



*the Festival of the Nativity of  
Our Lord*

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*Huntersville Lutheran  
Christmas, 2020 AD*



# HUNTERSVILLE LUTHERAN

## *A Changeless Message for A Changing Community*

Worshipping at Brick Row (19725 Oak Street Cornelius, NC) at 9:30am

Huntersvillelc.com | 248-807-3057 | pastor@huntersvillelc.com

Welcome! Thank you for joining us for worship this evening. Our service is centered on our Savior, Jesus Christ, who lived, died, and rose from the dead so that we would have eternal life in him. God reveals this soul saving message in his Word. We gather to find strength through God's powerful and holy Word. Take a few moments to familiarize yourself with the order of service, readings, and hymns, and fill out the take action card. May God bless our time together this morning.

### **About Our Worship**

The gospel is the good news about what Jesus did to be the Savior for sinners. It is also the power of God—the very thing he uses to work faith in our hearts and transform our lives. Therefore, gospel-centered worship places the gospel in central focus. This order of service is called the liturgy. In the message, in specially selected Scripture readings, and in carefully crafted songs, prayers, and creeds, the liturgy proclaims the good news about Jesus from start to finish. Gospel-centered worship is also designed to include the participation of the entire assembly (including children).

### **For Your Convenience**

**Restrooms** are located in through the doors at the rear of the building. Simply follow the arrows once you are in the hallway.

### **Service Participants**

Rev. Doug Van Sice, *pastor of Huntersville Lutheran*

Andrea Van Sice, *keyboardist*

Shelia Cox, *soloist*

# SERVICE NOTES

For over a thousand years the Christian world has marked the passing of time from the year of Jesus' birth. Recognizing his coming into the world as the central event in the story of human kind, Christians count the years before his birth as B.C. (Before Christ) and the years after his birth as A.D. (*Anno Domini*, In the Year of Our Lord).

The celebration of Christmas Eve marks the beginning of the Church's celebration of Jesus' birth. The *Christmas Season* lasts for twelve days from December 25<sup>th</sup> until the Festival of the Epiphany on January 6<sup>th</sup>. We do not know from Scripture on what day of the year Jesus was born. The tradition of celebrating Jesus' birth on December 25<sup>th</sup> goes back over 1,700 years. One theory holds that Christians in the Roman Empire deliberately celebrated Christmas at the same time the pagans celebrated the winter solstice. A second theory is perhaps more interesting: An ancient superstition held that great men were conceived and died on the same day. Early biblical scholars computed that Jesus died on March 25<sup>th</sup>. Therefore, according to this theory, he would have been born nine months later on December 25<sup>th</sup>.

The *legends* behind the date of Christmas are interesting. The *historical* events surrounding Jesus' birth that are scripture are far more than interesting theories from a bygone age. They are clear, precious, and saving truths that fundamentally change hearts and lives.

## A Prayer Upon Entering Worship

Almighty God, how truly wondrous is the whole chronicle of the Nativity. For this night the ancient slavery is ended, the devil confounded, the demons take to flight, the power of death is broken, paradise is unlocked, the curse is taken away, and sin is removed from us. On this holy night, a heavenly way of life has been planted on the earth. On this most holy night, angels communicate with men without fear, and men now hold speech with angels. Help us to once again marvel at the mystery of the incarnation and to find peace, hope, and comfort in our Savior born in Bethlehem. Amen.

