

Gifts From the Manger

Immanuel Children's Christmas Service 2018
by Karen Maio/Adapted by Immanuel Lutheran Church

K-8 children should take off their coats and leave them in the chapel area, and then go to their assigned seats in the church in the choir loft area. PreK4 children sit with their parents.

Bell

Congregational Hymn: "All Praise to You, Eternal God" (CW 33; TUNE: VON HIMMEL HOCH)
*Stanza 1: K-8 Children Alone (Singing from Loft); Stanzas 2-5: Children and Congregation;
Grades 3-4 children move to front during stanzas 2-5 of hymn.*

1. *All praise to you, eternal God!
Now clothed in human flesh and blood,
You took a manger for your throne
While worlds on worlds are yours alone.*

2. *Once did the skies before you bow;
A virgin's arms contain you now
While angels, who in you rejoice,
Now listen for your infant voice.*

3. *O little Child, you were our guest
That weary ones in you might rest;
Forlorn and lowly was your birth
That we might rise to heav'n from earth.*

4. *You came to us in darkest night
To make us children of the light;
Like angels in the realms divine
Around your throne we, too, will shine.*

Congregation stands for final verse.

5. *All this your love for us has done;
By this our love for you is won;
For this our joyful songs we raise
And shout our thanks in ceaseless praise.*

Congregation is seated.

Welcome by Pastor:

[Personal welcome to Immanuel. Location of bathrooms, etc.]

Pause for title to come up.

If I were to ask any one of the children here, “What is a major part of a birthday celebration?” one of the first answers I’m sure I would hear would be, “Presents!” [*Gift graphic.*] Gifts are fun to receive, and some people find great satisfaction in picking out just the right present to give to someone. We are going to be talking about gifts, but not so much about gifts that are for the birthday boy, Jesus, but rather, gifts that are for all of us. Gifts that our gracious God generously gives to us through Jesus. Gifts from the manger!

Children’s Anthem (Grades 3-4): “It’s Christmastime” by Karen Maio

It’s Christmastime, so it is time to celebrate again,
To share the joy of the baby boy who was born in Bethlehem!

Every year we tell the story, the greatest story ever told,
Of a baby in the manger, on a night so clear and cold.

It’s Christmastime, so it is time to celebrate again,
To share the joy of the baby boy who was born in Bethlehem!

And this baby born to Mary was really Jesus Christ the Lord,
He’s the Word made flesh Messiah, whom the angel hosts adored.

It’s Christmastime, so it is time to celebrate again,
To share the joy of the baby boy who was born in Bethlehem!

Now the joy that we are feeling comes from the peace we have within,
Knowing that this baby Jesus has redeemed the world from sin.

He is the promised one.
He’s Jesus, God’s own Son!

It’s Christmastime, so it is time to celebrate again,
To share the joy of the baby boy who was born in Bethlehem!
Jesus was born in Bethlehem!

God gives us the gift of the WORD made flesh.

- (1) Narrator: At just the right time, God put his plan of salvation into action. In the gospel of Luke, we hear about an angel who appeared to a young girl named Mary, who was to be married to a man named Joseph. She was probably terrified at the angel’s sudden appearance. The angel calmed her fears and told her about the birth of the Savior.

Grade 4: The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him 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 Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”

Grade 3: “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?”

Grade 4: The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on 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. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail.”

Grade 3: “I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.” Then the angel left her. (Luke 1:30-38)

(2) N: God kept his promise; the Messiah finally came. His birth was not heralded by royal trumpets, but occurred simply, humbly, quietly, in the night. He was the answer to generations of prayers as the light to banish all doubt and darkness.

The gospel writer John records the Christmas story from heaven’s perspective:

Grade 3: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

Grade 4: He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.

Grade 3: The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
(John 1:1-3,10-14)

Grades 3-4 return to their seats during hymn.

Grades 5-8 move to the front during hymn.

Congregational Hymn: “Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord” (CW 28:1 and CW 2:2,5)

1. Let the earth now praise the Lord,
Who has truly kept his word
And at last to us did send
Christ, the sinner's help and friend.

2. 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.

