- •Preparing the Sanctuary for Christmas If you're willing to lend a hand from 9-10 on Saturday, Dec 16 to help decorate the sanctuary for the season, the Worship, Music, Arts Team would be grateful for the help!
- •Bible Studies The CoG Bible Study will continue to meet onsite and online on Tuesdays at 9:30 am, except for the following dates (due to the holidays): Dec 26 and Jan 2.
- •Visitation If you're interested in receiving a visit from Pastor Ali or a CoG friend, or would be willing to serve as a visitor (who makes either in-person or phone call visits to homebound members), let Rachel in the office know.
- •Want to Know More About COG? We're so glad you're worshiping with us! Welcome. If you're interested in learning more about life together at COG. reach out to Pastor Ali (atranvik@crossofglory.us).



Please join us in lifting up these brothers and sisters in prayer:

Mavis Wold Norma Gilbertson Audrey Swanberg Jeannie Kuzmich Eric Thompson & family

Dick Mero Martha Krueger Penny Lindblom Sherry Mattfield Debbie Sjoquist

To be added or removed from the weekly prayer list, please contact the church office (office@crossofglory.us) or call 763-533-8602.

You are welcome to stop at our community prayer wall just outside the sanctuary to place a written prayer in the wall. Further instructions are at the prayer wall.





PRELUDE

WELCOME

P: Welcome! Today we rejoice as we remember the prophesies of a Messiah to come, as we prepare for the glorious night when Jesus came to earth, arriving as a tiny baby to be our Savior. This was a moment so filled with joy that angels could not stay in heaven but overflowed from heaven to earth. We anticipate the coming of the Lord, whose love fulfills the prophesies, frees the oppressed, and warms our weary souls.

ALL: Lord, we sing of your coming. We join the prophets and angels in anticipating your presence among us. We thank you for including us in your love and light.

NARRATION

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Reader #1: What a glorious God, who loves us so much that the "light of the world" would come to earth as the promised Savior of all.

Reader #2: Amazing things that were foretold would come to pass—happening in a humble place, beginning with the "yes!" of a young woman whose soul magnified the Lord. The world was longing for a Savior, and anticipating the dawn of a new light to come.

CHOIR As the Dark Awaits the Dawn Schalk

As the dark awaits the dawn, So we await your light. O Star of promise, scatter night, Loving bright, loving bright, Till shades of fear are gone.

As the blue expectant hour Before the silv'ring skies, We long to see your day arise, Whole and wise, whole and wise, O lucent Morning Star. As the moon reflects the sun Until the night's decrease, May we your healing light release, Living peace, living peace, Unto your holy dawn.

Shine your future on this place, Enlighten ev'ry guest, That through us stream your holiness, Bright and blest, bright and blest; Come dawn, O sun of grace.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- •Coffee Hour Please join us after worship in the fellowship hall for a time of food and fellowship.
- •Christmas Cookie Distribution TODAY Lend your hands after worship today as we pack plates of cookies to be delivered to members this week! If you're able to make a couple deliveries, stop by the packaging table to let us know.
- •Upcoming Meetings The Worship, Music, Arts Team will meet after worship today. Council will meet after worship next Sunday, Dec 17.
- •Advent Devotional Alongside the "Holden [Morning] Prayer" liturgy this Advent, which explores the God who dwells with us morning and evening, you're invited to take part in "Creator of the Stars of Night," a daily devotional written by Luther Seminary faculty, which explores these same themes. Pick up a copy at the Welcome Desk or request an electronic version from the office.
- •December Neighborhood Listening Session THIS WEEK As we work to discern what God's call to life together looks like at CoG, join us this Wednesday from 5:30-6:30 pm as we welcome neighbors from CAPI, share a meal, and get to know our neighbor(hood)!
- •Site Visits As we work to further discern God's call, we're learning from neighboring churches who have reimagined ways to share space for the sake of God's work. If you're interested in taking part in a site visit or two in the next few months and haven't yet taken part in the short orientation, reach out to Kris Simon ASAP.
- •Stewardship & End of Year Giving Statements Thanks for your generosity this past year and pledged for the year ahead as we work to live out God's call to life together! If you haven't submitted your 2024 pledge, please drop it off/mail it into the office ASAP. If you'd like a giving statement to see where you're at on your 2023 pledge, please let the office know.
- •Winter Clothing Drive Mark your calendars for WinterFest, a neighborhood block party celebration hosted in conjunction with CAPI at CoG on Fri, Jan 26 from 5-7 pm. In addition to free food, music, covid and flu vaccines, games for kids, etc., we'll be distributing winter clothing (new or gently used coats, hats, scarves, mittens, etc.). Please drop off donations anytime between now and Jan 26 in the box near the welcome desk. Thank you!