*~Christmas Prayer of John Chrysostom, 349AD-407AD~*

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 favor rests.***

*~Luke 2:13,14~*

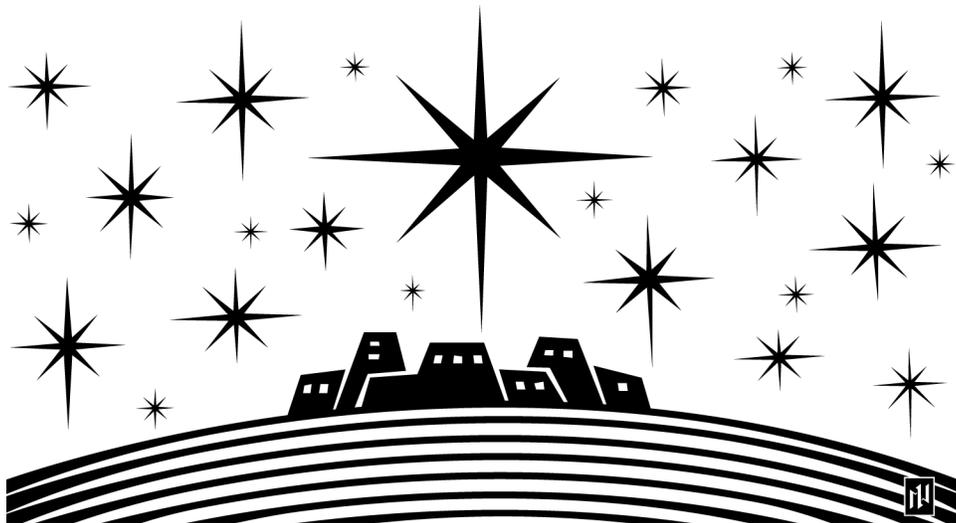
# AN ORDER FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

## CAROL

Joy has Dawned

*Text and Tune: Stuart Townend/Keith Getty*

1. Joy has dawned upon the world, promised from creation—  
God's salvation now unfurled, hope for ev'ry nation.  
Not with fanfares from above, not with scenes of glory,  
But with humble gifts of love—Jesus born of Mary.
2. Sounds of wonder fill the sky with the songs of angels  
As the mighty Prince of Life shelters in a stable.  
Hands that set each star in place, shaped the earth in darkness,  
Cling now to the mother's breast, vuln'erable and helpless.
3. Shepherds bow before the Lamb, gazing at the glory;  
Gifts of men from distant lands prophesy the story.  
Gold—a King is born today, Incense—God is with us,  
Myrrh—his death will make a way, and by his blood he'll win us.
4. Son of Adam, Son of heav'n, given as a ransom;  
Reconciling God and man, Christ, our mighty champion!  
What a Savior! What a friend! What a glorious myst'ry!  
Once a babe in Bethlehem, now the Lord of hist'ry.



## CALL TO WORSHIP

- L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** **Amen.**
- L** The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.
- C** **The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.**
- L** Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness, on them light has shined.
- C** **We have seen the glory of the Christ, the glory of the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.**
- L** To us a child is born, to us a Son is given.
- C** **In him was life, and that life was the light of men.**
- L** O Loving God, you once caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true light. Turn our thoughts toward Bethlehem and the Christ-child. May the words of Scripture we hear tonight remind us again that the old story is ever so new. May the carols we sing tonight reveal to us again the mystery of his birth. May the candles we see tonight symbolize for us your Son as the Light of the world. May all who have known that Light on earth come to the full measure of its joys in heaven.
- C** **Help us, O Lord, in our worship this night. Amen.**



# CAROL

## Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful

Christian Worship #55



1 Oh, come, all ye faith - ful, Joy - ful and tri - um - phant, Oh,  
2 God from true God, and Light from Light e - ter - nal,  
3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, Sing in ex - ul - ta - tion;  
4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, oh, come ye to Beth - le - hem;  
Born of a vir - gin, to earth he comes,  
Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav'n a - bove.  
Je - sus, to thee be all glo - ry giv'n,



Come and be - hold him, Born the King of an - gels.  
On - ly be - got - ten Son of God the Fa - ther.  
Glo - ry to God, all Glo - ry in the high - est.  
Word of the Fa - ther, Now in flesh ap - pear - ing.

