

“Decorated for Christmas”

School Christmas Service

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PIANO PRELUDE Selected Carols for Christmas

Eighth Grade Piano Students

STRING PRELUDE “A Medley of Christmas Carols”

CHORAL PRELUDE “People, Look East” - Donald Rotermund

People, look East. The time is near Of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able, Trim the hearth, and set the table.
People, look East, and sing today: Love the Guest is on the way.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, One more Seed is planted there;
Give up your strength the Seed to nourish, That in course the Flower may flourish.
People, look East, and sing today: Love the Rose is on the way.

Angels, announce to man and beast Him who cometh from the East.
Set every peak and valley humming With the Word, the Lord is coming.
People, look East, and sing today: Love the Lord is on the way.

BAND PRELUDE “What Child Is This” - John O’Reilly

PROCESSIONAL HYMN “Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful” *LW 41*

All: Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant!
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him Born the King of angels:
Oh, come, let us adore Him, Oh, come, let us adore Him,
Oh, come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

Highest, most holy, Light of light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
Son of the Father Now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God In the highest: *Refrain*

**Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be glory giv’n!
Word of the Father, Now in flesh appearing! *Refrain***

INVOCATION

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

C: **Amen**

PRAYER

P: O God, You sent Your only Son Jesus Christ into the world. By His obedience, suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension the debt of sin for all mankind was paid. Through the saving faith we have received from You we are reconciled to You through Your Son. We give You thanks that we may hear again this evening the sacred story of Your great love for us and all people. Through the power of the Holy Spirit lead us to daily repent of our sins and look only to Jesus our Savior for forgiveness and new life. Keep us in the one true faith until He returns on the Last Day to take us and all believers to heaven, where He reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen**

CALL TO LISTEN

Kindergarten: Christmas is coming,
Christmas is near.
Come listen to the children,
The message is clear.

Jesus is our Savior,
He came for you and me.
Born in a manger,
For all the world to see.

MESSAGE

Narrator 1: At this time of year mountains of decorations can be found everywhere we look. It can be difficult to focus on the real reason that we decorate and celebrate. Let’s take a few moments to be calm, look, listen, and see if we can find Christmas in a Christmas tree.

Student 1: Wow! Look at the Christmas tree. I can’t believe that Mom is letting us decorate it by ourselves this year.

Student 2: Why do people put up a tree anyway? I mean, I know they are pretty, but why a tree and not something else?

Student 3: What do you mean “why a tree”? What do you want someone to decorate?

Student 2: But I really want to know—why do people decorate trees at Christmas time and how did the custom start?

Narrator 2: An evergreen tree is a symbol of hope and faith. The fact that it remains green year round reminds of us God’s faithfulness to us and to His promises.

Grade 1: Psalm 145:13 says: “The LORD is faithful to all His promises and loving toward all He has made.” [NIV]

Student 4: Hey guys, I have the decorations here in this box.

Student 5: You should see all the old stuff in here.

Student 1: Well, we all know Mom has ornaments and decorations that have been passed down from generation to generation.

Student 6: Yeah, but you know, this box is huge. We better get started, or we’ll never finish.

Student 7: I guess we should start with the lights.

Student 8: That’s a good idea, here they are.

Narrator 3: The lights we hang on our Christmas trees each year remind us that Jesus came to be the Light of the World.

Grade 3: John, chapter 1, says: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.

Grade 4: “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. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.” [NIV]

(Pretend to decorate the tree with lights.)

SONG “In a Little Stable”

Text: H. W. Gockel; Music: E. W. Schroeter

Kindergarten: In a little stable Far across the sea
Was a little Baby Just like you and me.

Not a bed or cradle, Not a pillow deep,
But a lowly manger Was His place to sleep.

Shepherds stood around Him, Angels watched with care,
For this Babe was Jesus, Lying, smiling there.

Oh, I love this Jesus, Who was little then,
For I know He loves me, Little though I am.

(Flip the switch to light the trees.)

Student 3: Hey, this is the toilet paper tube candle I made in Kindergarten. I can’t believe Mom saved it.

Student 4: Mom is pretty sentimental, and she knows that old story about Martin Luther.

Student 2: What story?

Narrator 4: Legend has it that Martin Luther began the tradition of decorating trees to celebrate Christmas. One crisp Christmas Eve he was walking through snow-covered woods and was struck by the beauty of a group of small evergreens. Their branches, dusted with snow, shimmered in the moonlight. When he got home, he set up a little fir tree indoors so he could share this story with his children. He decorated it with candles, which he lit in honor of Christ’s birth.

Student 8: That’s funny; I didn’t know we had fruit shaped ornaments.

