# Lights of Longing

## Christmas Eve 2020 - 3:30 pm Service



### **MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL**

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MEMBER: CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION
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# **Order of Worship**

#### Introduction and Invocation

#### A WORLD OF LIGHT AND LOVE

In Genesis one it says,

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day." (Genesis 1:1-3 NKJV)

Astronomers look through telescopes and try to explain how the stars and planets formed. But if you read Genesis chapter one, you'll know how our planet was born. For six glorious days, God casually created and organized all that now exists. When the laws of nature were written, the places set, and the animals created—God made mankind in a special way. In Genesis one it says,

"God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." (Genesis 1:27 NKJV)

In love, God made them in His own image—sinless and perfect. Genesis one tells us that everything was perfect back then. For God surveyed his work at the end of the sixth day, and declared that...

"It was very good." (Genesis 1:31b NKJV)

And for Adam and Eve especially, it was so good! God had given them a whole world to rule over and care for. But God didn't create mankind to take His place. He created them to be His family. A gorgeous garden was their home. A deathless world was their kingdom. And God visited them often. Our first parents lived in a world of light and love.

#### DARKNESS FALLS

But then came the darkness. Of all he made, God held one thing back from Adam and Eve. He told them not to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. But through the lies of the Serpent, Eve was tempted, and took the forbidden fruit. Then death and suffering flooded into the world. The Devil had promised Eve, "You will be like God, knowing good and evil." But his words were only half true. After they sinned, Adam and Eve knew evil very well, but that wasn't a knowledge that they cherished.

God Had warned them that they would die if they ate of the forbidden fruit. And die they did. As sin flooded into the world, death came with it, and extinguished the spiritual life of our first parents. Their marvelous bodies held on to life for a few more years. But on that first day of sin, they began to perish. They had been created in the image of God. Now they were sinful and corrupt. As their distant children, we still bear THAT broken image. We were all born with a sinful nature, and doomed to die. Darkness has fallen on the world of light and love, and great is that darkness.

Let's confess our sins to God in prayer.

#### PRAYER CONFESSING OUR SINS

ALL: Almighty God, You are our Maker. We confess that like our first parents, we have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and actions. We have not loved You above all things. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. Have mercy upon us, and forgive us our sins.

#### THE LIGHT OF GOD'S PROMISE

Right after their sin, God found Adam and Eve. He knew what they had done. In love, God promised that one of Eve's descendants would crush the Devil's power, banishing sin and death forever. In Genesis 3, we read God's words to the Serpent,

"...I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel." (Genesis 3:15 NKJV)

With this promise God pointed our parents to a bright light. That bright light was the solution to our sin problem – Jesus Christ. Like it says in Galatians 4, He would be...

"...born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons." (Galatians 4:4-5 NKJV)

The Savior would be the great light of the world. But before He came, God would send other lights into the darkness of mankind's history. Throughout the ages God would send his prophets into the world. Like bright candles they would light up the darkness and point sinners to the Light that was coming. Tonight we look through the Old Testament to see some of these candles. Their light will lead us to the manger of Bethlehem, and to the cross of Calvary.

#### FORGIVENESS THROUGH CHRIST

But before we turn our eyes to these lights of old, look to yourselves dear people. Know that the sins you have confessed tonight are already gone. They have been washed away by the blood of the Promised Savior. Burned away by the brilliance of God's perfect Son. Your sins stand forgiven through the suffering and death of Jesus Christ. May God give you strength to live according to His will, as you walk in the light of His salvation.

God Loves Me Dearly......PreK-Kindergarten

God loves me dearly, grants me salvation; God loves me dearly, loves even me. Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly, God loves me dearly, Loves even me.

I was in bondage, sin, death, and darkness; God's love was working to make me free. Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly, God loves me dearly, Loves even me.

He sent forth Jesus, my dear Redeemer; He sent forth Jesus and set me free. Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly, God loves me dearly, Loves even me.

Jesus, my Savior, Himself did offer; Jesus, my Savior, paid all I owed. Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly, God loves me dearly, Loves even me.

### Come, O Long-Expected Jesus ......5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Come, O long-expected Jesus, Born to set Your people free; From our sins and fears release us By Your death on Calvary.

Born Your People to deliver, Born a child and yet a king, Born to reign in us forever, Now Your gracious kingdom bring.

By Your own eternal Spirit Rule in all our hearts alone; By Your all-sufficient merit Raise us to Your glorious throne.



