

“The Jesse Tree”

School Christmas Service

+++

✠ IN THE NAME OF JESUS ✠

Pre-service Music

Eighth Grade Piano Students Selected Carols for Christmas

School Choir “He Is Born” – Linda Cable Shute

“Before the Paling of the Stars” – John Boda

**Processional Hymn “Oh, Come, All You Children”
SGL 9**

Congregation and School

**Oh, come, all you children, oh, come one and all;
To Bethlehem haste to the manger so small.
God’s Son for a gift has been sent you this night
To be your Redeemer, your Joy and Delight.**

**He’s born in a stable for you and for me;
Draw near by the bright, gleaming starlight to see,
In swaddling clothes lying, so meek and so mild,
And purer than angels, the heavenly Child.**

**See, Mary and Joseph, with love-beaming eyes,
Are gazing upon the rude bed where He lies;
The shepherds are kneeling with hearts full of love,
While angels sing loud alleluias above.**

**Kneel down and adore Him with shepherds today;
Oh, lift up your hands now and praise Him as they;
Rejoice that a Savior from sin you can boast,
And join in the song of the heavenly host.**

Invocation

P: In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Responsive Reading Isaiah 11:1-10

P: There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

C: **And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.**

P: And His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what His eyes see, or decide disputes by what His ears hear,

C: **but with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall kill the wicked.**

P: Righteousness shall be the belt of His waist, and faithfulness the belt of His loins.

C: **The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them.**

P: The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

C: **The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder’s den.**

P: They shall not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

C: **In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of Him shall the nations inquire, and His resting place shall be glorious.**

Prayer

P: Let us pray.

O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that, as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes again to be our Judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

(Musical Interlude)

C1: I think I’m done sweeping.

C2: I’ve got all the boxes gathered together and all the lights are up.

C3: I think the place looks pretty good.

C4: We have a few leftover pieces of pizza if anyone wants them.

C5: Oh, there’s one more thing that I found to put out. *(offstage—brings out stump)*

“The Jesse Tree”

C3: There goes making the place look pretty good.

C2: What is that?

C4: That’s not even a Christmas decoration, that’s just a tree stump.

C5: I got it out of a box that said “Christmas-Jesse Tree” on it.

C3: Christmas is about Jesus, not Jesse. You misread the box.

C4: What does a dead stump have to do with Christmas?

C1: It has a Bible reference on it. Isaiah 11:1.

(Freeze Action or dim lights except spot on stump)

7-8: Isaiah 11:1 and 2 says: “There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. And His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.”

S1: Jesse was King David’s father and one of Jesus’ ancestors. A Jesse Tree is a kind of family tree for Jesus. Believe it or not, this old stump can help us remember how God chose to save us through Jesus His Son.

S2: The stump of the tree reminds us that we were dead because of our sin and unable to help ourselves. That’s the bad news. But God didn’t leave us dead and cut off. The Good News is God chose to reach out to us and give us new life in Jesus.

(Musical interlude)

(Symbol for creation is brought forward—Earth)

K-1: God chose to create life.

C3: That’s a pretty ornament.

C4: It looks like the earth.

C5: Even I know that’s in the Bible, right at the beginning.

5th: Genesis 1:24-28 says: And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so.

“And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind.” And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

“The Jesse Tree”

So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

S3: God made everything, even life itself. He also made people to care for His creation. Everything He made was good and perfect.

S4: The first people, Adam and Eve, were given simple instructions, which they did not follow. Although there was only one thing they were not allowed to do, that is exactly what they did. They chose to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

S5: Adam and Eve’s choice had serious consequences: death and separation from God forever. All mankind would now suffer the same punishment because their sin separated them from God. That’s the bad news.

S6: The Good News is that God chose a plan to save Adam and Eve, and us.

(Symbol for the fall is brought forward—Snake and foot)

K-1: God chose to save all people.

C1: Look at that ornament. There’s a snake on it.

C5: And a foot! That’s just plain weird.

C2: Maybe not. Listen to this verse from Genesis.

2nd: In Genesis 3:15, God says: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her Offspring; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”

S7: This is the first promise of a Savior. The snake represents sin and the devil. Someone was going to have to take on the punishment for all that sin. The snake gets to take a bite. That’s the bad news.

S8: The Good News is that Jesus is the “foot” that would come to crush sin and the devil. God chose to send His one and only Son to take the punishment for Adam and Eve, and for us.

Hymn “What Hope! An Eden Prophesied” LSB 342

Grades 5-8

What hope! An Eden prophesied Where tame live with the wild;
The lamb and lion side by side, Led by a little child!