BLESSING

P: If you are weary as we journey through this Advent season--whether from hunger, heartbreak, loneliness, longing, grief, addiction, illness, or injustice, if your body aching or your spirit is dwindling, know that we are journeying toward the manger. There, we will be met with a love that fills the night with wonder, a love that warms the weary soul and bursts all chains asunder, a love that frees us and makes us whole. So go in peace, refreshed by God's love, and enlivened by the promise of the Christ child and new life that is to come.

All: Thanks be to God! Amen.

POSTLUDE

MUSIC CREDITS

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WORSHIP LEADERSHIP

Pastor: Rev. Ali Tranvik

Director of Choirs: Keith J. Williams Worship & Tech Director: Mark Trease Worship Team Vocalists: Becca Floyd, Johnetta Freeman, Erik Haugland, Kim Jacobson, Laura McClanahan, Kris

Simon, Eric Thompson

Guitar: Steve Sebald, Josh Smith Cross of Glory Choir: Abby Simon Kelley, Amanda Smith, Becca Floyd, Carol Stejskal, Deb Olson, Dennis Olson, Erik Haugland, Kathy Swendiman, Kris Simon, Marcy Hartlage, Marie King, Pam

Gilbert, Ruth Brateng

Greeters: Arlene Kosek, Sharon Quick **Readers:** Erik Haugland, Pam Gilbert,

Gayle Merritt, Kris Simon **Ushers:** Cheryl Anderson, Don

Halverson, Gayle Merritt

Fellowship: Tom and Kris Simon **Technical Team**: The Bailey family **Ministers:** The people of Cross of Glory

Today's worship liturgy was written by Mark Trease and Keith Williams. A special thanks to each of them for crafting the service and leading the musical ensembles, and to all those who took part in reading and singing. The gift of your storytelling and singing, indeed, has warmed our souls.

Please stand as you are able

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Reader #3: We gather in the name of the Creator, and of the Son who came to live with us, and of the Holy Spirit with us now.

All: Amen.

Reader #4: As we await the fullness of Christ's coming and the dawning of this Star of Promise, we confess our need for God's presence in our lives.

ALL: Lord, we are not the people you created us to be in your world. We confess our need for the gift of your coming. We ask that you come to us quickly and return daily because we cannot live fully and freely without your presence in our lives.

P: God does not weary of forgiving us. Through God's grace and promise, fulfilled in Jesus, we receive the entire forgiveness of all our sins. We rejoice in the freedom and the new life brought by our Savior's coming.

All: Amen.

Please be seated

MUSIC Hark, the Glad Sound #239 vs.1 &	k 4
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Verse 1 Verse 4

Hark, the glad sound!

Our glad hosannas,
The Savior comes,
Prince of Peace,

The Savior promised long.

Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne

And ev'ry voice a song.

Prince of Peace, Your welcome shall proclaim, And heav'n's eternal arches ring

With your beloved name.

FIRST READING - Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

Reader #1: You have been gracious to your land, O Lord;

You have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

You have forgiven the iniquity of your people

And blotted out all their sins.

I will listen to what the Lord God is saying;

For you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.