3. Praise to God the Father sing,
Praise to God the Son, our King,
Praise to God the Spirit be
Ever and eternally.

God gives us the gift of a KING.

(3) N: The prophet Isaiah foretold the birth of King Jesus about seven hundred years before Jesus was born.

Grades 5-6: Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14)
For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this. (Isaiah 9:6,7)

(4) N: The people waited, year after year, for the fulfillment of these prophecies, for their King, their Messiah, who would deliver them.

Grades 5-6: In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register.
So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. (Luke 2:1-7)

God gives us the gift of JOY.

(5) N: This is the season of joy. Mary just had a baby! The shepherds were the first to hear the good news.

Grades 7-8: There were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, 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. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." (Luke 2:8-12)

Children's Anthem (Grades 5-8): "Shepherds, Arise" by Dan R. Edwards

Shepherds, arise! Listen to the angels sing!
Good news, great joy! Tidings of the newborn King.
Fear not! Behold these glad tidings,
Come unto you on this day;
Jesus the promised Messiah, Sleeps in a manger of hay.

Shepherds, arise! Listen to the angels sing.
Good news, great joy! Tidings of the newborn King.
There in a Bethlehem manger
God's matchless gift of great worth,
God's wondrous love to us bringing Peace and good tidings to earth.

Shepherds, arise! Listen to the angels sing!
Good news, great joy! Tidings of the newborn King!
Shepherds, arise! Listen to the angels sing!
Good news, great joy! Tidings of the newborn King!
Tidings of the newborn King! Tidings of the newborn King! Shepherds, arise!

(6) N: The shepherds glorified and praised God for all that they had seen and heard. This joy was not just for the original cast of the Christmas story. It extends to all who are redeemed, or bought back, by Jesus' precious blood.

Grades 7-8: They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away. (Isaiah 35:10)

(7) N: Know the joy that is ours this season. Show the joy. Proclaim the Messiah to all!

Grades 5-8 return to their seats during hymn.

PreK4 and Kindergarten move to the front during hymn.

The Offering will take place during the singing of this hymn. Extra time may be added if needed.

Congregational Hymn: "Now Sing We, Now Rejoice" (CW 34)

1. 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!

2. 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!

3. 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!

4. 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!

God gives us the gift of LOVE.

(8) N: From year to year many things can change—where you live, where you go to school, how you dress, how you style your hair—but there are some things that do not change over time. People sin. People need a Savior from sin. God loves us and has sent us that Savior.

PreK 4: God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

(9) N: The angels couldn't contain their joy at the news that Jesus had been born, and they joined with the messenger angel in singing praises to God for his gift of love.

K: Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."
(Luke 2:13,14)

Children's Anthem (PreK4 and Kindergarten): "Away in a Manger" Traditional Melody with Harp Accompaniment

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright 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 you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.

God gives us the gift of HOPE.

(10) N: I hope I get an Apple watch for Christmas. I hope the Packers win their next game. I hope it snows for Christmas. I hope my teacher gives me a good grade on that math test. These people all wish for things to happen. They desire them, long for them, hope for them. Yet not one of them can say with absolute certainty that his or her wish will come true.

(11) N: The hope we include as a gift from our manger tonight is different in that it has a sure promise of fulfillment. Through God's gift of love, our Savior offers to all who believe in him the sure hope of heaven.

(12) N: We read in Titus 3:7: "Having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life." And also in 1 Peter 1:3-4: "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you."

*PreK4 and Kindergarten return to their seats during hymn.
Grades 1-2 move to the front during hymn.*

Congregational Hymn: "I Am So Glad When Christmas Comes" (CW 51)

1. I am so glad when Christmas comes,
The night of Jesus' birth,
When Beth'lem's star shone as the sun,
And angels sang on earth.

2. The little child of Bethlehem,
He was a king indeed!
For he came down from heav'n above
To help a world in need.

3. He lives again in heaven's realm,
The Son of God today;
And still he loves his little ones
And hears them when they pray.

Congregation stands for the singing of final stanza.

4. I, too, shall sing my Savior's praise,
My joy, my crown, my Lord;
For he has made me his own child
By water and the Word.

Congregation is seated.

God gives us the gift of LIGHT.

