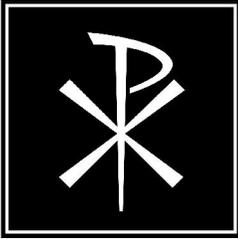




Divine Service

THE FESTIVAL OF THE NATIVITY



OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH

Birmingham, Alabama

December 25, 2013 - The Nativity of Our Lord

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

Welcome! Thank you for joining us for worship this morning. In our service we gather before our almighty God to offer him our worship and praise. We also gather to strengthen ourselves through the study of God's holy and powerful Word. If you are a guest, please fill out a Welcome card found in our entryway. You can place it in the offering plate or hand it to Pastor or an usher as you leave.

SERVING IN WORSHIP

Music: Rhoda Holbrook

Instrumentalists: Olivia Boyce-Sauer, Hannah Kratz

Ushers: Bob Holbrook, Roger Benz

Service Leader: Pastor Ben Kratz

Church Office: (205) 677-8642

Cell: (205) 478-6843

Email: Pastor@OurSaviorBirmingham.com

SERVICE NOTES FOR THIS SUNDAY

Nativus is Latin for "birth." By the fourth century, the early Christian Church had set December 25th as the day to celebrate the birth of Christ. Along with Easter, it quickly became one of the major celebrations in the Christian Church Year. It always included celebration of the Lord's Supper. This is seen in the word Christmas, which is simply short for "Christ's Mass."



BEFORE WORSHIP

As you prepare to worship your Lord today, spend a few quiet moments in prayer before the service. Review the lessons, the service notes, and pray this prayer:

Almighty God, grant that the birth of your one and only Son in the flesh may set us free from our old bondage under the yoke of sin; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

FOR THE CHILDREN

Children's Activity Sheets give activities and lessons pertaining to the Scripture lessons for the day. Ask an usher at the door into the sanctuary.

If your little one needs a moment, there is a speaker and window in our entryway that will allow you to see and hear the service.

INFORMATION

Bathrooms are located at the end of the end of the hallway as you exit the sanctuary.

Looking for more information? If you would like to learn more about Our Savior Lutheran Church, check out our information table in the entryway, speak with Pastor Kratz after the service, send him an email at: Pastor@OurSaviorBirmingham.com, or call the church office at (205) 677-8642.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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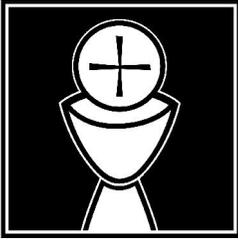
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DIVINE SERVICE

OPENING HYMN

#55

Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful

~Please stand

INVOCATION

The name of the triune God and the sign of the cross remind worshipers of their baptisms.

(L)eader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

(C)ongregation: **And also with you.**

CHRISTMAS LITANY

L: Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; Let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

Psalm 95:1

C: O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.

Psalm 8:1

L: Give thanks to the Lord of lords, to him who alone does great wonders, who by his understanding made the heavens, who spread out the earth upon the waters, who made the great lights — the sun to govern the day, the moon and stars to govern the night.

Psalm 136

C: **Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit.**

Psalm 147:5

L: But our iniquities have separated us from our God; our sins have hidden his face from us, so that he will not hear. We look for light, but all is darkness; for brightness, but we walk in deep shadows. We look for deliverance, but it is far away.

Isaiah 59:2, 9

C: **For our offenses are many in his sight, and our sins testify against us. Our offenses are ever with us, and we acknowledge our iniquities.**

Isaiah 59:12

L: The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.

Psalm 103:8-10

C: From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets, the name of the Lord is to be praised.

Psalm 113:3

L: "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. 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."

Jeremiah 23:5,6

C: Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.

Matthew 3:3

L: Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

Luke 2:10,11

C: Let the name of the Lord be praised, both now and forevermore. Alleluia!

Psalm 113:2

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST ~ *Gloria in Excelsis*

#61

Hark, the Herald Angels Sing

SALUTATION

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

The *Gloria in Excelsis* (Latin for "Glory to God in the highest") has been the traditional song of praise sung at the beginning of Christian services for centuries. This hymn quotes the opening words of the *Gloria*, the same words that the angels first sang on Christmas night.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Let us pray:

Almighty God, grant that the birth of your one and only Son in the flesh may set us free from our old bondage under the yoke of sin; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

~Please be seated



THE WORD

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 52:7-10 (pg. 1144)

Your God reigns! God is in control and is ruling for his people.