^{**}Silence for reflection and repentance**

Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you,

That your glory may dwell in our land.

Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together:

Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth,

And righteousness shall look down from heaven.

The Lord will indeed grant prosperity,

And our land will yield its increase.

Righteousness shall go before the Lord

And shall prepare for God a pathway.

Leader: The word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

NARRATION

Reader #2: The world mourned and longed for the arrival of the promised Messiah, the one who would be Emmanuel, "God With Us." But it also rejoiced in the hope that the Son of God would appear to come and be its King—the King of Peace.

CHOIR O Come, O Come, Emmanuel Christiansen

O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel, That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to thee,

O Israel.

O come, desire of Nations, and bind the hearts of mankind; Bid Thou our divisions cease. And be our King of Peace.

Reioice! Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to thee.

O Israel.

Emmanuel shall come to thee.

O Israel.

SECOND READING - Isaiah 11:1-10

Reader #3: A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. ² The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD 3 and he will

RESPONSIVE NARRATION

Reader #1: Please join in reading responsively:

We adore this one in the manger. A child has been born for us.

All: God's grace has been given to us.

Reader #2: Our Savior has come.

We have seen the glory of the Lord,

All: Revealed in the face of the Christ child.

Reader #3: Tell the world. Treasure the story.

Ponder it in your heart.

All: We worship and praise God,

For all we have heard and seen!

Reader #4: We rejoice!

All: We rejoice for the love that is to come!

Adapted from http://www.ministrymatters.com/worship/entry/4459/worship-elements-option-1-christmas-eve-2013

What a Glorious Night MUSIC McDonald/Brown/Frey/Smith

Verse 1

The shepherds came to see the baby,

Stood by His mother's side.

Here laid the Savior inside a manger.

Oh, what a glorious night! Oh, what a glorious night!

Chorus

I hear the angels singin', "Hallelujah!

Let the earth receive her King." I know that love has come.

Sing it out:

Jesus Christ is born! Jesus Christ is born!

Verse 2

The shepherds wondered; they couldn't hide it,

Told ev'ryone in sight. All were amazed when they heard how God came Down on the glorious night.

God came down

on this glorious night. (Chorus)

Tag

Glorious, glorious, what a glorious night! Glorious, glorious,

what a glorious night! (Chorus)

Endina

All is calm now, all is quiet. A star shining in the sky. Below in Bethlehem the King is sleeping.

Oh, what a glorious night!

Oh, what a glorious night! (Chorus)

NARRATION

Reader #1: This child was born before we had anything to offer him, before we lifted our voices in praise or our hands to His work, before we even thought to worship Him— in fact, even before we were ever created, God was pursuing us out of love.

Reader #2: We don't deserve the Love of God. We search after everything but God, and God still comes after us, seeking us out with unending love.

Reader #3: God's love was born as a baby in a manger. This baby, Jesus, left heaven and grew and lived among us to show what real love, God's love, looks and feels like. To show us a love that never leaves, love that never disappoints, a love that fills us with new life.

Reader #4: In this time, in this place, let us dwell on that love. Let us put aside thoughts of decorated trees and gifts and malls and meals to ponder God's love.

Pastor: God is with us right now. God is close to us, dwelling with us, delighting in us, and loving us. Today is one more reminder of that love. No matter where we come from, no matter what is going on in our lives, no matter how weary the world has made us, God has sought us out, and brought us here to say, "I love you. I am with you. You are mine."

Adapted from http://www.nailscars.com/drama/dramatic-readings/a-reading-for-christmas/

MUSIC **Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus** #254 (tune #631)

Verse 1

Come, thou long-expected Jesus, Born to set thy people free; From our fears and sins release us: Born to reign in us forever, Let us find our rest in thee. Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art, Dear desire of ev'ry nation, Joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Verse 2

Born thy people to deliver, Born a child, and yet a king; Now thy gracious kingdom bring. By thine own eternal Sprit Rule in all our hearts alone: By thine all-sufficient merit Raise us to thy glorious throne.

delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes or decide by what he hears with his ears; 4but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.

