

Welcome to
GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
A congregation of the ELCA



Christmas Eve 2020, 7:00 pm

Broadcast live on WRSC 1390 AM and 93.3

205 S. Garner St., State College, PA 16801

phone: 814-238-2478

email: churchoffice@glcpa.org

web address: www.glcpa.org



Our Mission Statement: *"Grace Lutheran Church is energized by the Holy Spirit and nurtured through God's Word and Sacrament to **gather, feed, and send** people in the name of Jesus Christ."*

4. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;

Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n!

Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: Refrain

GREETING

Pastor: The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.

Congregation: O come let us adore Him.

P: May the light and peace of Christ be with you all.

C: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray.

C: Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC: *Away in a Manger*.....James R. Murray
Adult Choir; Nate Glocke, Director

FIRST LESSON.....Isaiah 9:2-7

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness — on them light has shined. ³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

SPECIAL MUSIC: *Angels from the Realms of Glory* Henry Thomas Smart
Adult Choir; Nate Glocke, Director

SECOND LESSON.....Titus 2:11-14

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Christmas Season Gospel Acclamation.....Barbara Bridge

Adult Choir; Nate Glocke, Director

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 2nd chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord. (spoken)

HOLY GOSPEL.....Luke 2:1-20

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

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶So they went with haste and

NICENE CREED

**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.**

SPECIAL MUSIC: *Angels We Have Heard on High* Anne Krentz Organ
Combined Choirs of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians

THE PRAYERS

P: Beholding the Word made flesh among us, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world and all those in need.

A brief silence.

P: For all young men and women in military service, and for rulers of every land, that they may work to promote peace on earth. Lord in your mercy,

C: **hear our prayer.**

P: For the church, that it may faithfully announce the good news of great joy that Christ is born in our midst. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: For all who are homeless, poor, lonely, feeling not wanted, or despised in this world, that the humble birth of Christ may give them hope. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: For those who are hospitalized, homebound, or sick, that God's grace would enfold them with light and healing. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: For guests who join us for worship, and for family and friends not present with us, that the joy and gladness of this night stir our hearts to gratitude for the gifts of love and companionship. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: For our congregation, that partaking of the Word made flesh among us, we may be signs of his presence in the world. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: For all the faithfully departed who rejoiced at the Savior's coming. Keep us in union with them, until we join the angelic host in the never-ending song of adoration and praise. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Receive our prayers, gracious God, as we proclaim the wonders of your love to all the earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

THE PEACE

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

C: **And also with you.**

OFFERTORY *O Holy Night*.....Adolphe Adam
Ethan Hardyk, tenor

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P: Holy God,

C: **your beauty shines forth from the manger and your love flows from the cross. As you gather us around these signs of your love come among us, warm us to extend your care among the hungry and all in need. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

What Child Is This

ELW# 296

Led by Choral ensemble

- 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 ***Why lies he in such mean estate
where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through,
the cross be borne for me, for you;
hail, hail the Word made flesh,
the babe, the son of Mary!***

- 3 ***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!***

Some of you are listening tonight because you live far from us. Others are listening because the worldwide pandemic has required that we prudently limit our in-person contacts. In either event, you are not able to be at the Lord's Table, as would normally be our practice on Christmas Eve. That is a sadness for all of us. Nevertheless, the Bible, as well as the Lutheran Confessions, clearly affirm that Jesus comes to us in a multitude of ways beyond Holy Communion, including the Word read and preached, and the mutual care and consolation of our fellow Christians. And so during the upcoming pieces of sacred music, contemplate the ways that you have experienced Christ's presence throughout the recent months, and joyfully anticipate all the ways that Christ will undoubtedly be made manifest to you in the coming days. Know that Jesus Christ loves you, treasures you, and will always find ways to be with you.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice (John Mason Neale) - Adult Choir

Bell Carol (arr. Anne Sullivan) - Anne Sullivan, harp

Come, All Ye Shepherds (arr. Laurel Sanders) - Choral Ensemble

Greensleeves (arr. Anne Sullivan) - Anne Sullivan, harp

CANDLE LIGHTING

P: Hear the words of our Savior: "I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life,"

C: Thanks be to God.