In a dark and unbelieving world, Abram was a man of faith. A light that showed the way to the true God. God changed Abram's name to Abraham which means "father of many". He became the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Centuries later, the Savior of the world was born from this family. And so, all the families of the earth were blessed through Abraham. In Genesis 12, we read,

"Now the LORD had said to Abram: 'Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." (Genesis 12:1-3 NKJV)

Savior of the Nations, Come ......Congregation

Savior of the nations, come, Virgin's Son, make here Thy home! Marvel now, O heaven and earth, That the Lord chose such a birth.

Moses • The twelve tribes of Israel were brought out of slavery in Egypt by the mighty hand of God. But they were led by God's servant Moses.

They had seen the plagues God brought on Egypt. They had witnessed the miraculous dividing of the Red Sea. But once they got out into the desert that led to the Promised Land, they doubted God. They told Moses they would surely die out in this terrible wilderness.

For years to come, Moses would serve the tribes of Israel. For years he would endure their endless doubt and whining. As a true light of God. Moses pointed them forward to a special Prophet that would come to

them. Israel must listen to this Prophet, for in Him would be the Word of life. In Deuteronomy, chapter 18, we read,

"The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. For this is what you asked of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, 'Let us not hear the voice of the LORD our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die.' The LORD said to me: 'What they say is good. <sup>18</sup>I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account."" (Deuteronomy 18:15-18 (NIV84)

#### Who Are We Waiting For?.....5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Who are we waiting for?
Who are we waiting for?
The promised Messiah, God's only Son; the Treasure of heaven, the Holy One.
That's who we're waiting for.

Who are we waiting for?
Who are we waiting for?
The Wonderful Couns'lor, the King of kings;
Our Savior, Redeemer, salvation brings.
That's who we're waiting for.

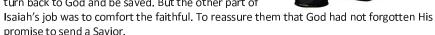
Oh, how we long to worship the King coming from heaven above. We will rejoice, and we will sing as we welcome God's gift of love.

Who are we waiting for? Who are we waiting for? The promised Messiah, God's only Son; the Treasure of heaven, the Holy One. That's who we're waiting for.

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Isaiah Souring his lifetime Isaiah saw the northern half of Jewish lands invaded and destroyed by Assyria. God told Isaiah that judgement for the southern kingdom was also coming, and soon. Why? Because Israel had abandoned the true God to worship idols.

Part of Isaiah's job as a prophet was to warn the unbelieving of their coming judgment, so that they might turn back to God and be saved. But the other part of



Of all the ancient prophets, none revealed more about the Christ than Isaiah. An ancient Christian by the name of Jerome said of Isaiah:

"It would be proper to call him, not so much a prophet, but rather an evangelist; for he displays before our eyes the mysteries of Christ and the church so clearly that one might think he were not writing prophecies of future events, but were telling the story of past occurrences."

In Isaiah 7, we read,

"The Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." (Isaiah 7:14 NKJV)

"Immanuel" means "God with us!"

In Isaiah 9, it says,

"The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined. For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of *His* government and peace *There will be* no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this." (Isaiah 60:1-3 NKJV)

Just like God promised back in the garden, it wouldn't be an angel that would save mankind. It would be a special human child! But also, this child would be "mighty God!"

In Isaiah 60, we read,

"Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the LORD will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you. The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising." (Isaiah 60:1-3 NKJV)

This Savior wouldn't just help the Jews, he would come for the Gentiles too. For the whole world of sinners! Later in Isaiah 60 it says,

"The sun shall no longer be your light by day, Nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; But the LORD will be to you an everlasting light, And your God your glory. Your sun shall no longer go down, Nor shall your moon withdraw itself; For the LORD will be your everlasting light, And the days of your mourning shall be ended." (Isaiah 60:19-20 NKJV)

For Unto Us a Child is Born .......5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, unto us a Son is given, For unto us a Child is born. Unto us a Son is given, unto us a Son is given, unto us a Son is given.

And the government will be upon his shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace, The everlasting Father,

Micah 
The prophet Micah lived during the same time as Isaiah. His message was a lot like Isaiah's too. Micah warned the unfaithful that the day of judgment was coming. Micah comforted the faithful by telling them the Savior was coming.

The Prince of Peace.

It was Micah who revealed where the Savior would be born. It is Micah who reminds us that the Savior would be human, but also God himself. In Micah 5, we read.



"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *Though* you are little among the thousands of Judah, *Yet* out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth *are* from of old, From everlasting." (Micah 5:2 NKJV)

To Shepherds as They Watched by Night ......Congregation

To shepherds as they watched by night Appeared a host of angels bright; Behold the tender Babe, they said, In yonder lowly manger laid.

