

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE

“SAVIOR OF THE NATIONS, COME”

This year's program is based on the great hymn “Savior of the Nations, Come,” which unpacks the miracle of the two natures of Christ (human and divine). The simple truth that God is man is both a profound mystery and a simple confession.

The program follows a simple pattern repeated four times: hymn, reading, hymn, meditation. As the hymn focuses on the two natures of Christ, it also rejoices that the God-man has come to be the Savior of the Nations. The promise made to Abraham (Genesis 12) now finds fulfillment in the Child of the promise. He comes to rescue and redeem all that once was His. Certainly there would be no nations of the world had not sin, death, and the power of the devil overtaken us in the garden. The consequences of sin find brother fighting against brother. The lines of division, including national borders, are drawn to separate and claim what once was God's gracious gift to all mankind. Yet despite our sinful divisions, the Christ comes to make us whole. He comes for all the nations of the world to reveal Himself as the long-expected Jesus.

A Note regarding Photographs

Because this church service is not a mere program or performance but an opportunity to worship, we kindly ask that you refrain from taking photographs or video during the service. You are invited to take photographs after the service.

CHILDREN'S SERVICE

+ *In Nomine Jesu* +

PRESERVICE MUSIC

PROCESSIONAL: "O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL"

TLH 102

Oh, come all ye faithful, triumphantly sing:
Come, see in the manger our Savior and King!
To Bethlehem hasten with joyful accord:

Oh, come, let us adore Him,	Venid y, adoremos,
Oh, come, let us adore Him,	venid y, adoremos,
Oh, come, let us adore Him,	venid y, adoremos
Christ the Lord!	a Cristo el Señor.

True Son of the Father, He comes from the skies;
To be born of a virgin He doth not despise;
To Bethlehem hasten, with joyful accord;

Oh, come, let us adore Him,	Kommt, lasset uns anbeten,
Oh, come, let us adore Him,	kommt, lasset uns anbeten,
Oh, come, let us adore Him,	kommt, lasset uns anbeten,
Christ the Lord!	den König, den Herrn.

Hark, hark to the angels all singing in heaven,
"To God in the Highest all glory be given!"
To Bethlehem hasten, with joyful accord;

Oh, come, let us adore Him,	En lui viens reconnaître,
Oh, come, let us adore Him,	En lui viens reconnaître,
Oh, come, let us adore Him,	En lui viens reconnaître
Christ the Lord!	ton Dieu, ton Sauveur.

To Thee, then, O Jesus, this day of Thy birth,
Be glory and honor through heaven and earth.
True Godhead incarnate, omnipotent Word!

Oh, come, let us adore Him,
Oh, come, let us adore Him,
Oh, come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord! Amen.

INVOCATION

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

C: Amen.

P: O Lord, open my lips,

C: and my mouth shall declare Your praise.

P: Praise the Lord, all nations! Extol him, all peoples! For great is his steadfast love toward us,

C: and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever.

P: The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

C: Praise the Lord!

ALL: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

COLLECT

P: Let us pray. Almighty God, who by the mouth of Your holy prophets did proclaim the coming of Your Son, Jesus Christ, the Hope of Israel and Savior of the Nations, help us we pray to see Him rightly as our own Lord and Savior, and by true faith rejoice in Your salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C.: Amen.

SAVIOR OF THE NATIONS, COME

Styne Schramm: Tonight, in word and song, we will lead you to pray and sing “Savior of the Nations, Come.” Who is this Savior? Whom does He come to save? How does He save? Listen closely as we answer these questions about Jesus, the Savior of the Nations.

CHILDREN’S HYMN: “IN A LITTLE STABLE”

LOSP, p. 81

In a little stable Far across the sea
Was a little Baby Just like you and me.

Not a bed or cradle, Not a pillow deep,
But a lowly manger Was His place to sleep.

Shepherds stood around Him, Angels watched with care,
For this Babe was JESUS, Lying, smiling there.

Oh, I love this Jesus, Who was little then,
For I know He loves me, Little though I am.

READING: Luke 2:1–7

Carter Mrozek: In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to 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, who was with child.

Maxwell "Max" Carey: And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth.

Emma Knox: And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

CONGREGATION HYMN: “GENTLE MARY LAID HER CHILD”

LSB 324

Gentle Mary laid her child Lowly in a manger;
There He lay, the Undefined, To the world a stranger.
Such a babe in such a place, Can He be the Savior?
Ask the saved of all the race Who have found His favor.

Angels sang about His birth, Wise Men sought and found Him;
Heaven’s star shone brightly forth Glory all around Him.
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight, Heard the angels singing;
All the plains were lit that night, All the hills were ringing.