He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

Reader #4: ⁵ Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. ⁶ The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. ⁷ The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. 8 The infant will play near the cobra's den, and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest. 9 They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. ¹⁰ In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious.

Leader: The word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

MUSIC

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

#272 1.2 & 4

Verse 1

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming From tender stem hath sprung. Of Jesse's lineage coming As seers of old have sung. It came a flow'r so bright, Amid the cold of winter, When half-spent was the night.

Verse 2

Isaiah had foretold it. The rose I have in mind: With Mary we behold it,

The virgin mother kind. To show God's love aright, She bore to us a Savior. When half-spent was the night.

Verse 4

O Savior, child of Mary, Who felt our human woe: O Savior, king of glory, Who doest our weakness know: Bring us at length, we pray, To the bright courts of heaven And into endless day.

12

NARRATION

Reader #1: We anticipate and celebrate the coming of the Savior at a time of year when the days are short and the nights are long.

Reader #2: And here, in this Minnesota winter, we anticipate and celebrate the coming of the Savior at a time of year when the air often stings with cold, and the length of winter begins to settle in.

Reader #3: Yet, it is into this holy darkness that Christ will come to dwell among us and rescue us, whose love will come to warm the coldness of the world.

Reader #4: In the least expected and least obvious place, the Son of God will be born. Born as a child to the humblest of women, a king whose throne was a bed of hay. His birth will give the world unspeakable joy.

Inspired by a quote from Frederich Borsch & David Napier at http://godweb.orgchristmasprayers.htm

MUSIC Christmas Day Bergthold/Cash

Verse 1

Joy to the world On a night like no other.

Emmanuel, God is with us

Beggars and kings, Let us come and adore Him.

Rest in His peace And bow before Him.

Chorus

Sing all you people
The Lord almighty reigns.
Sing every creature of God,
Come bless His name
For He is good, For He is good,
He was born to conquer the grave.
Light of the world,
The reason for Christmas day.

Verse 2

Stars we have seen
Over deserts and oceans.
The darkness was deep
But never hopeless.
Redemption came
And His name is Jesus. (Chorus)

Verse 3

From the mountains
We will shout it out
For the Lord,
our God almighty, reigns.
He is with us.
He is with us now
For the Lord, our God almighty, reigns.
(Repeat) (Chorus)

Ending

Light of the world, The reason for Christmas Day.

MUSIC

Angels We Have Heard on High

#289

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.

OFFERTORY RESPONSE

P: Let's pray responsively: Lord, "When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone,

All: When the kings and leaders are home, when the shepherds are back with the flocks,

P: Then the joy and the work of Christmas begins:

All: To find the lost, to heal those broken in spirit,

P: To feed the hungry, to release the oppressed, to rebuild the nations,

All: To bring peace, in your name, to all peoples, to make music with all hearts and voices...

P: And to radiate the Light of Christ, every day, in all that we do and say.

Then the work of Christmas begins.

All: Lord, help us be your light to those around us, those we love and those we encounter, to those with whom we work, worship and live, to those in our city, our nation and our world. Amen.

-- Adapted from quote by Howard Thurman, from http://godweb.org/christmasprayers.htm

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Verse 3

A mother holds the promise tight. Ev'ry wrong will be made right, The road is straight, The burden's light, For in His hands he holds tomorrow. (Chorus 1, Chorus 2)

NARRATION

Reader #1: Christ's humble beginnings made him accessible. Going into a throne room to see a king may be intimidating, but there's nothing intimidating about going into a stable and approaching a feeding trough. You don't need special credentials; you don't need to have an appointment. The shepherds could just come in.

Reader #2: In fact, an angel appeared to that group of shepherds and told them exactly how to find this tiny baby. They were given this good news by an amazing assembly of heavenly beings in order to seek him out.

Reader #3: Once the host of angels left, the shepherds knew what they had to do. They said "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." And they hurried to see Jesus.

