



On a long winter evening we gather to proclaim the coming of the light. Isaiah announces that the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Paul reminds us that the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all. In the familiar account of Christ's birth, the evening sky is bright with the heavenly host singing, "Glory to God in the highest." Amid our broken world we proclaim that the prince of peace is born among us. God comes to us in human flesh—in Christ's body and blood—so that we may be bearers of divine light to all the world.

THE GATHERING

Prelude

As you enter the church, ushers will distribute individual candles.

Call to Worship

O Holy Night

Congregation

Please stand as individual candles are lit by passing the flame to the person next to you. The lighted candle is never tilted but always held upright when passing the light to another.

Verse 1

O holy night the stars are brightly shining
 It is the night of the dear Savior's birth
 Long lay the world in sin and error pining
 'Til He appeared and the soul felt its worth
 A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices
 For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn
 Fall on your knees O hear the angels' voices
 O night divine O night when Christ was born
 O night O holy night O night divine

Verse 2

Led by the light of faith serenely beaming
 With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand
 So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming
 Here came the wise men from Orient land
 The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger
 In all our trials born to be our friend
 He knows our need to our weakness is no stranger
 Behold your King before Him lowly bend
 Behold your King before Him lowly bend

Verse 3

Truly He taught us to love one another
 His law is love and His gospel is peace
 Chains shall He break for the slave is our brother
 And in His name all oppression shall cease
 Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we
 Let all within us praise His holy name
 Christ is the Lord O praise His name for ever
 His power and glory evermore proclaim
 His power and glory evermore proclaim

December 24, 2015
 Nativity of Our Lord – Christmas Eve

Christmas Dialog

L: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

C: The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.

L: Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.

C: We have beheld Christ's glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.

L: For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given

C: In him was life, and the life was the light of man.

Thanksgiving for the Light – Prayer *(Spoken together)*

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

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Ringling of the Christmas Bells

Greeting

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

C: O come let us adore him.

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

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day *(spoken together)*

L: 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.

Gloria

Angels We Have Heard On High

Seated, please put out candles.

Angels we have heard on high,

Sweetly singing o'er the plains,

And the mountains in reply,

Echoing their joyous strains.

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?

Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

The 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

Hymn

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice; give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today; ox and ass before him bow, and he is in the manger now. Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice; now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born

for this! He has opened heaven's door, and we are blest forevermore. Christ was born for this!
Christ was born for this!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice; now ye need not fear the grave; Jesus Christ was born to save! Calls you one and calls you all to gain the everlasting hall. Christ was born to save!
Christ was born to save!

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 Hymn *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear (standing)*
It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,
from heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

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 found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Gospel Hymn *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king;
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners
reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Sermon

Hymn *What Child Is This*

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!

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; Come peasant, king to
own him. The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts
enthroned him. Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her
lullaby; Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe the son of Mary!

Prayers

L: Lord in your mercy

C: Hear our prayer.

Sharing of the Peace

L: The angels sing Glory to God in the highest and peace to God's people on earth. The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Offering and Music

(5:00) *Breath of Heaven* Vocal Solo

(10:30) *Mary Did You Know?* Vocal solo

Offertory Prayer (please stand, spoken together)

Eternal God, with Mary we treasure the gift of your Son, and in our hearts we ponder the mystery of his birth. Receive these offerings that our lives may declare the wonders of your love in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

The Words of Institution

The Lord's Prayer

C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Communion Distribution

Distribution will be done in a continuous manner. The ushers will direct those seated on the lower floor in two lines to center front where you will receive bread. Continue to the side to receive the wine. Those in the balcony will be directed to serving station in the narthex. For the 10:30 service all will commune at the center front station.

Post-communion Prayer (please stand)

L: We give you thanks, O God, that in this bread and cup of Christ's very life, you give us food for our journey. As you led the magi by a star, as you brought the holy family home again, guide us on the way unfolding before us. Wherever we go, may our lives proclaim good news of great joy in Jesus Christ our Lord. **C: Amen.**

Lighting of the Candles

L: Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you! Jesus said, *I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.* This is the message we have heard and proclaim, that God is light; in God there is no darkness at all.

The minister takes a candle and lights it from the Christ candle. The ushers light their candles from the pastor's candle and then light the candles of each worshipper nearest the aisle. The lighted candle is never tilted but always held upright when giving light to another.