### Refrain



Oh, come, let us a - dore him, Oh, come, let us a - dore him,



Oh, come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

**L** Let us pray

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 only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

# THE WORD OF GOD

## FIRST READING

Isaiah 9:2-7

*To Us a Child is Born*

- <sup>2</sup> The people walking in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
on those living in the land of deep darkness  
a light has dawned.
- <sup>3</sup> You have enlarged the nation  
and increased their joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as people rejoice at the harvest,  
as warriors rejoice  
when dividing the plunder.
- <sup>4</sup> For as in the day of Midian's defeat,  
you have shattered  
the yoke that burdens them,  
the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor.
- <sup>5</sup> Every warrior's boot used in battle  
and every garment rolled in blood  
will be destined for burning,  
will be fuel for the fire.
- <sup>6</sup> For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given,  
and the government will be on his shoulders.  
And he will be called  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- <sup>7</sup> Of the greatness of his government and peace  
there will be no end.  
He will reign on David's throne  
and over his kingdom,  
establishing and upholding it  
with justice and righteousness  
from that time on and forever.  
The zeal of the LORD Almighty  
will accomplish this.

## CAROL

How Suddenly A Baby Cries  
*Text and Tune: Keith and Kristen Getty*  
*Sung by Soloist*

Soloist: How suddenly a baby cries and all forever change  
As shepherds leave the angel song to find this holy place,  
Where in her young and trembling arms a virgin holds her Son.  
And in this Child of breath divine our Light has finally come.

She ponders how the Magi kneel before Emmanuel.  
With gold and frankincense and myrrh, Christ's sacrifice they tell.  
A dream would help them flee a king whose pride would cruelly destroy.  
A mother's weep, God's mercy meets the hunger for His Joy.

How suddenly a baby cried and all forever changed  
Through history, soul by soul have come to find his healing grace.  
He filled my troubled heart with peace, with hope of endless worth.  
My voice will join the song of praise that tells Messiah's birth.



## SECOND READING

Titus 2:11-14

*The grace of God appears to offer salvation.*

<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. <sup>12</sup> It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, <sup>13</sup> while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, <sup>14</sup> who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

## CAROL

Peace Came to Earth

*Text: Jaroslav Vajda; Tune: K. Lee Scott*

*Sung by Soloist*

Soloist: Peace came to earth at last that chosen night  
When angels clove the sky with song and light  
And God embodied love and sheathed his might—  
Who could but gasp: Immanuel!  
Who could but sing: Immanuel!

And who could be the same for having held  
The infant in their arms, and later felt  
The wounded hands and side, all doubts dispelled—  
Who could but sigh: Immanuel!  
Who could but shout: Immanuel!

You show the Father none has ever seen,  
In flesh and blood you bore our griefs and pain,  
In bread and wine you visit us again—  
Who could but see Immanuel!  
Who could but thrill: Immanuel!

How else could I have known you, O my God!  
How else could I have loved you, O my God!  
How else could I embrace you, O my God!  
Who could but pray: Immanuel!  
Who could but praise Immanuel!

<sup>1</sup> In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. <sup>2</sup> (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) <sup>3</sup> And everyone went to their own town to register.

<sup>4</sup> 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. <sup>5</sup> He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup> While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, <sup>7</sup> and she 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.

<sup>8</sup> And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. <sup>9</sup> An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. <sup>11</sup> Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

<sup>13</sup> Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup> "Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

<sup>15</sup> 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."

<sup>16</sup> So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup> When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, <sup>18</sup> and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. <sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.



# CAROL

## Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Christian Worship #61

Charles Wesley was the younger brother of Anglican clergyman, John Wesley. Whereas John stuck largely to theology (and is generally credited as being the founder of the Methodist movement), Charles stuck primarily to hymn writing. He penned "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing", which was first printed in *Hymns and Sacred Poems* in 1739. It quickly became extremely popular. The tune associated with "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" is titled *MENDELSSOHN*. It comes from the second chorus of Felix Mendelssohn's *Festgasung an die Kunstler*, written in 1840 to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Johannes Gutenberg's invention of movable type. Mendelssohn did not think the tune appropriate for a sacred text. He wrote that it was too "soldier-like" to convey Scriptural truth. Nevertheless, in 1855 Dr. William H. Cummings adapted the tune *MENDELSSOHN* to fit Wesley's text. The result is arguably the most popular Christmas hymn of all time.