P: Receive the light of Christ. Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

C: Thanks be to God.

Instructions:

When we meet in person, this is the point in worship when the pastor lights a candle from the Paschal candle, which symbolizes Christ, the Light of the world of whom John's gospel speaks. The ushers light their candles from the pastor's candle, then light the candle of each worshiper nearest the aisle. It is breathtaking to see that light spread throughout our sanctuary. Tonight, we cannot do that together, but we encourage you to light a candle at home, knowing that others are likewise doing so, and confident that despite the pandemic, Christ's light continues to spread.

HYMN *Silent Night, Holy Night*.....ELW #281
Led by the Adult Choir; Nate Glocke, Director

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;
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!***

3. ***Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from your holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.***

PRAYER

P: Gracious God, in the incarnation of your Son you have united the earth and heaven. May we who have tasted heavenly things share the gift of your presence with all the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
C: Amen.

BENEDICTION

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.
C: Amen.

The candles are extinguished.

RECESSIONAL HYMN *Joy to the World*.....ELW #267
Led by Choral ensemble; Adam Hallacher, trumpet

1. *Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive its King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare him room And heav'n and nature sing,
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 ...*
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 ...*
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 ...*

P: Glory to God in the highest!

C: Peace to God's people on earth!

P: As heralds of God's peace, go forth in joy to love and serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Sing We Now of Christmas (Noel Nouvelet).....arr. Michael Burkhardt



From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2020 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.
Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #20807.

New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice - Arr. Trevor Manor. © 2014, Choristers Guild. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-xxxxxxx. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-700989. All rights reserved

Christmas Season Gospel Acclamation - Music adapt. fr. Sussex Carol, © 2005, Barbara Bridge. Published by OCP. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-700989. All rights reserved.

Angels from the Realms of Glory – Descant copyright © 2016 by Charles Giffen. Permissions via Creative Commons license CC-BY-SA 4.0.

Angels We Have Heard on High – Arr. Anne Krentz Organ, made available to members of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians. Used by permission. No copyrights required are required for the other hymns, carols, or special music. All are either in the public domain or permissions were given from the arrangers and composers, Laurel Sanders and Anne

Bulletin sponsored by Sally Keiser-Bankert and Polly McWilliams dedicated
in memory of Pete and Lois Keiser
Radio sponsored by Greg and Kathy Weimer dedicated in honor of their
Grandchildren Drew, Dana, Jaxson and Emmy

The Rev. Scott E. Schul, Senior Pastor.....pastorschul@glcpa.org
The Rev. Carolyn K. Hetrick, Associate Pastor..pastorhetrick@glcpa.org
Cindy Fritz, Peter Horn, Faith Formation.....faithformation@glcpa.org
Laurel Sanders, Music & Arts Ministry Coordinator...lsanders@glcpa.org
Nathan Glocke.....Adult Choir Director
Ryan Ditmer, Pat Lloyd, June Miller,
Adam Smith & Chris Wilhelm.....Pianists/Organists
Joan Kovalchik.....Flute
Anna Carol Buffington.....The Bells of Grace Director

The Rev. P. Stevens Lynn.....Pastor Emeritus

Our heartfelt appreciation is extended to all who contributed to this Christmas celebration: Sharon Jodon for the animals; all the musicians, all Live Nativity participants; all ushers/parking attendants; Karl Hosterman and John Palmgren, sound; Alyson Hoegg for building the manger and stable; David Wills, lighting; Sally Keiser-Bankert, Carl Bankert, Deb Stewart and Ann Burke for decorating the main entrance; Laurel Sanders Music Coordinator; Graham Sanders, audio-visual production; Grace's choirs and ensembles; and Pastor Schul and Pastor Hetrick for their creative ways to keep bringing God's word to us.