Reader #4: My friends, the message of the season is not, "Let it snow" or even, "Let us shop." The message of Christmas is, "Come! Let us worship." And "Let there be God's peace in the world." That is why the shepherds went with haste and excitement...to share and live out the good news of God's love; that is what we are called and compelled to do too.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

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

All: And always with you.

P: Let's share a sign of God's peace with one another.

** Please be seated **

OFFERING

The Spirit moves through the offering we joyfully share. We invite you to leave an offering in the plates or scan the QR code here to make a secure, online gift. Thank you!



** Please stand as you are able**

GOSPEL READING Matthew 1:18-24

Pastor: The Gospel according to Matthew, the first chapter.

All: Glory to you O Lord.

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. 19 Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her guietly. 20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23 "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us"). ²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

CHOIR Mary, How Could You Have Known Albrecht/Althouse

Mary, how could you have known

That an angel would come and proclaim the holy birth,

And you would be chosen to bring God's son to earth?

Mary, how could you have known?

Mary, how could you have known that your child

Would be the Savior just as the prophets said,

And that he would be born in a lowly manger bed?

Mary, how could you have known?

Were you not bewildered? Was it very strange?

^{**} Please be seated **

Did you ever wonder how your life would change? How could you be ready? How could you prepare? How could you imagine? Did you say a prayer? Mary, how could you have known that your son Would be Messiah, and all the world behold that you would name Him Jesus as angels had foretold? Mary, how could you have known?

NARRATION

Reader #1: And so God's Son became human and came to earth to save us. God had promised to send a Messiah, one who would save His people.

Reader #2: He could have easily burst on the scene as a fully grown adult, a tall warrior with fiery eyes and arms of steel. This was what many people were looking for, but it wasn't how God did it.

Reader #3: He came humbly, as an infant. His mother wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, like any peasant of the time. This great gift came in simple wrapping. The one who would be called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father" —the Creator—came down to be born as a baby. It's amazing, and the more you think about it, the more staggering it becomes.

Reader #4: On that night, God sent a Savior. He was born to a young girl of no status or wealth. He was wrapped in rags, given from the heart of God. The perfect gift. God gave us Jesus so that we, in all our weariness, could know the warmth of love. God gave us Jesus to bring us hope. God, in God's love, gave us Jesus to be with us.

Adapted from http://thoughts-about-god.com/christmas /christmas-story and https://
www.crosswalk.com/devotionals/christmas-devotionals/why-a-manger-christmas-devotionalnovember-26.html

MUSIC Of the Father's Love Begotten #295 vs.1, 2 & 3

Verse 1

Of the Father's love begotten ere the worlds began to be, He is Alpha and Omega, he the source, the ending he, Of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see, Evermore and evermore.

Verse 2

Oh, that birth forever blessed, when the virgin, full of grace, By the Holy Ghost conceiving, bore the Savior of our race, And the babe, the world's redeemer, first revealed his sacred face, Evermore and evermore.

Verse 3

This is he whom seers in old time chanted of with one accord, Whom the voices of the prophets promised in their faithful word; Now he shines, the long expected; let creation praise its Lord Evermore and evermore.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

P: We pray to You, O God. Come among us and fill our weary souls as we pray the prayer you taught us...

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as 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.

WORSHIP TEAM

Make Room

Hall/Maher

Verse 1

A fam'ly hiding from the storm
Found no place at the keeper's door.
It was for this a child was born:
To save a world so cold and hollow.
A sleeping town, they did not know
That lying in a manger low
A Savior king who had no home
Has come to heal our sorrows.

Chorus 1

Is there room in your heart? Is there room in your heart? Is there room in your heart For God to write His story.

Verse 2

Shepherds counting sheep at night. Do not fear the glory light. You are precious in His sight. God has come to raise the lowly. (Chorus)

Chorus 2

You can come as you are. It may set you apart, When you make room in your heart And trade your dreams For His glory. Make room in your heart. Make room in your heart.