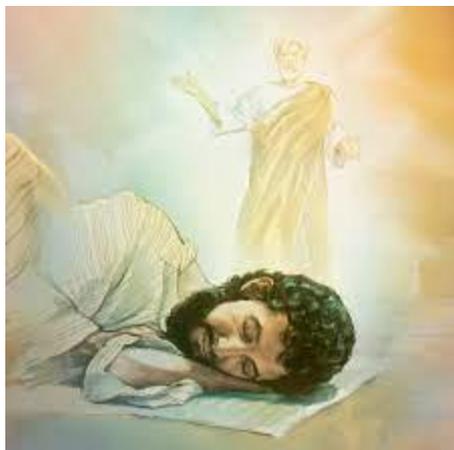


Dreams of Christmas

An Advent Service

Joseph Dreams of a Wondrous Birth



December 14, 2022



St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church

508 N. Chicago Road • Thornton, IL 60476

Dreams of Christmas

An Advent Service

Joseph Dreams of a Wondrous Birth

Ringing of the Bells

Welcome

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** **Amen.**
- P** We are like Ahaz, piously excusing ourselves from trusting God, practicing false humility. We simply doubt God's power to save. We miss witnessing his might in our reluctance to test him. Let us confess our unbelief and all our sins to God.
- C** **Holy God, I confess that I have not believed your word as I should. I have taken matters into my own hands rather than wait on you. I have doubted you in my mind, words and actions. I have lived in fear and defeat, robbed of the joy and confidence of faith that could be mine. I am a sinner, but I try to hide my sin under a religious veneer. Forgive me, for Jesus' sake.**
- P** Hear the good news! When the time had fully come, God sent forth his own Son, born of a virgin, born under Law to redeem those who are guilty of breaking that Law. This Son of God is Jesus Christ, who died for your sins. He forgives you of all your sins. You are no longer a slave of sin. Go in peace, in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** **Amen! Thanks be to God!**

Advent Wreath

- P** The light shines in the darkness.
- C** **Jesus Christ is the Light in the darkness.**
- P** He comes to his own.
- C** **All who believe in him are born of God.**

Psalm 89 ... Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel

P I will sing of the Lord's great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations.

C **You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to David my servant,**

**1. Oh, come, oh, come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

P 'I will establish your line forever and make your throne firm through all generations.'

C **Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne;
love and faithfulness go before you.**

**2. Oh, come, our Wisdom from on high,
who ordered all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show,
and teach us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

P Once you spoke in a vision, to your faithful people you said: "I have bestowed strength on a warrior; I have exalted a young man from among the people.

C **I have found David my servant; with my sacred oil I have anointed him.**

**3. Oh, come, oh, come, our Lord of might,
who to your tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times did give the law
in cloud and majesty and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

P My hand will sustain him; surely my arm will strengthen him.

C No enemy will subject him to tribute; no wicked man will oppress him.

**4. Oh, come, O rod of Jesse's stem,
from ev'ry foe deliver them
That trust your mighty pow'r to save;
bring them in vict'ry through the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

P I will crush his foes before him and strike down his adversaries.

C My love will be with him, and through my name his name will be exalted.

**5. Oh, come, O Key of David, come,
and open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

P I will set his hand over the sea, his right hand over the rivers.

C He will call out to me, 'You are my Father, my God, the Rock my Savior.'

**6. Oh, come, our Dayspring from on high,
and cheer us by your drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

P I will also appoint him my firstborn, the most exalted of the kings of the earth.

C I will maintain my love forever, and my covenant with him will never fail.

**7. Oh, come, Desire of nations,
bind in one the hearts of humankind;**

**Oh, bid our sad divisions cease,
and be yourself our King of Peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

P I will establish his line forever, his throne as long as the heavens endure."

C **I will sing of the Lord's great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations.**

Prayer of the Day

P Father God, in a great mystery, your only Son Jesus Christ was conceived and born to Mary, a humble virgin, by the power of the Holy Spirit. As a real human being, Jesus was tempted but did not sin. He perfectly obeyed your laws, and suffered an agonizing death on the cross to redeem us from all our sins. Therefore, with thankful hearts may we live holy lives and tell the world the good news of your saving love. This we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son, forever one God with the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

Old Testament

Isaiah 7:10-14

The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son.

¹⁰Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, ¹¹"Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." ¹²But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test." ¹³And he said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle

Galatians 4:1-7

God sent his Son, born of a woman.

¹I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything, ²but he is under guardians

and managers until the date set by his father. ³In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. ⁴But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Holy Gospel

Matthew 1:18-25

What is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel"

(which means, God with us). ²⁴When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise be to Thee O Christ**

374 Gentle Mary Laid Her Child

Sermon: Joseph Dreams of a Wondrous Birth

Apostles' Creed

- C** I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

367 Angels from the Realms of Glory

sts. 1–2

Gathering of Tithes & Offerings

Prayers

- P** Holy Jesus, thank you for godly Joseph who believed the word of the angel spoken to him in a dream. Make us, we pray, attuned to your Word. Guide use to seek it out, in Scripture, in Sacrament, in community, and in the face of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Immanuel, God with us,
- C** **Hear our prayer.**
- P** Guide your people, the Church, to be yourself--Christ in the world. Unify us in one Holy Spirit. Bid all discord cease. Let love reign in our midst. Then we will bring "God with us" to all the earth. Immanuel, God with us,
- C** **Hear our prayer.**
- P** Reveal yourself, we pray, to every nation, everywhere. Bring an end to all warfare, tyranny and injustice. Guide world leaders in ways of wisdom. Be with us ... all of us. Immanuel, God with us,
- C** **Hear our prayer.**
- P** Come with your constant and comforting presence to all who suffer any sort of need. Where there is loneliness, grief, sickness,

hunger, thirst, hopelessness and despair, bring your pervasive peace. Immanuel, God with us,

C Hear our prayer.

P Even as Joseph took you into his home, may we also believe and take you into our hearts by faith. In your most holy name we pray.

C Amen.

Lord's Prayer

P Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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

Concluding Sentences and Benediction

P The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph 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.

C 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."

P Blessed with the assurance of transgressions forgiven and sins covered, go forth joyfully in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

379 O Come, All Ye Faithful

Acknowledgments

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