Hymn

Silent Night, Holy Night

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!

(Voices Only)

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.

Silence

Christmas Blessing

May the Word that Mary brought to birth
carry you into new and abundant life. **Amen.**

May the Word that Joseph cradled in his arms
enfold you with love and strength. **Amen.**

May the Word that angels proclaimed in song
bring harmony to our world. **Amen.**

And the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Hymn *Joy to the World*

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. (3x)

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks hills and plains.
Repeat the sounding joy. (3x)

He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness
And wonders of his love. (3x)

Dismissal

L: Go in peace. Christ is with you.

C: Thanks be to God.

L: Merry Christmas!

C: Merry Christmas!

Postlude

Preaching & Presiding: Pastor Peter Soli

Assisting: Pastor Melinda McCluskey

Organist: Ruth Sheldon

Vocal Solos: Bruce Adams and Olivia Schoonover

Sound: Al Skellenger

Video Coordinator: Carol Abbey

Thank you for the poinsettias placed in memory of loved ones:
*In loving memory of Kurtis Helgson's birthday, Christmas Eve,
from Verna and his kids*

*In memory of Roger Peterson & Bob Peterson, from their family
In memory of Robert Kvale, from his family*

The 8:30 a.m. worship service is broadcast weekly on KLOW-FM 107.3.

Reserve your special date to sponsor the 2016 8:30 a.m. worship service broadcast on KLOW (107.3 FM) radio in Forest City. The service can also be heard at 8:30 a.m. on cable channel 2. **Call the office to reserve your dates. Cost for 2016 is \$83.**

Available dates are: Jan. 17 Feb. 28, March 6, 20, 27, May 1, 8, June 5, 12, July 10, 17, 31 Aug. 7, 14, 21, Sept. 4, Oct. 9, 16, 23, Nov. 6, 20, Dec. 4, 11, 25.

We have a sponsorship program for the live internet broadcast of the 10:30 a.m. worship service. Sponsorship is available for \$40 per Sunday. **Call the office to reserve a date in 2016.**

Salem has a wheel chair available for use. It is kept in the narthex closet near the coat rack.

Be sure to look at the beautiful picture on display in the narthex. It is a gift to Salem from Pastor Soli and wife, Sandy. It will be placed over the fireplace in the library when the library remodeling project is completed.

Pledges may still be returned to the office.
Any donations that you would like credited for 2015 must be received or be postmarked by December 31, 2015.

Sunday Worship Schedule

Beginning January 3 there will be one worship service at 9:00 a.m.
Sunday School and Coffee Fellowship will held at 10:00 a.m. Sunday School resumes January 10.



*Thank you to the many Salem members, youth and adult,
who donated their time and talents to help with our
2015 Sunday School Christmas Program.*

Salem's Annual Meeting will be held Sunday, January 24.

Brunch will be served in the fellowship hall at 11:15 a.m. The Annual Meeting will begin at 11:45 a.m., in the fellowship hall. All members are encouraged to attend.

*****Two Salem members are needed to be placed on the Annual Meeting Ballot to attend the North Eastern Iowa Synod Assembly, June 10-12, 2016 at Wartburg College, Waverly IA. Please contact the office or Scott Hagenson.*****

PRAYER

changes things

Please remember in prayer this week:

The family & friends of Roger Juveland

Bonnie Steffens, Michael Thune, Gavin Thompson, Darlene Madson

Prayer Families: Jonah Ringham, Terry/Jayne Ringham, Zachary Ringham, Norman/Marvis Risius, Adam/Megan Ritter Family, Andrea Rodberg, Scott Rodberg, Terry/Karen Rodberg, Chalsea Roder, Sarah Roelfs Family



THIS WEEK AT SALEM

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24

5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service - Sanctuary
10:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Service - Sanctuary

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25

OFFICES CLOSED

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship - Sanctuary
9:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship – Fellowship Hall
10:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship Service

MONDAY, DECEMBER 28

2:00 – 5:00 p.m. Food Shelf Open

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30

1:45 p.m. Mills Harbour Communion
2:30 p.m. Lake Mills Care Center Communion
6:00 p.m. Informal Worship - Chapel
7:00 p.m. Contemporary Music Practice

Salem Contact Information

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