Gentle Mary laid her child Lowly in a manger;
He is still the Undefined But no more a stranger.
Son of God of humble birth, Beautiful the story;
Praise His name in all the earth; Hail the King of glory!

“ROCK BABY JESUS”

FTS, p. 14

Katrina Kueck: Softly, softly rock the Baby;
Hold Him in your arms
Lay Him in His manger bed.

Kortlynd Schramm: Keep Him safe and warm.

Whit Kovar: Tiny little baby Jesus

Harrison ‘Hank’ Beck: Came from heaven above;
Came to save us from our sins,
Gives us God’s own love.

CHILDREN’S HYMN: “AWAY IN A MANGER”

LSB 364

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And take us to heaven to live with Thee there.

MEDITATION: A Lowly Cattle Shed

Lillian Carey: One of the great Christmas Eve traditions of the British people is the Cambridge University Festival of Lessons and Carols. The first hymn sung in that service is “Once in Royal David’s City.” The hymn begins in the stillness of the candlelit chapel of King’s College, with the solo voice of a young boy singing, “Once in royal David’s city stood a lowly cattle shed . . .” But by the end of the hymn, the whole choir and congregation are singing out, with loud organ accompaniment, “Not in that poor lowly stable . . . shall we see Him, but in heaven . . .” What a way to communicate through music the whole point of Christmas! The reason for the season is this: the baby boy born of Mary is also the incarnate Son of God Almighty!

Lexi Ahrens: The Savior of the Nations, Jesus the Christ, wasn’t born in a castle, a palace, or some ritzy neighborhood of a great world-class city. Emperor Augustus in faraway Rome didn’t send a birthday gift. Governor Quirinius of Syria didn’t publish a birth announcement. Jesus wasn’t even born in Jerusalem, the capital city of His own people, the Jews. He was born in “a lowly cattle shed,” with “a manger for His bed.”

CONGREGATION HYMN: “ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID’S CITY”

LSB 376

Once in royal David’s city, Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby In a manger for His bed:
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven, Who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable, And His cradle was a stall;
With the poor and mean and lowly Lived on earth our Savior holy.

For He is our childhood's pattern, Day by day like us He grew;
He was little, weak, and helpless, Tears and smiles like us He knew;
And He feels for all our sadness, And He shares in all our gladness.

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

Not in that poor, lowly stable With the oxen standing by
Shall we see Him, but in heaven, Set at God's right hand on high.
Then like stars His children, crowned, All in white, His praise will sound!

Elijah Kueck: There was nothing about the manger scene that first Christmas to suggest that people on an island of the British Isles, thousands of miles away, would be singing about it two thousand years later in a language not yet developed. But the last stanza of the hymn points us to the great mystery of who this baby in the lowly stable really is. When we see Jesus face-to-face, it won't be like Mary saw Him that first night, or Joseph, or even the shepherds. We won't see a delicate infant in swaddling cloths, dependent on Mary and Joseph for everything. We'll see Jesus "set at God's right hand on high." We'll see Him as His brothers and sisters, with us shining like stars, crowned with the crown Jesus won for us at His death.

CONGREGATION HYMN: "SAVIOR OF THE NATIONS, COME" **LSB 332 vrs. 1 & 7**
Savior of the nations, come, Virgin's Son, make here Your home!
Marvel now, O heav'n and earth, That the Lord chose such a birth.

From the manger newborn light Shines in glory through the night.
Darkness there no more resides; In this light faith now abides.

RECITATION: Athanasian Creed (27–29)

Dylan Beck: But it is also necessary for everlasting salvation that one faithfully believe the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is the right faith that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is at the same time both God and man. He is God, begotten from the substance of the Father before all ages; and He is man, born from the substance of His mother in this age.

CONGREGATION HYMN: "NOW SING WE, NOW REJOICE" **TLH 92**
Now sing we, now rejoice, Now raise to heav'n our voice;
He from whom joy streameth Poor in a manger lies;
Not so brightly beameth The sun in yonder skies.
Thou my Savior art! Thou my Savior art!

Come from on high to me; I cannot rise to Thee.
Cheer my wearied spirit, O pure and holy Child;
Through Thy grace and merit, Blest Jesus, Lord most mild,
Draw me unto Thee! Draw me unto Thee!

Now through His Son doth shine The Father's grace divine.
Death o'er us had reigned Through sin and vanity
He for us obtained Eternal joy on high.
May we praise Him there! May we praise Him there!

Oh, where shall joy be found? Where but on heav'nly ground?
Where the angels singing With all His saints unite,
Sweetest praises bringing In heav'nly joy and light.
Oh, that we were there! Oh, that we were there!