Adult Choir

Kathleen Arrington
Susan Buda
Ann Burke
Deana Coine
Rod Egan
Josh Evert

Ethan Fasnacht
Kevin Honz
Matthew Kidd
Emily Kiver
Natalie Ondrey
Marissa Perri

Phyllis Verderame
Thomas Verderame
Barb Vogler

Choral Ensembles

Susan Buda
Ryan Ditmer
Nathan Glocke
Angie Hardyk
Drew Hardyk
Ethan Hardyk

Spencer Hardyk
Kevin Honz
Jennifer Royse
Graham Sanders
Laurel Sanders
Barb Schroeder

Ken Shafranko
Charlie Vasey
Phyllis Verderame
Megan Widener
Chris Wilhelm

Crossfire Youth Choir

Mara Anderson-Skelly
Mirabella Bills
Sophia Bills
Maeve Flanagan
Sammy Hallacher
Ethan Hardyk

Spencer Hardyk
Lincoln Hockenberry
Ella McDyre
Ireland McDyre
Allie Peters
Joe Peters

Bella Poehner
Emma Proctor
Logan Proctor
Emily Whitney

Instrumentalists

Tony Buda, percussion
Ryan Ditmer, organ
Adam Hallacher, trumpet
Spencer Hardyk, euphonium

June Miller, organ
Graham Sanders, synthesized bells
Laurel Sanders, flutes
Anne Sullivan, harp

Soloists

Mara Anderson-Skelly
Maeve Flanagan
Nate Glocke
Sammy Hallacher
Ethan Hardyk

Other Musicians

Jon Brockopp
Susan Buda (cello)
Paula Droege
Ken Shafranko (dobro)

- - - ANNOUNCEMENTS - - -

Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year to you from Pastor Schul,
Pastor Hetrick and all of our church staff!

**Please tune in to worship with us tomorrow, December 25th at 10:00
a.m. and Sunday December 27th at 10:30 am on WSRC 1390 AM and
93.3 FM**

The church office will re-open on Tuesday, December 29th.

We are never alone



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work, Our hands.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The room was spare and dimly lit. We sat on folding chairs in a circle—young Honduran women and some of us from the ELCA. We had come to Honduras to observe the work of AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities). This is the ELCA's strategy to help youth who have been forced to flee their home countries because of violence, abuse, extortion by gangs and extreme poverty. Amparo is the Spanish word for shelter or refuge.

In this case, AMMPARO partnered with the Lutheran World Federation and the Mennonites to resettle returned migrants—those who had tried to seek asylum in the United States but had failed or had been denied and deported back to Honduras.

One by one they told us their stories of fear and desperation. Not a one undertook the long and dangerous trek north on a whim. They told us about the abuse they had suffered, about family members who had been killed by gangs, about the inability to make a living because of the extortion by organized crime. They talked about the bitter sadness of leaving home and family, and the uncertainty of the future.

I remember one young woman in particular. She was pregnant when she tried to migrate to the United States. She had the baby somewhere along the way. She was far from home, mostly alone and desperately wanted her mother to be with her. None of this is what she had hoped for when she was growing up. Circumstances beyond her control had forced her into this new and strange existence. She and her baby were now back in Honduras—but not at home. Home was too dangerous.

Remember last Christmas? Remember all of the preparations, the travel to be with family? Remember the holy beauty of the Christmas Eve liturgy and receiving Christ's grace and forgiveness at his table? The shopping and Christmas caroling? The in-person gatherings? All that has changed.

The pandemic hasn't forced us from our homes but into our homes, sheltering in place, isolated. Not together, but physically distanced. Not gathered with family and friends, but forced apart because of the threat of infection. Forced by circumstances beyond our control into this strange existence. Oh, there will be Christmas carols piped into grocery stores and other essential services, but they will be painful reminders of how life used to be.