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the  
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er -  
3 Hail, the heav'n - ly Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of



new - born King; Peace on earth and mer - cy mild,  
last - ing Lord, Late in time be - hold him come,  
Right - eous - ness! Light and life to all he brings,



God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!" Joy - ful, all you  
Off - spring of a vir - gin's womb. Veiled in flesh the  
Ris'n with heal - ing in his wings. Mild he lays his



na - tions rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;  
God-head see, Hail th' in - car - nate De - i - ty!  
glo - ry by, Born that we no more may die,



With th' an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is  
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus,  
Born to raise us from the earth, Born to

### Refrain



born in Beth - le - hem!"  
our Im - man - u - el! Hark! The her - ald  
give us sec - ond birth.



an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King!"

## CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

*A sermon by Pastor Doug Van Sice based on Luke 2.*

*The Night It Went Down*

## OFFERING

*The members of Huntersville Lutheran have joined together to do the Lord's work in this community and around the world. Visitors need not feel obligated to participate in this offering which supports our ministry.*

*Please take a moment to fill out the blue Take Action Card in your service folder.*

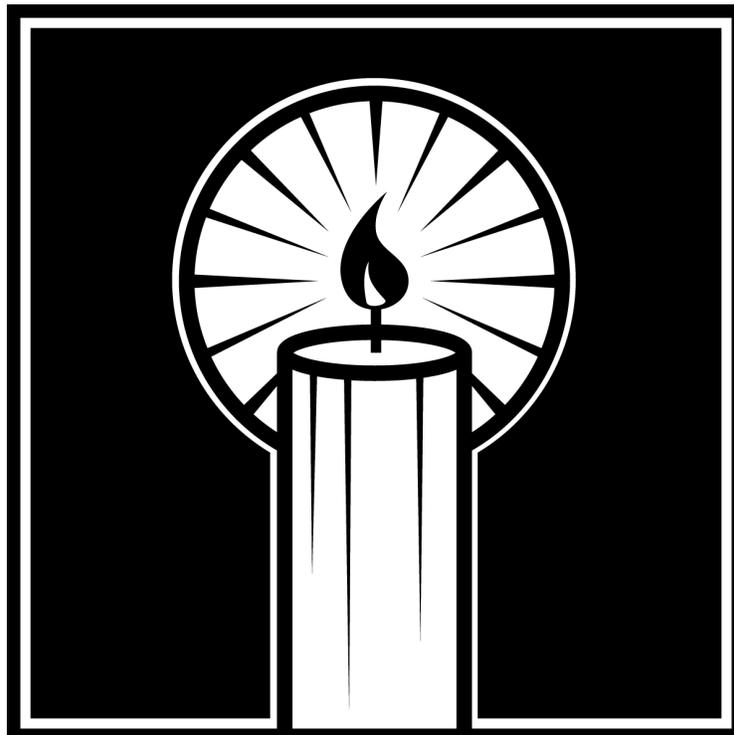
## OFFERTORY

The Yearning

*Text: Susan Bentall Boersma; Tune: Craig Coutney*

## LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

The candles are lit following the instructions of the presiding minister. Each candle has a switch located on its bottom. They will remain lit through the final stanza of the closing hymn. If you are in need of a candle, they are located with the usher in the back of the sanctuary.



## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

**L** Let us pray:

Dear Father, thank you for giving us your Son—because only in him may be bold to call you Father. Thank you for being God-with-us. Thank you for fleshing out your love, forgiveness, and peace, in a way we can approach, touch, and believe in our trembling and death-shadowed hearts. Thank you for bringing us the light of eternity in this Babe of Bethlehem, Mary’s boy, your Son, and our Savior. Let us join the angels this night in their song:

**C** **Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.**

**L** Bless your Church throughout the world, and make it a place where all may hear the angel’s song and hasten to see and to adore Jesus, who is their Lord and Savior. Shelter your persecuted Church in your arms, so they may gather to worship in peace and rise to serve you in joy. Lord, in your mercy,

**C** **Hear our prayer.**

**L** Bless everyone for whom this season of joy is dimmed by sorrow, pain, loneliness, and everything else that is inflicted by evil’s power working through human hands or natural disaster. Come with healing in your wings; with tidings of great joy; and with light and life for all. Lord, in your mercy,