A shoot will sprout from Jesse’s stem, A branch from David’s line,
A Prince of Peace in Bethlehem: The fruit of God’s design.

“The Jesse Tree”

Come, Jesus, come, Messiah Lord, Lost Paradise restore;
Lead past the angel’s flaming sword—Come, open heaven’s door.

(Symbol for Abraham and Sarah is brought forward—Man and woman and camel/tent)

K-1: God chose Abraham and Sarah.

C4: There’s a camel on this one. Are those the wise men?

C3: I don’t think so. That’s a man and woman.

C2: I’m pretty sure they are Abraham and Sarah. They are written about in Genesis, too.

3rd: In Genesis 12:2-3, God says to Abram: “And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.

“I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

S9: God’s plan for salvation took place in God’s perfect timing. That meant that people on earth had to wait for a Savior. That’s the bad news.

S10: The Good News is that God never left His people without hope. Abraham believed God’s promises and did what God told him to do. God chose Abraham and Sarah to be the parents of His chosen people; the ancestors of Jesus Himself.

(Symbol for Moses is brought forward—Burning bush)

K-1: God chose Moses.

C5: Okay, okay, this one I know. It is a burning bush. It’s got to be Moses.

3rd: In Exodus 3:10, God says to Moses: “Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.”

S11: Sometimes God’s people got lost along the way and thought that He forgot them. The Jews, God’s chosen people, were slaves in Egypt. That’s the bad news.

S12: The Good News is that God never forgets. He always keeps His promises. God chose Moses to rescue His people and bring them out of Egypt into the Promised Land.

(Symbol for David is brought forward—Anointing oil and crown)

K-1: God chose David

C1: There’s a crown so this one must be a king.

C4: That looks like oil and this is Jesse’s stump so this must stand for David.

2nd: I Samuel 16:13 says: Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed [David] in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day forward.

“The Jesse Tree”

S13: God continued to lead and guide His people, but they wanted a king like everyone else. The first king He gave them was Saul. Although God was faithful to Saul, Saul was not faithful to God. We are not always faithful to God either. That’s the bad news.

S14: The Good News is that God is always faithful to His people. He chose a new king for Israel, David. David was not perfect, but he was faithful to God and wrote many Psalms of praise. The promised Savior would come from this faithful man’s family.

Hymn “The People That in Darkness Sat” *LSB* 412

Congregation and School

**The people that in darkness sat
A glorious light have seen;
The light has shined on them who long
In shades of death have been,
In shades of death have been.**

**To us a Child of hope is born,
To us a Son is giv’n,
And on His shoulder ever rests
All pow’r in earth and heav’n,
All pow’r in earth and heav’n.**

**His name shall be the Prince of Peace,
The Everlasting Lord,
The Wonderful, the Counselor,
The God by all adored,
The God by all adored.**

**His righteous government and pow’r
Shall over all extend;
On judgment and on justice based,
His reign shall have no end,
His reign shall have no end.**

(Symbol for the prophets is brought forward—Flower and candle)

K-1: God chose prophets.

C5: A candle and a flower?!?

C3: Well, the candle is light that means God is with us. But I don’t get the flower.

C2: The flower could refer to a prophecy in Isaiah. Isaiah 35 talks about the desert blooming at the coming of the Lord. Maybe this is a symbol for the prophets.

6th: Isaiah 9:6-7 says: “For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

“Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.”

S15: Just like us, God’s people continued to rebel. They forgot God’s promises and even worshiped other gods. That’s the bad news.

S16: The Good News is that God constantly calls us back to Him. He chose prophets like Isaiah to remind His people that He loved them and was sending a Messiah.

Song “Come Along with Me to Bethlehem”

Kindergarten

Come along with me to Bethlehem To see the Baby there.
Come along with me to worship Him, The Christ Child pure and fair.
For Jesus is God’s Son, you know, Sent down here from above
To be our Lord and Savior too, To teach us of God’s love.

Come along with me to Bethlehem, Out on that starry plain
Where shepherds gathered round to hear The angels’ glad refrain.
“Glory to God on high,” they sang, “And peace on earth to men.”
Come along with me to Bethlehem, Where hope is born again.

Come along with me to Bethlehem, Where Wise Men from afar
Were shown the way to the manger side By a brightly shining star.
They brought the Christ Child frankincense And gold and myrrh gifts too.
Come along with me, you wise men all, And give the gift of “you.”

