

The Season of Christmas

*Scripture Selections from the Evangelical Heritage Version[®]
following the Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal 1-Year Lectionary*

Revised March 2, 2017

The Nativity of Our Lord (Christmas Eve)

*Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal 1-Year Lectionary
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Lesson

Isaiah 9:2-7

²The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.
On those living in the land of the shadow of death, the light has dawned.

³You have multiplied the nation. You have increased its joy.
They rejoice before you like the joy at harvest,
like the celebration when people divide the plunder.

⁴For you have broken the yoke that burdened him,
the bar on his shoulder, and the rod of his oppressor,
as you did in the day of Midian.

⁵For every boot that marched in battle
and the garments rolled in blood will be burned, fuel for the fire.

⁶For to us a child is born.

To us a son is given.

The authority to rule will rest on his shoulders.

His name will be called:

Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.

⁷There will be no limit to his authority
and no end to his peace.

He will rule on David's throne
and over his kingdom to establish it and to uphold it with justice
and with righteousness from now on and forever.

The zeal of the LORD of Armies will accomplish this.

Second Lesson

Titus 2:11-14

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all people. ¹²It trains us to reject ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope, that is, the glorious appearance of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He gave himself for us, to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people who are his own chosen people, eager to do good works.

Gospel

Luke 2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governing Syria. ³And everyone went to register, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the town of Nazareth, into Judea, to the town of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was from the house and family line of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, his wife, who was pledged to him in marriage and was expecting a child.

⁶And so it was that while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son, wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

⁸There were in the same country shepherds staying out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock at night. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to 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 behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which will be for all people: ¹¹Today in the town of David, a Savior was born for you. He is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” ¹³Suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude from the heavenly army, praising God and saying, ¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward mankind.”

¹⁵When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Now let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they had seen him, they told others the message they had been told about this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it were amazed by what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

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The Nativity of Our Lord (Christmas Day)

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First Lesson

Micah 5:2-5a

²“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
out of you will come the one to be ruler in Israel.
His goings forth are from ancient times, from eternity.”

³Therefore he will surrender them
until the time she who is in labor gives birth to a child.
Then the remainder of his brothers will return to the children of Israel.

⁴He will stand and shepherd with the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.

They will dwell securely,
for at that time he will be great to the ends of the earth.

⁵This one will be their peace.

Second Lesson

Hebrews 1:1-9

In the past, God spoke to our forefathers by the prophets at many times and in many ways. ²In these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. ³The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact imprint of the divine nature. He sustains all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he took his seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

⁴The Son became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. ⁵For to which of the angels did God ever say:

You are my Son. Today I have begotten you?

And again:

I will be his Father, and he will be my Son.

⁶And again, when he brought his firstborn into the world, he said:

Let all God’s angels worship him.

⁷About the angels he says:

He makes his messengers winds and his ministers flaming fire.

⁸But about the Son he says:

God, your throne is forever and ever,
and the scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your kingdom.

⁹You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness.

Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of joy beyond your companions.

Gospel

John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ³Through him everything was made, and without him not one thing was made that has been made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind. ⁵The light is shining in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶There was a man, sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as an eyewitness to testify about the light so that everyone would believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light.

⁹The real light that shines on everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, yet his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. ¹³They were born, not of blood, or of the desire of the flesh, or of a husband's will, but born of God.

¹⁴The Word became flesh and dwelled among us. We have seen his glory, the glory he has as the only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

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The First Sunday after Christmas

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First Lesson

Isaiah 42:1-4

Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen one in whom I delight.
I am placing my Spirit upon him.
He will bring forth the verdict for the nations.
²He will not cry out.
He will not raise his voice.
He will not make his voice heard in the street.
³A bent reed he will not break,
and a dimly burning wick he will not snuff out.
He will faithfully bring forth the verdict.
⁴He will not grow dim, and he will not be crushed
until he establishes the verdict on the earth.
The coastlands will wait for his teaching.