**C** **Hear our prayer.**

**L** Bless all who mourn with the certainty that you have opened heaven’s doors to all who have died trusting in your promises. Bless us each day of our earthly pilgrimage with peace and mercy, reconciliation and joy. And lead us, at length, we pray, to your bright courts of heaven, and to your endless day. Lord, in your mercy,

**C** **Hear our prayer.**

**L** Thank you for hearing our prayers, dear Lord. We entrust them, and our lives into your merciful care.

**C** **Amen.**

## LORD'S PRAYER

- ☐ Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

## LORD'S BLESSING

- ☐ 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.
- ☐ Amen.



# CAROL

## Silent Night! Holy Night!

Christian Worship #60

*"Silent Night" is the undoubtedly the most beloved of all the "cradle carols," those quieter Christmas hymns which remind one of a song a new mother might sing to her infant. It was written in 1818 by Joseph Mohr, assistant priest in St. Nikolaus Church in Oberndorf, a small village in Upper Austria. It is believed that Mohr began writing the hymn late the evening of December 23rd. He had been summoned to the home of a humble woodcutter to bless a baby that had recently been born. On his way home, he contrasted that scene with the birth of Christ in a humble stable. The thought inspired him to write the poem Stille Nacht, which he finished about 4am. After a few hours of sleep, Mohr rose and took the poem to the office of Franz Gruber, who was both Mohr's best friend and the organist at St. Nikolaus, and asked him to set the poem to music for use in that evening's Christmas Eve service. Within a few hours, Gruber had sketched in a melody and simple harmony. Since the organ at St. Nikolaus was broken, Gruber's arrangement was for guitar. The tune quickly spread over Germany and Austria. A touring family of singers, the Raniers, sang it for the Emperor of Austria, the Czar of Russia, Queen Victoria of England, Napoleon III, and in 1839 presented it in New York City before the Alexander Hamilton memorial. All this came from a simple poem and guitar tune that were written in about twelve hours Christmas Eve day.*



1 Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! All is  
2 Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! Shep - herds  
3 Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! Son of



calm, all is bright, Round yon vir - gin  
quake at the sight. Glo - ries stream from  
God, love's pure light Ra - diant beams from



moth - er and child. Ho - ly In - fant, so  
heav - en a - far; Heav'n - ly hosts sing,  
thy ho - ly face With the dawn of re -



ten - der and mild, Sleep in heav - en - ly  
Al - le - lu - ia; Christ, the Sav - ior, is  
deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at thy



peace, Sleep in heav - en - ly peace.  
born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!  
birth, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.

# THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

Thank you for joining us this evening to celebrate our Savior's birth. Make plans to join us again during the Twelve Days of Christmas. We have more opportunities for worship.

## **Sunday, December 27<sup>th</sup>, at 9:30am | Festival of the Holy Innocents |**

There is evil in this world that fights against God's Son. On this day the Church remembers how King Herod tried to kill the Christ child along with the boys of Bethlehem. Come and see how God preserved his Son and still preserves his Church.

## **Sunday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 9:30am | Obedient for His Brothers |**

The gospel writers Matthew, Mark, and John move us very quickly from the Christmas narrative to the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. But have you ever wondered what happened in those 33 years in-between? Well, Dr. Luke, the other gospel writer, gives us a rare glimpse into the childhood of our savior. Join us to see how Jesus, the savior born in Bethlehem, was obedient to his parents—for us—and "grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" (Luke 2:52).

## **Sunday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, at 9:30am | Festival of the Epiphany of Our Lord |**

The twelve days of Christmas ends with the celebration of the Epiphany. Epiphany is traditionally on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 12 days after Christmas. This year, we will observe Epiphany on January 10<sup>th</sup>. On Epiphany, we remember how God guided Magi—Gentiles from the East—to their Savior with a special star.

# HUNTERSVILLE

## *Lutheran Church*

19725 Oak Street Cornelius, NC 28031 | Worship @ 9:30am

Huntersvillelc.com | 248-807-3057 | [pastor@huntersvillelc.com](mailto:pastor@huntersvillelc.com)