At Bethlehem, in David's town, As Micah did of old make known; 'Tis Jesus Christ, your Lord and King,

#### Who doth to all salvation bring.

Oh, then rejoice that through His Son God is with sinners now at one; Made like yourselves of flesh and blood, Your brother is the eternal God.

What harm can sin and death then do? The true God now abides with you. Let hell and Satan rage and chafe, Christ is your Brother--ye are safe.



Jeremiah 

→ Jeremiah the prophet served as
God's light to the southern half of Jewish lands, the
kingdom of Judah. He served God under one of the great
God-fearing kings of Judah—King Josiah.

When Josiah died, Jeremiah found himself serving under the unbelieving king Jehoiakim. Once, when Jeremiah

sent king Jehoiakim a message from God, the king tore up the message and burned the pieces. Then the king sent guards to seize the prophet who had written it.

During his life, Jeremiah experienced bad kings and good kings. In his book, Jeremiah described the greatest King to come. This King would be descended from King David's family, and would reign with wisdom and righteousness. This King wouldn't just protect people from a foreign army. This King would give them his righteousness!

In Jeremiah 23 we read,

"'Behold, the days are coming,' says the LORD, 'That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." (Jeremiah 23:5-6 NKJV)

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#### Hail to the Lord's Anointed .......Vocalists

Hail to the Lord's anointed, great David's greater Son! Hail, in the time appointed, his reign on earth begun! He comes to break oppression, to set the captives free, To take away transgression, and rule in equity.

He shall pour down his blessings upon the barren earth; Faith, hope, and love together before him spring to birth. Upon the mountains with him shall peace and gladness go; And righteousness, in fountains, from hill to valley flow.

He comes with consolation to those who suffer wrong; And for the poor and needy, the courage to be strong. He offers songs for sighing, turns darkness into light, for souls, condemned and dying, are precious in his sight.

Kings shall fall down before him, their royal tribute bring; All nations shall adore him, his praise all people sing. Hail to the Lord's Anointed, great David's greater Son! Hail, in the time appointed, his reign on earth begun! Hail the Anointed One!

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The book of Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament. Malachi says the Sun of Righteousness is about to rise. In Malachi 4, we read,



"'Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble' ... says the LORD Almighty ... "But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings." (Malachi 4:1-3 NKJV84)

#### Waiting for the Light ......Kindergarten - 4th Grade

Waiting for the light, Waiting for the light Waiting for the light, Waiting for the light Promised long ago in prophecy Written in God's Word for all to see And we believe, so we are waiting for the light.

Waiting for the light, Waiting for the light
Waiting for the light, Waiting for the light
Wandering in darkness year after year
Longing for the living light to appear
And meet us here, so we are waiting for the light.

O come, O come, Emmanuel And ransom captive Israel That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear We're...

Waiting for the light, Waiting for the light
Waiting for the light, Waiting for the light
Promised long ago in prophecy
Written in God's Word for all to see
And we believe, so we are waiting for the light.

Waiting for the light Waiting for the light The light.

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#### The Christ Child ❖

And so finally, the Light of the World finally came. We read from Luke, chapter 2.

"And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria.



So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing

that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. Now when they had seen *Him*, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard *it* marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered *them* in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them."

Silent Night! Holy Night! ...... Kindergarten-4<sup>th</sup> grade, Verse 1

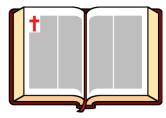
Congregation, Verses 2-3

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.

Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing, Alleluia.
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!

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.

Peter The prophets of the Old Testament never got to see the Christ Child with their own eyes. But Peter the apostle did. And in First Peter, chapter one, he wrote,



"We have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that

shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts ... for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Peter 1:19-21 NKJV)

The Holy Spirit spoke by the prophets so that we might come to trust in God's Savior and be saved. Peter says the words of the prophets had been confirmed because their prophecies have been fulfilled by Jesus.

Today we can read exactly how Jesus fulfilled them! We can read how he was born. We can read how he lived without sinning. We can read how he was betrayed, arrested, mocked, scourged, and crucified. All of this was foretold by the prophets, and all this he endured to take our sins away. And after he had suffered our hell on the cross, he died to complete the payment required. Because he did this for us, our sins are forgiven, and we can live with God forever.

God the Father even raised him from the dead so we could be sure that he is from God and no counterfeit.