Second Lesson

Galatians 4:1-7

What I am saying is this: As long as the heir is a young child, he is no different from a slave. Although he is owner of everything, ²he is still under guardians and managers until the day set by his father. ³So also, when we were younger children, we were enslaved under the basic principles of the world. ⁴But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son to be born of a woman, so that he would be born under the law, ⁵in order to redeem those under the law, so that we would be adopted as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts to shout, “*Abba, Father!*” ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but a son. And if you are a son, then you are also an heir of God through Christ.

Gospel

Luke 2:25-38

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, waiting for the comfort of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. ²⁷Moved by the Spirit he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what was customary according to the law, ²⁸Simeon took him into his arms and praised God. He said,

²⁹Lord, you now dismiss your servant in peace, according to your word,

³⁰because my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹which you have prepared before the face of all people,

³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.

³³Joseph and the child's mother were amazed at the things that were spoken about him. ³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Listen carefully, this child is appointed for the falling and rising of many in Israel and for a sign that is spoken against, ³⁵so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

³⁶Anna, a prophetess, was there. She was a daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old. She had lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, ³⁷and then she was a widow of eighty-four years. She did not leave the temple complex, since she was worshipping with fasting and prayers night and day. ³⁸Standing nearby at that very hour, she gave thanks to the Lord. She kept speaking about the child to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

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The Second Sunday after Christmas

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First Lesson

Jeremiah 31:15-20

¹⁵This is what the LORD says:

“A voice is heard in Ramah,
weeping and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children.
She refuses to be comforted for her children,
because they are no more.”

¹⁶This is what the LORD says:

“Stop your crying,
do not shed tears,
because your work will be rewarded,”

declares the LORD.

“They will return from the land of the enemy.

¹⁷There is hope for your future,”

declares the LORD.

“Your children will return to their own territory.

¹⁸I have certainly heard Ephraim grieving.

‘You have disciplined me.

I was disciplined like an untrained calf.

Turn me, and I will be turned,
for you are the LORD, my God.

¹⁹After I turned away, I repented.

After I was instructed, I slapped my thigh in grief.

I was ashamed and humiliated,
because I bore the disgrace of my youth.’

²⁰“Isn’t Ephraim my dear son?

Isn’t he my darling child?

I often speak against him,
but I still remember him.

My heart yearns for him.

I will certainly be compassionate to him,”

declares the LORD.

Second Lesson

1 Peter 4:12-19

¹²Dear friends, do not be surprised by the fiery trial that is happening among you to test you, as if something strange were happening to you. ¹³Instead rejoice whenever you are sharing in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.

¹⁴If you are insulted in connection with the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, a thief, a criminal, or as a meddler. ¹⁶But if you suffer for being a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God in connection with this name. ¹⁷For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God. Now if it begins with us, what will be the end for those who disobey the gospel of God? ¹⁸And if it is hard for the righteous to be saved, where will the ungodly sinner end up? ¹⁹So let those who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to their faithful Creator while doing what is good.

Gospel

Matthew 2:13-23

¹³After the Wise Men were gone, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared to Joseph in a dream. He said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, because Herod will search for the child in order to kill him.”

¹⁴Joseph got up, took the child and his mother during the night, and left for Egypt. ¹⁵He stayed there until the death of Herod. This happened to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

¹⁶When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Wise Men, he was furious. He issued orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and in all the surrounding countryside, from two years old and under. This was in keeping with the exact time he had learned from the Wise Men. ¹⁷Then what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled:

¹⁸A voice was heard in Ramah,
weeping and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children,
and she refused to be comforted,
because they are no more.

¹⁹After Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt. The angel said, ²⁰“Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to kill the child are dead.”

²¹Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. ²²But when he heard that Archelaus, Herod’s son, had succeeded his father as ruler in Judea, he was afraid to go there. Since he had been warned in a dream, he went to the region of Galilee. ²³When he arrived there, he settled in a city called Nazareth. So what was spoken through the prophets was fulfilled: “He will be called a Nazarene.”

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