We are reminded of the experience of the exiles in Babylon: "By the rivers of Babylon—there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion. On the willows there we hung up our harps. For there our captives asked us for songs, and our tormentors asked for mirth, saying, 'Sing us one of the songs of Zion!' How could we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land" (Psalm 137)?

I told the young Honduran woman about another young woman who was forced to leave home because of a government decree. She, too, was pregnant and made a long and difficult journey. She, too, was far from home and without her mother when the baby came. She had to find shelter wherever she could. This wasn't what she had hoped for when she was growing up. Circumstances beyond her control had forced her into this new existence.

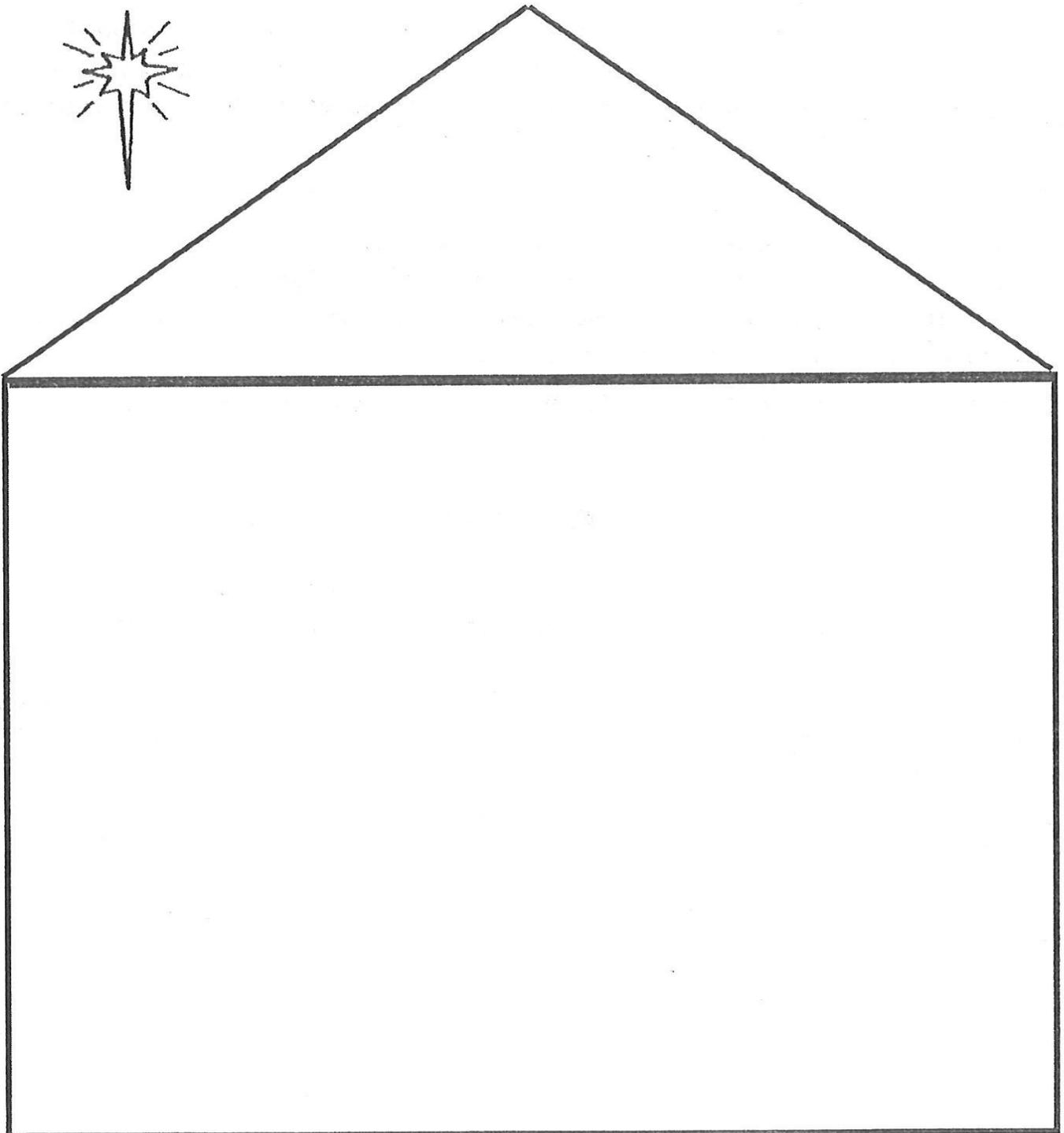
That young woman was Mary and the child was Jesus. Precisely in our distress, in our dislocation, the Lord shows up. Emmanuel—God with us—makes his home in the very places we find foreign or isolating. The young Honduran woman, and all of us, can find hope because of the birth of Mary's child. There is no God-forsaken place and we are never alone—not in hospital rooms, or sheltering in place, or Zoom calls or on dangerous roads.