READING: Luke 2:8–11

Weston Beck: And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear.

And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

CONGREGATION HYMN: “SAVIOR OF THE NATIONS, COME” LSB 332 vrs. 2 & 6

Not by human flesh and blood By the Spirit of our God,
Was the Word of God made flesh— Woman's offspring, pure and fresh.

For You are the Father's Son Who in flesh the vict'ry won.
By Your mighty pow'r make whole All our ills of flesh and soul.

RECITATION: Athanasian Creed (30–34)

Kennedy Mrozek: Perfect God and perfect man, composed of a rational soul and human flesh; equal to the Father with respect to His divinity, less than the Father with respect to His humanity.

Although He is God and man, He is not two, but one Christ: one, however, not by the conversion of the divinity into flesh, but by the assumption of the humanity into God; one altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person.

CONGREGATION HYMN: “HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING”

TLH 94

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

Refrain:

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

Christ, by highest heav’n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come, Offspring of a virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel! *Refrain*

Hail, the heav’n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, Ris’n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by, Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth. *Refrain*

Come, Desire of nations, come, Fix in us Thy humble home;
Oh, to all Thyself impart, Formed in each believing heart!
Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!” *Refrain*

READING: Luke 2:12–14

Benjamin 'Ben' Kueck: “And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”

Jordynn Figueroa: 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 among those with whom He is pleased!”

CONGREGATION HYMN: “ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH”**LSB 368**

Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain:

Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be Which inspire your heav’nly song? *Refrain*

Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King. *Refrain*

MEDITATION: Songs of Angels and Shepherds

Brooklyn Nevius: The hymn “Angels We Have Heard on High” is an old French hymn, possibly dating in some form to before the Reformation. It was probably sung in the days when Latin was still the only truly acceptable language in the Church, but when people also wanted to sing a song in their own tongue. This hymn is one of the first bilingual hymns. Even in our translation, we sing the stanzas in English and the refrain in Latin, much as the French would have sung the stanzas in their own tongue and the refrain as “Gloria in excelsis Deo,” as we do.

Barrett Kay: Our sinful desire to make ourselves gods caused the Lord to confuse our languages. Remember the tower of Babel incident? If it hadn’t been for that, there’d be no need for translators at the United Nations! Of course, if it hadn’t been for sin, there’d be no United Nations either, because there would be only one nation in the world under God. Singing in different languages reminds us that, in heaven, Christians of every language on earth will sing praises together around the throne of God and of His Lamb, Jesus Christ, who takes away our sin.

Jordynn Figueroa: “Angels We Have Heard on High” contrasts the singing of the angels and the lofty mountains with the call to worship of the lowly shepherds. What a mixed congregation! The noble and the peasant, the celestial generals and the terrestrial privates of God’s army, the high and mighty and the poor and lowly—all have come together to sing the praises of the One born in Bethlehem. There is something moving about our lowly voices being joined together in song with the voices of God’s army, His heavenly host.

Jonathan Bamsch: The Savior of the Nations, Jesus Christ, is the Son of God at whose feet the angels worship. But he chooses to make Mary's womb the throne from which He would rule for nine months of our time. Now it's not just all nations that are singing, but all of creation, creatures great and creatures small, praising the Creator lying in the straw.

CONGREGATION HYMN: "SAVIOR OF THE NATIONS, COME" LSB 332 vrs. 3 & 5
Here a maid was found with child, Yet remained a virgin mild.
In her womb this truth was shown: God was there upon His throne.

God the Father was His source, Back to God He ran His course.
Into hell His road went down, Back then to His throne and crown.

RECITATION: Athanasian Creed (35–37)

Presley Landry: For as the rational soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ, who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead, ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father, God Almighty, from whence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

CONGREGATION HYMN: "O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM" TLH 647
O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy darkness shineth The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears Of all the years Are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, And gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, The angels keep Their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together Proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing To God, the King, And peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently, The wondrous Gift is giv'n!
So God imparts To human hearts The blessings of His heav'n.
No ear may hear His coming, But in this world of sin.
Where meek souls will Receive Him still, The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin And enter in, Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell:
Oh, come to us, Abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!

READING: Luke 2:15–20

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.”

And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.

And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child.

And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

CHILDREN’S HYMN: “JESUS LOVES ME”

LSB 588

Jesus loves me! This I know,

For the Bible tells me so.

Little ones to Him belong;

They are weak, but He is strong.

Cristo me ama, bien lo sé;

su Palabra me hace ver

que los niños son de aquel

quien es nuestro amigo fiel.

Refrain (after each stanza):

Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!

Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

Sí, Cristo me ama; sí, Cristo me ama;

sí, Cristo me ama; la Biblia dice así.

Jesus loves me! He who died Heaven’s gates to open wide.

He has washed away my sin, Lets His little child come in. *Refrain*

MEDITATION: Savior of the Nations, Come!

Callie Wagner: The hymn we’ve been singing throughout this service, “Savior of the Nations, Come,” was written by a pastor from a “nation” that no longer exists! Ambrose, who wrote the hymn, was the bishop, or pastor, of Milan in the fourth century. At the time, Milan was part of the Roman Empire, even though now we think of Milan as an Italian city. Ambrose wrote the hymn to teach the scriptural truth that Jesus is both God and man. This baby was born to save not only the Jews but all people of every nation on earth. Even though the song was originally written in Latin, a language no nation speaks anymore, “Savior of the Nations, Come” has been translated into numerous languages and is still being sung around the world. Martin Luther translated it into German for his own congregations to sing.

Andrew Davis: Most of us were born and raised and still live our lives in one country or nation. But more and more often, people move away from their countries of birth and spend time in different places, with different languages and customs. Our Lord Jesus Christ is God and Savior of every person in every one of those nations on earth. Some of the nations, like Ambrose's Roman Empire, have come and gone. Some have not yet arisen. But whether the nations are in the past, the present, or the future, Jesus is Lord of all of them. He loves them all and desires that all their people come to trust in Him. Jesus saved them all by giving up His own life as a sacrifice for the sin of the human race. By His death on the cross, Jesus has taken people who speak different languages, have different customs, and live in different parts of the world and made them all members of a new nation: the Church of Jesus Christ.

The Savior of the Nations and Lord of all creation, the Son of God our King, was born for us from a young Jewish virgin named Mary, was laid in a manger, and was first worshiped by common shepherds. What a joy to know that our God is not distant from us. He understands us and came to earth to live among us and to die in our place. Now He rules over all things, that we may have life in His name.

CONGREGATION HYMN: "SAVIOR OF THE NATIONS, COME" LSB 332 vs. 4 & 8

Then stepped forth the Lord of all From His pure and kingly hall;
God of God, yet fully man, His heroic course began.

Glory to the Father sing, Glory to the Son, our king,
Glory to the Spirit be Now and through eternity.

RECEIPT OF OFFERINGS

CONGREGATION HYMN - MAGNIFICAT: "MY SOUL REJOICES" LSB 933

My soul rejoices, My spirit voices—Sing the greatness of the Lord!
For God my Savior Has shown me favor—Sing the greatness of the Lord!
With praise and blessing, Join in confessing God, who is solely Mighty and holy—
O sing the greatness of God the Lord! His mercy surely Shall rest securely
On all who fear Him, Love and revere Him—O sing the greatness of God the Lord!

His arm now baring, His strength declaring—Sing the greatness of the Lord!
The proud He scatters, Their rule He shatters—Sing the greatness of the Lord!
Oppression halted; The meek exalted. Full are the hungry; Empty, the wealthy—
O sing the greatness of God the Lord! Here is the token All that was spoken
To Abr'ham's offspring God is fulfilling—O sing the greatness of God the Lord!

THE LITANY

P: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

P: For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord:

C. Lord, have mercy.

P: For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord:

C. Lord, have mercy.

P: For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord:

C. Lord, have mercy.

P: For Matthew Harrison, our synod president, Michael Newman, our district president, for all pastors in Christ, for all servants of the Church, and for all the people, let us pray to the Lord:

C. Lord, have mercy.

P: For our leaders, for all public servants, for the government and those who protect us, that they may be upheld and strengthened in every good deed, let us pray to the Lord:

C. Lord, have mercy.

P: For those who work to bring peace, justice, health, and protection in this and every place, let us pray to the Lord:

C. Lord, have mercy.

P: For those who bring offerings, those who do good works in this congregation, those who toil, those who sing, and all the people here present who await from the Lord great and abundant mercy, let us pray to the Lord:

C. Lord, have mercy.

P: For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord:

C. Lord, have mercy.

P: For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and need, let us pray to the Lord:

C. Lord, have mercy.

P: For all who are sick and hurting, let us pray to the Lord:

C. Lord, have mercy.

P: For the faithful who have gone before us and are with Christ let us give thanks to the Lord.

C. Alleluia.

P: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Silence for personal prayer.

P. Rejoicing in the fellowship of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ, our Lord.

C. To You, O Lord.

P. O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C. Amen.

P. Taught by our Lord and trusting His promises, we are bold to pray:

ALL: 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.

