Luke 2:1-7)

ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY

1 (children)

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 (cong.)

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 Saviour holy.

3 (cong.)

And our eyes at last shall see Him,
 Through His own redeeming love,
 For that child so dear and gentle
 Is our Lord in heaven above;
 And He leads His children on
 To the place where He is gone.

4 (cong.)

Not in that poor lowly stable,
 With the oxen standing by,
 We shall see Him; but in heaven,
 Set at God's right hand on high;
 Where like stars his children
 crowned
 All in white shall wait around.

Part Three: To God's Glory Alone (Soli Deo Gloria)

Narration:

Matthew, the author of the first book of the Bible's New Testament, records the angel's instructions to Joseph concerning Mary's child:

Recitation:

"You are to give Him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21)

Narration:

We have no part in saving ourselves. The Bible tells us we are saved through Christ alone. So we give God alone all the glory in thankfulness for sending His Son to save us. Yes, today we see a humble Baby in a manger; but the apostle Paul reminds us in his letter to the Philippians of Jesus' honoured place:

Recitation:

"The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will fulfil the good promise I made to the people of Israel and Judah. In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David's line; He will do what is just and right in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which it will be called: The LORD Our Righteous Saviour." (Jeremiah 33:14-16)

Cong.

COME THOU SAVIOUR OF OUR RACE

1

Come, Thou Saviour of our race,
 Choicest gift of heavenly grace;
 O Thou blessed virgin's Son,
 Born Thy course for us to run.

2

Not of mortal blood and birth,
 He descended to the earth:
 By the Holy Ghost conceived,
 Truly man, to be believed.

3

Wondrous birth! O wondrous child
 Of the virgin undefiled!
 Though by all the world disowned,
 Still to be in heaven enthroned.

4

From the Father forth He came,
 And returneth to the same,
 Captive leading death and hell-
 High the song of triumph swell.

5

Thou, the Father's only Son,
 Hast o'er sin the victory won.
 Boundless shall Thy kingdom be;
 When shall we its glories see?

6

Brightly doth Thy manger shine,
 Glorious is its light divine;
 Let not sin o'ercloud this light,
 Ever be our faith thus bright.

7

Praise to God the Father sing,
 Praise to God the Son, our King,
 Praise to God the Spirit be
 Ever and eternally.

Part Two: By Faith Alone, Through Christ Alone (Sola Fide, Solus Christus)

Narration:

In the 11th chapter of the letter to the Hebrews, we find a definition for faith: *"Faith is the confident assurance of the things we hope for, the conviction about things that are not seen."* When we receive unsettling news, our reac-

tion might be to doubt the truth of this news. Today, we see in Mary an example of a strong faith as she reacts to some potentially startling news.

Recitation:

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you."

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favour with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; His kingdom will never end."

"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy One to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail."

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her. (Luke 1:26-38)

Children: **HOW GLAD I AM EACH CHRISTMAS EVE**

1

How glad I am each Christmas Eve,
The night of Jesus' birth!
Then, like the sun, the star shone forth,
And angels sang on earth.

2

The little Child in Bethlehem,
He was a king indeed;
For He came down from heaven above
To help a world in need.

3

He dwells again in heaven's realm,
The Son of God, today;
And still He loves His little ones
And hears them when they pray.

4

How glad I am on Christmas Eve!
His praises now we sing
He saved us by His life and death
He is our Saviour King.

Narration:

Mary was chosen by God to give birth to the Saviour. Mary was not special in and of herself, but by faith - a gift of the Holy Spirit - she trusted God and His Word. Many people today say they have faith, but too often it is in someone or something that provides no lasting foundation. Scripture tells us that there is only one sure foundation for our faith - Jesus Christ.

Recitation:

Jesus answered, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6)

Recitation:

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved. (Acts 4:12)

Narration:

Thousands of years after making the first promise of a Saviour, God finally sent the Messiah. Listen again to those familiar words proclaiming Jesus' birth:

Recitation:

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a Child. While they were there, the time came for the Baby to be born, and she