Many of us will not be physically home for Christmas, but we are truly home in Christ.

Mary and Joseph put the baby
in the manger for bed.

They slept in a stable for animals!

Draw a picture of Mary, Joseph and the baby!



DECEMBER 24-25, 2020
CHRISTMAS EVE,
CHRISTMAS DAY



Jesus is born for those in need.

CHRISTMAS BIBLE READINGS

Take time to read and reflect on these Bible passages as part of your Christmas celebration.

Thursday	Luke 2:1-20 Isaiah 9:2-7	The birth of Jesus The reign of the coming king
Friday	Psalms 96 John 1:1-14	Sing a new song The Word became flesh

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR CHRISTMAS

But the angel said to [the shepherds], "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord."

Luke 2:10-11 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for Christmas:

Amazing God, for good news given to peasants, to shepherds, and to us, we give you thanks and praise through Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

With this gift of food we remember you are to be praised for all you do for us through Jesus Christ, born in a manger in Bethlehem. Amen. (Psalm 96:4)

A Blessing to Give:

May the God who comes to save you, bless you with joy. (Titus 2:11)



© 2020 Milestones Ministry, LLC. All rights reserved.

DECEMBER 24-25, 2020
HYMN FOR CHRISTMAS
Silent Night



CHRISTMAS MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Tell or think about a time when you surprised someone.
- Tell or think about a time when someone surprised you.
- How does Jesus' birth in Bethlehem amaze you?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Luke 2:1-20.

The shepherds in the fields have a startling encounter with God, bringing them good news of Jesus' birth. In that time and place, shepherds were described as "sinners." Their work in the fields kept them from observing the Sabbath. They were unclean and seen as liars, thieves, and generally unsavory. With this social stigma, they are likely people who had themselves given up on God. More than outcasts, they had simply walked away from hope in the mercy of God. In Luke 2, God does not give up on the shepherds—or us—as God reaches out to them in the fields. God didn't wait for them to show up at the temple or the synagogue. God doesn't have to wait for us to show up at "church," either. The startling news of Jesus' birth is that it is for those who need God most. When have you felt like giving up on God? How does this birth story help you hear good news?

Pray: Loving God, help us to hear the good news of Jesus' birth for all the world, especially when we feel far from you; in the name of Jesus, the Savior, Messiah, and Lord, amen.

SERVICE

There are those around us in need of seeing God's love in action. Is there a local soup kitchen or shelter where you can volunteer time or donate items this week for those in need of seeing the good news of Jesus birth in action?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Make your Christmas Day into a celebration of Jesus' birthday. Use some Christmas pastries or a cake to help celebrate. Place a white candle in its center and on Christmas Day, light the candle, sing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus, and then take time to complete this sentence:

Say: The birth of Jesus is special to me because _____.

Then sing some Christmas carols.



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org