Student 7: I think the fruit reminds us of the beginning of sin in the world.

Narrator 5: Although God made our world perfect; it did not stay that way. In the Garden of Eden Adam and Eve were tempted by Satan through a serpent. They gave in to Satan’s temptation. They broke God’s good law by eating fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Through their action sin and death came into God’s perfect world. Sin separated them from God. By their sin all people are born sinful. Apart from God everyone deserves only eternal death in hell.

Narrator 6: However, God is loving and gracious, and He promised to save mankind.

Grade 2: In Genesis 3, God said to the serpent: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will crush your head, and you will strike His heel.”
[NIV]

Narrator 6: This was the first of God’s promises of the coming Savior.

(Decorate tree with more candles and fruit.)

HYMN “All Mankind Fell in Adam’s Fall” LW 363

Grades 5-8: All mankind fell in Adam’s fall,
One common sin infects us all;
From sire to son the bane descends,
And over all the curse impends.

Grades 3-4: Through humankind corruption creeps
And them in dreadful bondage keeps;
In guilt they draw the infant breath
And reap its fruits of woe and death.

Grades 3-8: From hearts depraved, to evil prone,
Flow thoughts and deeds of sin alone;
God’s image lost, the darkened soul
Seeks not nor finds its heav’nly goal.

**All: But Christ, the second Adam, came
To bear our sin and woe and shame,
To be our Life, our Light, our Way,
Our only Hope, our only Stay.**

**All: As by one man all mankind fell
And, born to sin, was doomed to hell,
So by one Man, who took our place,
We all received the gift of grace.**

**All: We thank You, Christ; new life is ours,
New light, new hope, new strength, new pow’rs:
This grace our ev’ry way attend
Until we reach our journey’s end.**

Student 5: Here’s a clock. Most people don’t have one of these on their trees. I wonder why Mom has this?

Student 6: Hey, I made that in school, let me hang it.

Grade 3: In Galatians 4:4, St. Paul writes, “But when the time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.” [NIV]

Narrator 7: God’s timing is perfect. Jesus came at just the right time to bring salvation to the world. By faith we also live under His perfect timing in all aspects of our life. And, by faith, we await the perfect time of His second coming on the Last Day.

Student 5: Look here’s a cross, I think it’s in the wrong box.

Student 7: Shouldn’t that be in the Easter decoration box?

Student 8: Well think about it, without Christmas, there couldn’t be an Easter.

Grade 4: In Philippians 2:8, St. Paul writes, “And being found in appearance as a man, [Christ] humbled Himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross.” [NIV]

Narrator 8: Although Jesus Christ was born a tiny baby in Bethlehem, the purpose for His birth was to be our Savior. He came to live and die in our place.

SONG “On Christmas Morning Children Sing”

Text: Henry Lettermann; Music: Carl Schalk

K-8: On Christmas morning children sing, Here in the manger lies our King:
From loving hearts His praises spring. On Christmas morning we greet our King.

5-8: Large and small, Children all, Join in the song that has no end;
Earth and sky, All reply, Jesus has come to be our Friend! *Refrain*

K-4: Christmas tree, Calvary, Crossing in God’s most awesome plan
Sin and grace, Face to face, Bringing together God and man! *Refrain*

5-8: Oh, my Lord, Here adored, Find in my song Your answered call;
Sin and grace, Face to face, Jesus, redeeming mankind’s fall! *Refrain*

Student 6: Oh look! Here’s the box with the Nativity scene in it!

Student 3: Now that’s an obvious one. Christmas is the celebration of Jesus’ birth.

Student 4: That’s my favorite set of decorations! I remember when I got to read part of Luke 2 in the school Christmas service.

Grade 5: “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 his 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 room for them in the inn.

Grade 5: “And 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 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, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests.’ ” [NIV]

HYMN “Angels We Have Heard on High” *LW* 55

Men and boys: Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.

All: Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Women and girls: Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be Which inspire your heav’nly song?

All: Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Men and boys: Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

All: Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Student 5: I found another interesting decoration. It looks like an “A” and a horseshoe.

Student 1: I don’t think that is a horseshoe. Look at it more closely.

Grade 1: In Revelation 22:13, Jesus says, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.” [NIV]

Narrator 9: The Greek letters the Alpha and the Omega are often used as symbols for Jesus. They remind us that He always has been and always will be God. He is eternal. powerful enough to complete the task of saving the world. Another symbol that reminds us that Jesus is without beginning and end is the wreath.

Student 4: Look here is another of the symbols for Christ’s name.

Student 6: I recognize that as the Chi Rho. It stands for the first two letters of Christ’s name in the Greek alphabet.