(Symbol for Bethlehem is brought forward—City of Bethlehem)

K-1: God chose Bethlehem.

C4: Looks like a picture of a city.

C1: If it’s a city and it’s Christmas, it’s got to be Bethlehem!

4th: In Micah 5:2, God says: “But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for Me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.”

S17: God’s people were so rebellious that He allowed them to be conquered and scattered. That’s the bad news.

S18: The Good News is that God’s plan of salvation included gathering His people. He chose Bethlehem as the place of His Son’s birth. Through this little town, God would begin to gather His people once more.

Hymn “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming” *LSB* 359
Setting by Mark Bender

School Choir

Lo, how a rose e’er blooming From tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse’s lineage coming As prophets long have sung.
It came, a flow’ret bright, Amid the cold of winter,
When half-spent was the night.

Isaiah ’twas 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.

(Symbol for Mary and Joseph with manger is brought forward—Manger Scene)

K-1: God chose Mary.

C2: Another man and woman?

C 3: By now, don’t you think it is time for Mary and Joseph with the baby Jesus?

6th: Luke 2:1-7 says: In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.

This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria.

And all went to be registered, each to his own town.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David,

to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.

And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth.

And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

S19: The Savior that God was sending had to be human in order to take our place and die for our sins. That’s the bad news.

S20: The Good News is that God sent His Son Jesus. God chose Mary and Joseph to be His earthly parents. Because Jesus was both True God and True Man, He would be able to complete God’s plan.

Hymn “Let Our Gladness Have No End” *LSB* 381

Grades 1-4

Let our gladness have no end, alleluia!
For to earth did Christ descend, alleluia!
On this day God gave us Christ, His Son, to save us;
Christ, His Son, to save us.

Prophesied in days of old, alleluia!
God has sent Him as foretold, alleluia! *Refrain*

See, the loveliest blooming rose, alleluia!
From the branch of Jesse grows, alleluia! *Refrain*

Into flesh is made the Word, alleluia!
He, our refuge and our Lord, alleluia! *Refrain*

(Symbol for Shepherds—Sheep and staff)

K-1: God chose shepherds.

C4: This is an easy one, a sheep and a stick means the shepherds.

5th: Luke 2:8-20 says: “And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

“And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear.

“And the angel said to them, ‘Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

“ ‘For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

“ ‘And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.’

“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

“ ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!’

*(Grades K-8 sing refrain of “Angels We Have Heard on High” *LSB* 368)*

Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

“When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.’

“The Jesse Tree”

“And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Baby lying in a manger.

“And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this Child.

“And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.

“But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart.

“And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.”

S21: People are just like sheep. They wander around lost unless they have a good leader. That’s the bad news.

S22: The Good News is that God sent the Good Shepherd to gather and lead His people. He chose the shepherds to be the first eyewitnesses of the birth of the Savior to remind us of our Good Shepherd.

Hymn “Gentle Mary Laid Her Child” *LSB* 374

K-4: Gentle Mary laid her child Lowly in a manger;
There He lay, the Undefined, To the world a stranger.
Such a babe in such a place, Can He be the Savior?
Ask the saved of all the race Who have found His favor.

5-8: Angels sang about His birth, Wise Men sought and found Him;
Heaven’s star shone brightly forth Glory all around Him.
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight, Heard the angels singing;
All the plains were lit that night, All the hills were ringing.

**Congregation/School: Gentle Mary laid her child Lowly in a manger;
He is still the Undefined But no more a stranger.
Son of God of humble birth, Beautiful the story;
Praise His name in all the earth; Hail the King of glory!**

(Symbol for Jesus is brought forward—Cross and open tomb—and is hung on a shoot)

K-1: God chose Jesus.

C5: This is the wrong holiday. That belongs on an Easter tree, not a Jesse stump.

C1: Christmas is about Jesus. And He had a promise to fulfill.

4th: In John 3:16-17, Jesus says: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

“For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him.”

S23: Because of our sins, Jesus had to die. That is the bad news.

“The Jesse Tree”

S24: The Good News is that Jesus didn’t just die. God chose Jesus because He could crush Satan: conquering sin and death. Jesus lived the perfect life we couldn’t live and rose from the dead so that we too could rise to live with Him in heaven.

(Symbol for Us is brought forward—People)

K-1: God chose us.

C1: What do you think this could be?

C2: Looks like lots of people.

C3: Happy, joyful people.

C4: Joyful, saved people.

C5: People just like us.

7th-8th: 1 Peter 2: 9-10 says: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

“Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”

S25: We were completely lost and needed a Savior. That’s the bad news.