(13) N: Into a world of darkness, God shone his glorious light. From the skies full of light and angels to the star that guided the wise men, God signaled to all people that Jesus was born. His promise of salvation is a light in the minds and hearts of all who hear the news and believe. Jesus was born to be the one, true light to guide our lives and show us the way to salvation. Jesus said:

Grade 1: I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. (John 8:12)

Grade 2: In [Jesus] was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. (John 1:4, 9)

Children's Anthem (Grades 1-2): "Shine on Me" by Karen Maio

Into a world of darkness, there shone a heavenly light.
Jesus the promised Savior, was born that holy night.
Shine on me. Change this heart you see.
Let it be your home inside of me.

Out in the desert calling, "Repent, for Jesus is near."
John points us to the Savior; the light of the world is here.
Shine on me. Change this heart you see.
Let it be your home inside of me.

The Lord of light has shown us he is the truth and the way.
Eternal life he'll give us when he returns someday.
Shine on me. Change this heart you see.
Let it be your home inside of me.

God gives us the gift of PEACE.

(14) N: *Peace* is not always the first word that comes to mind when one thinks about Christmas. It can be a rather busy and noisy time with people rushing about to parties and shopping malls, bells ringing at the store entrances, and speakers playing carols everywhere you go. Yet this is the gift Christ brings us.

Grade 1: Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." (Luke 2:14)

Grade 2: Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. (John 14:27)

Congregational Hymn: "Silent Night" (CW 60)

During the singing of the hymn all K-8, children move forward (carrying battery operated candles) to the front.

1. 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.

2. 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!

3. 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.

(15) N: "Heavenly peace" is not a worldly "peace and harmony among men" kind of peace, although that is a wonderful thing we could pray for. Rather, this is the peace between God and man that results from Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Because Christ was punished for all our sins, we can stand blameless and holy before God. Through faith in Christ and his redeeming grace, we have God's gift of peace.

Grades K-8: Since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:1)

Prayer by Pastor:

Dear God, how can we begin to thank you? Our manger overflows with wonderful gifts from the Christ Child. What can we give in return for all the love you have shown us? Though our gifts would pale in comparison, we can offer our hearts full of love and obedience, our voices in songs of praise, and our lives in service to you. Give us your Holy Spirit to enable us to gladly and willingly bring you our gifts, Lord, out of love for you and all you have given us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Children's Anthem (Grades K-8): "Celtic Christmas Lullaby" by Joel Raney

In a lowly stable in Bethlehem, under starlight, glowing above,
A gift was given, a child was born, and heaven spilled over with love.
From a quiet hillside near Bethlehem came shepherds seeking the child;
And they fell to their knees as they worshiped him,
Mary's baby so tender and mild.

And the manger cradled a holy sight, and the stars began to sing.
As the angels danced in the morning light, all the bells of heaven did ring!
And the rocks and rivers and mountains rejoiced;
And the whole wide world did sing, "Emmanuel, Emmanuel.
Welcome to the newborn King."

And as Mary whispered a lullaby heaven's angels sang of his birth,
Of joy to the world, of love's pure light,
And the promise of peace on earth.

And the manger cradled a holy sight, and the stars began to sing.
As the angels danced in the morning light, all the bells of heaven did ring!
And the rocks and rivers and mountains rejoiced;
And the whole wide world did sing, "Emmanuel, Emmanuel.
Welcome to the newborn King."

"Emmanuel, Emmanuel.
Welcome to the newborn King."

Responsive Prayer:

M: Dear Lord Jesus, you came into this sin-sick world to be our Savior from sin.

C: We thank you for your gift of love as the Word made flesh.

M: You show us that you are the true and only way to salvation and how we are now a new creation in you.

C: We thank you for your gifts of light and life.

M: We rejoice with the angels that we can come before you in prayer and gladly proclaim the news of our Savior's birth.

C: We thank you for your gifts of peace and joy.

M: Reign in our hearts, Lord Jesus, both now and in eternity.

C: We thank you for your gifts of hope from the newborn King.

Blessing

Congregational Hymn: "Joy to the World" (CW 62: 1, 2, 4)

K-8 children exit to their spots or the gathering space.

1. 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.

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

3. 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.