- 7 How beautiful on the mountains
are the feet of those who bring good news,
who proclaim peace,
who bring good tidings,
who proclaim salvation,
who say to Zion,
"Your God reigns!"
- 8 Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices;
together they shout for joy.
When the LORD returns to Zion,
they will see it with their own eyes.
- 9 Burst into songs of joy together,
you ruins of Jerusalem,
for the LORD has comforted his people,
he has redeemed Jerusalem.
- 10 The LORD will lay bare his holy arm
in the sight of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth will see
the salvation of our God.

PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalm 98

Like the angels who heralded the birth of Christ, the psalm leads us in proclaiming the praise of God for his grace in sending his Son.

Refrain

All the ends of the earth have seen the pow-er of God;
all the ends of the earth have seen the pow-er of God.

Verses

1. Sing to the Lord a new song, for God has done wondrous deeds;
whose right hand has won the vict'ry for us, God's holy arm.
2. The Lord has made salvation known, and justice revealed to all,
remembering kindness and faithfulness to Israel.
3. All of the ends of earth have seen salvation by our God.
Joyfully sing out all you lands, break forth in song.
4. Sing to the Lord with harp and song, with trumpet and with horn.
Sing in your joy before the king, the king, our Lord.

1 In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. ³ The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. ⁴ So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

⁵ For to which of the angels did God ever say,

"You are my Son;
today I have become your Father"?

Or again,

"I will be his Father,
and he will be my Son"?

⁶ And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says,
"Let all God's angels worship him."

⁷ In speaking of the angels he says,

"He makes his angels winds,
his servants flames of fire."

⁸ But about the Son he says,

"Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever,
and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom.

⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions
by anointing you with the oil of joy."

In Jesus Christ all the promises God made were kept. In the past God sent angels and prophets as messengers to his people. But in these latter days, God sent the One who made the universe and who sustains it by the breath of his mouth.

VERSE OF THE DAY

REFRAIN

Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia,
Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia!

L: Refrain.

C: Refrain.

L: Good news and great joy to all the world: today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord.

C: Refrain.

GOSPEL

John 1:1-14 (pg. 1645)

The congregation stands and speaks words of acclamation out of respect for the word of Christ, our King.

So with Christ, God's glory could be seen as he came in grace and truth, in flesh and blood, to give us the right to be children of God.

~Please stand

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²

He was with God in the beginning.

³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

⁶ There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. ⁸ He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. ⁹ The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹ He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹² Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

~Please be seated

Joy to the World

The Hymn of the Day is assigned to this day because of its rich content and connection to the day's Gospel.

SERMON

Hebrews 1:1-9

CONFESSIOIN OF FAITH

~Please stand

C: It is furthermore necessary for eternal salvation truly to believe that our Lord Jesus Christ also took on human flesh.

Now this is the true Christian faith:

We believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, is both God and man.

He is God, eternally begotten from the nature of the Father, and he is man, born in time from the nature of his mother, fully God, fully man, with rational soul and human flesh.

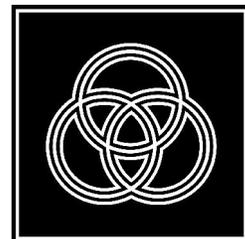
equal to the Father as to his deity, less than the Father as to his humanity; and though he is both God and man, Christ is not two persons, but one, one, not by changing the deity into flesh, but by taking the humanity into God; one, indeed, not by mixture of the natures, but by unity in one person; for just as the rational soul and flesh are one human being, so God and man are one Christ.

He suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose the third day from the dead.

He ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty, and from there will come to judge the living and the dead.

This is the true Christian faith.

Whoever does not faithfully and firmly believe this cannot be saved.

~Please be seated

The Athanasian creed is named after St. Athanasius, a staunch defender of the Christian faith in the fourth century. It was prepared to assist the Church in combating two errors that undermined Bible teaching. One error denied that God's Son and the Holy Spirit are of one being or Godhead with the Father. The other error denied that Jesus Christ is true God and true man in one person. The Athanasian Creed continues to serve the Christian Church as a standard of the truth. It declares that whoever rejects the doctrine of the Trinity and the doctrine of Christ is without saving faith. As we celebrate Christ taking on human flesh and being born as true God and true man, we confess the second half of the Athanasian Creed.

OFFERING

Moved by God's love in Christ, we offer him our first and best gifts, purely out of thanks to him.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

The Lord invites our prayers and asks that Christians pray for many people and circumstances.

~Please stand

L: On this holy day, dear Father, we rejoice to hear the good news of great joy that a Savior has been born for us. For fulfilling your prophecies and in the fullness of time sending your Son to be our Savior, we give you our heartfelt thanks and praise.

