

# INCARNATION

## The Divine Service

OPENING HYMN: Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful (LW #41)

### INVOCATION

P: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men.* (John 1:1-4, NIV).

### CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION OF SINS

P: *In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.* (Luke 1:26-29, NIV).

**C: Lord God, Heavenly Father, I come before you as Mary with a troubled heart. I know that I am a sinner, that I walk in darkness, unable to see your light because of my sinful blindness, and my sins make me a lost and condemned creature, deserving nothing but your wrath. But you have chosen to favor me, not because of my own merit, but for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, Whom You sent into human flesh to dwell among us and die for my sins, and I pray that, for the sake of His suffering and death on my behalf, that You forgive my sin and make me pure and holy.**

P: *But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his*

*kingdom will never end." "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God... For nothing is impossible with God."* (Luke 1:30-37, NIV).

Conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, the Son of God has truly come, and nothing is impossible for God, even forgiving your sin. Because Jesus, the Word made Flesh, died on the cross for your sin, I, as a called and ordained servant of the Word forgive you all of your sin in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen. I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me as you have said.** (Luke 1:30, NIV).

### INTROIT

P: *"My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,*

**C: for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed,**

P: *for the Mighty One has done great things for me--holy is his name.*

**C: His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.**

P: *He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.*

**C: He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.**

P: *He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.*

**C: He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful**

P: *to Abraham and his descendants for ever, even as he said to our fathers."* (Luke 1:46-55, NIV).

### KYRIE ELEISON

P: *And there were shepherds living out in the fields near by, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.* (Luke 2:8, 9, NIV).

**C: (sung) Lord, have Mercy. Christ, have Mercy. Lord, have mercy.** (LW p. 137)

#### GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

P: *But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,* (Luke 2:10-13, NIV).

**C: (sung) Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.**  
(LW #55)

#### COLLECT

P: *When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."* (Luke 2:15, NIV).

Lord Jesus, Incarnate Word, You took on mortal flesh and died on a cross that we may receive your immortality and eternal life. Send Your Spirit to give us faith that we, like the Bethlehem shepherds, may see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about, that Your light shine through us to the world. In Jesus' name we pray.

**C: Amen.**

#### OLD TESTAMENT READING

P: *Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign:*

**C: *The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.*** (Isaiah 7:14, NIV).

#### EPISTLE READING

P: *But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law,*

**C: *to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.*** (Galatians 4:4, 5)

#### HOLY GOSPEL

P: *So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph,*

**C: *and the baby, who was lying in the manger.*** (Luke 2:16, NIV).

SERMON HYMN: What Child Is This (LW #61)

#### SERMON

#### NICENE CREED

P: *When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.*

(Luke 2:17, 18, NIV).

Let us, with the shepherds and the whole Christian church in heaven and on earth, confess what has been told to us about the Child in the words of the Nicene Creed:

**C: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by Whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And on the third day, He rose again, according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, Whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who**

**with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

#### OFFERING

P: *The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.* (Luke 2:20, NIV). We glorify God with our offerings for all we have heard and seen.

(The offering is received.)

#### OFFERTORY

**C: (sung) Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with Your free Spirit.** (LW p. 143)

#### PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

##### PREFACE

P: The Lord, Immanuel, be with you.

**C: And with your spirit.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

**C: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

**C: It is good and right so to do.**

P: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, for in the mystery of the

Word made flesh You have given us a new revelation of Your glory that, seeing you in the person of Your Son, we may be drawn to the love of those things which are not seen. Therefore with angels and archangel and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

**C: (sung) Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of Sabaoth, Heav'n and earth are full of Your glory. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He, blessed is He, blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.** (LW p. 148)

P: Lord of heaven and earth, we praise and thank You for having had mercy on those whom You created, sending Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and blood on the cross. Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us.

#### 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.**

#### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me. In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying:

Drink of it, all of you; this is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.

P: Christ has come to us in the flesh, and now, He comes to you again in His body and blood. His peace be with you always.

**C: Amen**

AGNUS DEI

**C: (sung) O Christ, the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world, have mercy on us. O Christ, the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world, have mercy on us. O Christ, the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world, grant us Your peace. Amen.**  
(LW p. 151)

DISTRIBUTION

Hymns: LW #53, 64, 36

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE

**C: (sung) Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace according to Your Word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Your people Israel. 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.** (LW p. 152)

P: Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.

**C: And His mercy endures forever.**

P: Let us pray to our Lord.  
O God, the Father, giver of all good gifts, we praise and thank You for sending Your only-begotten Son into the flesh to bear our sins on the cross and rise in victory over death that we receive the same resurrection and promised glory. As You have given us pardon and peace in this

sacrament, enable us always to proclaim the Lord's death until He comes in all we say and do; 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: *"... You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."* (Acts 1:8-11, NIV).

Our incarnate, crucified, and risen Savior has ascended into heaven to prepare a place for us. Let us bless the Lord for all He has done for us.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

BENEDICTION

P: *He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon."*

**C: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

P: *The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people.*

**C: Amen.** (Revelation 22:20, 21, NIV).

CLOSING HYMN: Silent Night (LW #68)