P. Let us bless the Lord.

C. Thanks be to God.

P. The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, bless and preserve you.

C. Amen

CONGREGATION HYMN: "JOY TO THE WORLD"

TLH 87

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

Let earth receive her King; Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room

And heav'n and nature sing, And heav'n and nature sing,

And heav'n, and heav'n 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, Repeat the sounding joy,

Repeat, 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, Far as the curse is found,

Far as, 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, And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love. Amen.

Scarlett Landry: No Christmas Eve service would be complete without the hymn “Silent Night.” Maybe a pastor or church musician could get away without singing “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing,” “What Child Is This,” or “Joy to the World” on Christmas Eve. But not “Silent Night”! But this hymn, as popular as it is now, had a humble beginning. It was written in the nation of Austria, in a small village called Oberndorf near Salzburg, in the early nineteenth century by a German-speaking Roman Catholic priest. The music was composed by his school’s headmaster. The song bears many features of Austrian folk music and even of that wonderfully unusual musical form—yodeling!

Eleanor Carey: The hymn begins with the most intimate of Christmas scenes: Mary, holding the Holy Infant, so “tender and mild.” Paintings of “Madonna and Child,” Mary holding Jesus, are found in art galleries around the world. Maybe that’s because people of every nation can relate to the image of a mother holding her firstborn child. People of every tribe and tongue can imagine the emotions and love felt at that moment, especially if you’re a parent yourself!

But the hymn doesn’t stay in the stable with Mary and Jesus. It goes on to end from the perspective of eternity. This baby is “Son of God, love’s pure light” and “Lord” already at His birth.” Pastor Mohr and Headmaster Gruber, the Austrians who wrote the hymn, don’t want us to stay in the stable staring at Mary and the baby Jesus. They want us to praise the fact that this baby’s birth is “the dawn of redeeming grace”!

This Jesus, this Savior of the Nations, was born from woman in time and from His Father from all eternity. The sweet baby held in Mary’s arms will defeat the enemies of God and man and end the reign of death over us all.

CONGREGATION HYMN: “SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT”

TLH 646

Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht! Alles schläft, einsam wacht
Nur das traute, hochheilige Paar. Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh, Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh.

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, Heav'nly 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.

POSTLUDE

Thank you to our participants tonight!!

Mary: Katrina Kueck

Joseph: Styne Schramm

Angels: Emma Knox, Kennedy Morzek, Taylor Figueroa

Shepherds: Carter Mrozek, Maxwell Carey, Kortlynd Schramm, Whit Kovar,

Harrison Beck, Lexi Ahrens, Elijah Kueck, Dylan Beck, Weston Beck,

Benjamin Kueck, Scarlett Landry

A special Thank You to Carol Schramm for coordinating and directing tonight's program! Thank you to Ann Bamsch for the beautiful organ music and to the Sunday School teachers for your help with practices, etc. Merry Christmas!!

Savior of the Nations

A Christmas Service for School-Age Children

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Written by Bart Day, Scott Murray, and Janet Muth

Edited by Pamela Nielsen

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Christmas Poinsettias

Thank you to everyone who has given a Poinsettia to beautify our sanctuary this year!
You may take your poinsettia home after the Christmas Day service.

In memory of Justin Whited, Sr., Harold and Irene Kasper, and Ralph Kasper by
Margie Whited and family

In memory of Jimmie Lehmann, Billy and Jo Ann Lange, Willie and Ruby Lehmann,
and John and Renata Teinert by Kevin and Sandra Lange and daughters

In memory of Barbara Zoch by Bruce Zoch

In memory of Arnold Kasper by Evelyn Kasper, Billy and Pat Karisch

In memory of Rosie Heinrich and Bernice Heinrich by Lawrince Heinrich and
Nichole and Jack Gomez

In memory of Elwert and Helene Hobratschk by Lisa Wood

In memory of Alice and Otto Kunze by Glenn, Allen, Charles, Karen and Mark

In memory of Amanda Zoch Knox by Ron & Cyndy Zoch, Cory and Emma Knox
and Megan, Brett, & Jett Lamont

In memory of Roy and Ruth Lehmann by Roland and Betsy Guettler

In memory of all our loved ones who have gone to be with Jesus by Willie and Judy
Wagner

In memory of Elmo and Helen Pietsch by Dennis and Diann Pietsch

In honor of Amy Wagner by Willie and Judy Wagner

In honor of Willie and Judy Wagner by Amy Wagner

To the glory of God by Delbert and Judy Zoch

To the glory of God for all His blessings by J.C. and Carol Schramm

This year's sanctuary Christmas Tree is given to the Glory of God by Jerrell and
Oranell Dunk in memory of all Holy Cross members who have gone to their heavenly
home in 2020.