C: Unto us a child is born! Unto us a Son is given!

L: What a great mystery of our faith this is: that God has become fully human for our salvation! Even though he is the all-powerful Lord of all, he is wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger.

C: Help us always believe that this precious child was born as our substitute to be our Savior.

L: In the midst of our joy, we grieve for the many people in our world who do not know that Jesus has come to bring them forgiveness and healing. As the shepherds spread abroad the good news of the birth of the Savior born for all the world, may we also make use of the unique opportunities this holiday presents to tell others of what we have seen and heard concerning the child.

C: Grant that the true peace between God and fallen mankind may comfort all people.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

L: Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent prayer.

L: As the angels sang out their praise, move us also to sing out our praise to you, today and every day, as the joy of Christmas remains in our hearts.

C: Glory to God in the highest! Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION



PREFACE

L: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

C: **It is good and right so to do.**

L: It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, for in the wonder and mystery of his birth you have opened our eyes to the glory of your grace and renewed in our hearts the fervor of your love. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

The opening words of the communion liturgy mark the beginning of the Sacrament section of the service and lift the worshipers' hearts in praise. The opening sentences are among the oldest in the Christian liturgy.

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY ~ Sanctus

1 O ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of pow'r and
2 Ho - san - na in the high - est! How tru - ly blest is
might, Your glo - ry, earth and heav - en In
he Who in God's name is com - ing To
count - less ways re - cite. Ho - san - na! Come and
set his peo - ple free! He comes to bring sal -
save us, Lord God of hosts on high, And
va - tion And with his blood out - poured, De -
in your grace and mer - cy Re - ceive our fer - vent cry.
liv - er us from bond - age—Ho - san - na, might - y Lord!

“Sanctus” means “holy.” Used possibly as early as the second century, this canticle was in wide use among Christians in worship by the fourteenth century.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

*Jesus took bread and
"gave thanks" (Matthew
26:26).*

L: Blessed are you, O Lord of heaven and earth. We praise and thank you for sending your Son, Jesus Christ, and we remember the great acts of love through which he has ransomed us from sin, death, and the devil's power.

By his incarnation, he became one with us.
By his perfect life, he fulfilled your holy will.
By his innocent death, he overcame hell.
By his rising from the grave, he opened heaven.

Invited by your grace and instructed by your Word, we approach your table with repentant and joyful hearts. Strengthen us through Christ's body and blood, and preserve us in the true faith until we feast with him and all his ransomed people in glory everlasting.

C: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

THIS IS MY
BODY
THIS IS MY
BLOOD



WORDS OF INSTITUTION

L: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat, this is my (†) body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my (†) blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

As he speaks the Words of Institution, the pastor both proclaims the words of Jesus to the congregation and sets apart the bread and wine for the Lord's use. The sign of the cross reminds us of Christ's death.

L: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen.

LAMB OF GOD ~ *Agnus Dei*

Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.
Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God,
you take a - way the sin of the world;
grant us your peace. A - men.

Jesus is God's Lamb (Agnus Dei), who was offered as a sacrifice for sin once for all.

~Please be seated



DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

The Scriptures teach that the celebration of the Lord's Supper connects us intimately with Christ and with one another as Christians who are united around a common confession of faith.

THANKSGIVING

HYMN

#42

Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising

Verses 1,3,and 5

L: We give you thanks, O Lord, for the foretaste of the heavenly banquet that you have given us to eat and to drink in this sacrament. Through this gift you have fed our faith, nourished our hope, and strengthened our love. By your Spirit help us to live as your holy people until that day when you will receive us as your guests at the wedding supper of the Lamb, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

L: The Lord has refreshed us with His Word. Let us head into this new week equipped for lives of service.

C: Our mission is to worship God, to spread his Word to our community and to all nations, and to nurture all believers to prepare them for lives of Christian service.

BLESSING

L: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

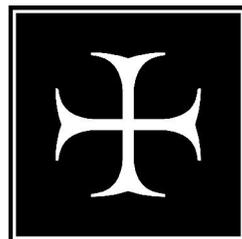
The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and (†) give you peace.

C: Amen.

~Please be seated



The blessing of Aaron has been spoken over God's people for over 3,500 years. The Lord said, "So they will put my name on [them], and I will bless them" (Numbers 6:27).

CLOSING HYMN

#49

Rejoice, Rejoice This Happy Morn

*Gloria
in excelsis
Deo*



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