Grade 2: In Matthew 16:15-16, Jesus asked His disciples, “But what about you? ... “Who do you say I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” [NIV]

Narrator 10: Christ is the Greek word for “anointed one” meaning that Jesus was the one chosen to be our Savior.

Student 2: Look, here’s a shell.

Student 7: I love looking at the shell on our tree each year. It reminds me of my baptism.

Student 8: I never thought about baptism being part of Christmas.

Narrator 11: Shells are used as a symbol of our Lord’s baptism, but they also remind us of our own baptism. Through baptism we are connected to the forgiveness Jesus won for us on the cross.

Grade 6: In Romans 6: 4, St. Paul writes, “We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.” [NIV]

SONG “The Greatest Gift” - Lana Gibbons

Grades 1-4: We celebrate Christmas with those we love,
Our hearts filled with all of God’s joy.
We celebrate love that was given to us
When God gave us His baby Boy.
The greatest Gift, the greatest Gift, Gift-wrapped and sent from above.
The greatest Gift, the greatest Gift—Jesus, the gift of God’s love for me.
It’s Jesus, the best Gift for me!

We give gifts at Christmas to family and friends,
All wrapped up and ready to send.
We get gifts at Christmas, but best of all gifts
Is Jesus; His love will not end.

We hear in the story when Jesus was born,
Of how all the angels did sing.
We hear of the shepherds who listened and ran
To worship the Savior and King.

We cherish the Giver how perfect the Gift
When God sent His Child to this earth.
We live in the pleasure of being His child;
He gave us new life and new birth.

Student 1: We’re at the bottom of the box, but my favorite decoration is still down here.

Student 7: What did you find?

Student 1: It’s the star for the top of the tree.

Student 8: Why is it your favorite?

Student 1: I think it’s obvious.

Grade 6: In Matthew 2:2, the Wise Men ask, “Where is the One who has been born King of the Jews. We saw His star in the East and have come to worship Him.” [NIV]

Narrator 12: “A star will come out of Jacob” is an Old Testament prophecy of the Messiah as recorded in Numbers 24:17. By a star God led the Wise Men to the Babe in Bethlehem. In Revelation 22:16 Jesus calls Himself “the bright Morning Star.”

Narrator 13: With the Wise Men we can also say that we have seen His star. The star on the Christmas tree reminds us that Christ came for all people. And, it reminds us that we are to be lights in this world and shine like stars to all around us.

Grades 6-8: Our school theme this year is 1 Timothy 4:12: “Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young. But set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity.”

Narrator 14: As baptized children of God, our words and actions can be reflections of our faith, and bear witness to our Savior.

Narrator 15: Decorations of the season are found almost everywhere we look. Surprisingly, they may hide from us the real reason we celebrate Christmas. However, when we see the lights and decorations through faith in Christ, they are reminders of Jesus, our Savior, and the salvation He won for us and for all people.

GATHERING OF THE OFFERINGS

HYMN SING Congregation and Students

“What Child Is This” *LW* 61

**All: What Child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mary’s lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The Babe, the Son of Mary!**

**Why lies He in such mean estate Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through, The cross be borne for me, for you;
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The Babe, the Son of Mary!**

**So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh; Come, peasant, king, to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise the song on high, The virgin sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The Babe, the Son of Mary!**

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" *LW 49*

**All: Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise; Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"**

**Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come, Offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see! Hail, incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel!
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"**

**Hail the heav'n born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by, Born that we no more may die,
Born to raise each child of earth, Born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"**

"Silent Night, Holy Night" *LW 68*

**Grades 1-4: 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.**

**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!**

**All: Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Your holy face With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at Your birth, Jesus, Lord at Your birth.**

LITANY

C: Sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things.
K-4: Come, Lord Jesus,
C: To us a child is born, to us a Son is given.
K-4: Be our guest.
**C: And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.**

K-4: Let Your gifts

C: Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end.

K-4: To us be blessed.

All: Amen

LORD’S PRAYER

P: Taught by our Lord and trusting in His promise, we are bold to say:

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

BENEDICTION

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C: Amen

RECESSIONAL HYMN “Once in Royal David’s City” *LW* 58

**All: Once in royal David’s city Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby In a manger for His bed;
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.**

**He came down to earth from heaven Who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable, And His cradle was a stall;
With the poor and mean and low Lived our Savior long ago.**

**But our eyes in truth should see Him Through His own redeeming love,
For that Child so dear and gentle Is our Lord in heav’n above,
As He leads His children on To the place where He is gone.**

**Not in that poor lowly stable With the oxen standing by
Shall we see Him, but in heaven, Set at God’s right hand on high.
Then like stars His children crowned, All in white, His praise will sound!**

POSTLUDE

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