What the Old Testament prophets longed for is revealed in the four Gospels. In John, chapter 8, Jesus says,

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12 NIV84)

Jesus also called His followers light because they carry his message. In Matthew 5, we read,

"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:14 NIV84)

Tonight you have seen the light of Jesus. Take that light with you. In a world bound by darkness, His light sets people free. Free from fear. Free from lies. Free from sin through the payment Jesus made on the cross.

In the remaining days before Christ returns, ponder what the Sun of Righteousness has done for you. Let His light warm your heart. And when it fills with thankfulness, don't hold it in. For there's a world of darkness out there. A world longing for the Light.

#### O God of God, O Light of Light ......Congregation

O God of God, O Light of Light,
Thou Prince of Peace, Thou King of kings!
To Thee where angels know no night
The song of praise forever rings.
To Him who sits upon the throne,
The Lamb once slain for sinful men,
Be honor, might, all by Him won,
Glory and praise! Amen, Amen.

Deep in the prophets' sacred page, Grand in the poets' winged word, Slowly in type, from age to age, Nations beheld their coming Lord, Till through the deep Judean night Rang out the song "Good will to men!" Hymned by the first-born sons of light, Reechoed now, "Good will!" Amen.

That life of truth, those deeds of love, That death of pain, mid hate and scorn, 17 These all are past, and now above
He reigns our King, once crowned with thorn.
Lift up your heads, ye heavenly gates;
So sang His hosts, unheard by men;
Lift up your heads, for you He waits.
We lift them up. Amen, Amen.

#### Prayer

#### Blessing

Joy to the World, The Lord is Come......Chime Introduction

Congregation, all verses

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King; Let every heart prepare Him room And heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ, While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains Repeat the sounding joy.

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.

He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the nations prove The glories of His righteousness And wonders of His love.



#### **Announcements:**

We're so glad you could be with us today, whether you were able to join us in-person, or through the live-stream! We'd love it if you'd join us for the Christmas Day service tomorrow at 9:00 am or some other time in the future.

Thank you to all the support staff, volunteers, contributors, musicians, singers, and speakers for helping to adorn God's praises today.

In a moment the ushers will dismiss you row by row. When they do, your kids up here will follow you. If you have younger ones to pick up, you'll find them waiting for you in the fellowship hall.

At the two south exits you'll find tables with candy bags on them. You are welcome to take one for each child. Thank you to those who helped put the candy bags together.

On behalf of Messiah congregation, we wish you a Christmas full of joy, and peace from Christ our Savior.

#### Participants:

Liuiii Duuci
Grace Larson*
Adalia Mielke
Logan Thompson*
<u>7th Grade</u>
Malcolm Bauer*
Caleb Hamann
Zander Johnson*
Alice Lau
Grace LeDuc*
Leah Thompson*
-

8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Liam Bauer\*

Natalie Gurgel\*

4<sup>th</sup> Grade **Jed Buck** 6th Grade Gwyneth Gurgel\* Claudia Gurgel Kali Gurgel\* Molly Johnson Emma Larson\* Pevton Mielke Savannah Ouade\* Lilly Roehl Tanner Ouade\* Evelyn Roehl\* 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Tucker Davis 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Edison Seffens Stefon Johnson\* Adia Swyter Drew Schaller Malaena Thompson Jordyn Schierenbeck\*

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Evangeline Gurgel Parker Rogalla Rvan Schierenbeck Ryker Swyter Virginia Tiefel 1st Grade Mallory Gurgel Aaron Plath

Pre K Calvin Gurgel Gabriel Gurgel Ellie Olmanson \*Tone chimes and

Autumn LeDoux Landon Olmanson **Everett Seffens** Guitar: Adelyn Tiefel **Kindergarten** Derek Gurgel Dylan Mielke Evelyn Schlegelmilch percussion

# **Music Director** Sam Kelly

Pre-service: Laurie Lau, piano and flute Marie Lau, flute

Organ/piano: Heather Thompson

Andrew Roehl Jonathan Kelly Matthew Kelly

**Upright bass:** Daniel Kelly

**Vocalists:** Jennifer Schaller Allison Schaller Marnie Schaller Carmen Schaller Maggie Schaller

Violin: Sam Kelly

Lights/Sound/Video: Matthew Kelly Jonathan Sandeen

**Practice Helpers** Eileen Tiefel Carrie Reim Haley Seffens Josie Vaver Sarah Heinze Abigail Heinze Marcy Gurgel Marcie Schierenbeck

**Program Director** Pastor Caleb Schaller

Additional Program Support: Jennifer Schaller Amanda Roth Marnie Schaller