S26: The Good News is that God chose us and made us His own.

S27: We like the living Christmas tree that is all green and sparkly. But the truth is that without God—we are the stump. Cut off, laid bare, wasted opportunities. That’s the bad news.

S28: The Good News is that God’s love and action brings new life to us. God chose to love and save us.

K-8: In John 15:16-17, Jesus says: “You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give it to you.

“These things I command you, so that you will love one another.”

Hymn “O Sing to the Lord” LSB 808

K-8: O sing to the Lord, O sing God a new song. *(3 times)*
O sing to our God, O sing to our God.

K-4: For God is the Lord! And God has done wonders. *(3 times)*
O sing to our God, O sing to our God.

K-8: So dance for our God And blow all the trumpets. *(3 times)*
And sing to our God, And sing to our God.

“The Jesse Tree”

5-8: O shout to our God, Who gave us the Spirit. *(3 times)*
O sing to our God, O sing to our God.

K-8: For Jesus is Lord! Amen! Alleluia! *(3 times)*
O sing to our God, O sing to our God.

S29: The Good News is God did keep His promise to send us the Savior—Jesus.

S30: The Good News is that Jesus did save us!

S31: The Good News is Jesus was born in Bethlehem for you and me.

S32: The Good News is that Jesus did shed His blood to pay for our sins. We are forgiven.

S33: The Good News is that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to work faith in our hearts in Jesus.

S34: The Good News is that Jesus rose again from death and so we will live forever with Him in heaven.

S35: The Good News is that Jesus loves us and is with us every moment.

S36: The Good News is that we get to share the Good News with others.

S37: The Good News is that we are chosen to live, love and serve.

**Gathering of the Offerings Unity Lutheran School
East St. Louis, Illinois**

**Handbell Class “Oh, Come, All You Children”
Michael Helman**

Handbell Elective Class

**School Choir “Bright and Glorious Is the Sky”
Jeffrey Blersch**

Bright and glorious is the sky, Radiant are the heavens high
Where the golden stars are shining All their rays to earth inclining
Beckon us to heaven above, Beckon us to heaven above.

Sages from the East afar, When they saw this wondrous star,
Went to find the King of nations And to offer their oblations
Unto Him as Lord and King, Unto Him as Lord and King.

Guided by the star, they found Him whose praise the ages sound.
We too have a star to guide us Which forever will provide us
With the light to find our Lord, With the light to find our Lord.

As a star, God’s holy Word Leads us to our King and Lord;
Brightly from its sacred pages Shall this light throughout the ages
Shine upon our path of life, Shine upon our path of life.

Hymn Sing Congregation and Students

“O Little Town of Bethlehem” *LSB* 361

Sung alternating between the tunes ST. LOUIS (LSB 361) and FOREST GREEN (LSB 362)

**All: O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting Light.
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.**

**For Christ is born of Mary, And, gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep Their watch of wond’ring love.
O morning stars, together Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King And peace to all the earth!**

**How silently, how silently The wondrous Gift is giv’n!
So God imparts to human hearts The blessings of His heav’n.
No ear may hear His coming; But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still The dear Christ enters in.**

**O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in, Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!**

“It Came upon the Midnight Clear” *LSB* 366

**All: 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, goodwill to all, From heav’n’s all-gracious king.”
The world in solemn stillness lay To hear the angels sing.**

**Still through the cloven skies they come With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heav’nly music floats O’er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains They bend on hov’ring wing,
And ever o’er its babel sounds The blessed angels sing.**

**All you, beneath your heavy load, By care and guilt bent low,
Who toil along a dreary way With painful steps and slow:
Look up, for golden is the hour, Come swiftly on the wing,
The Prince was born to bring you peace; Of Him the angels sing.**

**For lo, the days have come to pass By prophets seen of old,
When down into the circling years Came Christ as was foretold.
His word of peace shall to the earth God’s ancient promise bring,
And all who take this gift will hear The song the angels sing.**

“Silent Night, Holy Night” *LSB* 363

1-4: Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht! Alles schläft, einsam wacht
Nur das traute, hochheilige Paar. Holder Knabe in lockigen Haar,
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh, Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh.

**All: 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!**

**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.**

Prayers

Lord’s Prayer

Benediction

Recessional Hymn “Joy to the World” *LSB* 387

**All: 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.**

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

**No more let sins and sorrows grow Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found, Far as, far as the curse is found.**

**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.**

**Postlude “The People That in Darkness Sat”
Paul Manz**

✠ GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST ✠