



WHO IS HE?

**IMMANUEL EV. LUTH. CHURCH
CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2023**

Who Is He?

A Children's Christmas Service

PROCESSIONAL HYMN: CW 354, O Come, All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come and behold him, born the King of angels:

Refrain:

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

God from true God, and Light from Light eternal,
born of a virgin, to earth he comes!
Only begotten Son of God the Father:

Refrain

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest:

Refrain

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INVOCATION

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

Congregation: Amen.

RESPONSIVE READING

Psalm 24:7-10

Pastor: Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors,

Congregation: that the King of glory may come in.

Pastor: Who is this King of glory?

Congregation: The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.

Pastor: Lift up your heads, you gates; lift them up, you ancient doors,

Congregation: that the King of glory may come in.

Pastor: Who is he, this King of glory?

Congregation: The LORD Almighty—he is the King of glory.

INTRODUCTION

Madelyn Kannas: Have you ever had a person tell you that someone is coming to visit, but doesn't reveal the visitor's name? Instead, you're given descriptions or clues to the visitor's identity. As long as the identity is unknown, one question is foremost in mind: Who is he or she? We will look at some of the descriptions, or clues, God gave to his people about a man who was to come into the world. His identity is important to us too. So we also ask, "Who is he?"

1. WHO IS HE? THE PROMISED ONE

Madelyn Kannas: In Genesis chapter 1 we read, “God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning - the sixth day.” (Genesis 1:31).

Gabe Johnson: God created a perfect world for mankind. And he put the crown of his creation—humans—in the Garden of Eden, where he had placed the Tree of Life. When they ate from this tree, it gave them eternal life. God intended for them to live in his perfect creation forever. But God also placed another named tree in the garden, and with it came a command. We read in Genesis, chapter 2, “The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die” (Genesis 2:15-17).

Weston Marks: For a time, Adam and Eve obeyed this command. However, the devil came and led Adam and Eve into sin by enticing them to eat from the forbidden tree as we hear in Genesis, chapter 3, “Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, ‘Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’’ The woman said to the serpent, ‘We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'” "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it” (Genesis 3:1-6).

Ella Kannas: Adam and Eve disobeyed God’s command. And because of their sin, they would die. They had separated themselves from God, but God, out of great love for his creation, did not abandon them. He had a plan, already from eternity, that would save the human race from its sin. God promised to send a Savior. God revealed his plan when he said, “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” (Genesis 3:15).

Ella Kannas: Who is he? All we know is, God promised that when this man came, he would destroy the power of the devil.

HYMN: CW 352, Joy Has Dawned

Children – Stanza 1
Congregation Stanzas 2-4

Joy has dawned upon the world,
promised from creation—
God’s salvation now unfurled,
hope for ev’ry nation.
Not with fanfares from above,
not with scenes of glory,
but a humble gift of love—
Jesus born of Mary.

Sounds of wonder fill the sky
with the songs of angels
as the mighty Prince of life
shelters in a stable.
Hands that set each star in place,
shaped the earth in darkness,
cling now to a mother’s breast,
vuln’rable and helpless.

Shepherds bow before the Lamb,
gazing at the glory.
Gifts of men from distant lands
prophesy the story:
gold—a king is born today;
incense—God is with us;
myrrh—his death will make a way,
and by his blood he'll win us.

Son of Adam, Son of heav'n,
given as a ransom;
reconciling God and man,
Christ, our mighty champion!
What a Savior! What a friend!
What a glorious myst'ry!
Once a babe in Bethlehem,
now the Lord of hist'ry.

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2. WHO IS HE? THE PROPHESED ONE

Sophia Kannas: From God's description of the one who was to come, given in the Garden of Eden, believers could not yet answer exactly the question, "Who is he?" So throughout the Old Testament, God gave further descriptions concerning this Promised One. God inspired the prophet Micah to reveal where this man would be born, "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times" (Micah 5:2).

Sophia Kannas: Through Jeremiah and Isaiah, God foretold that this man would belong to the line of King David and would reign on his throne forever.

Conner Zvorak: Jeremiah writes, "The days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The Lord Our Righteousness." (Jeremiah 23:5,6).

Archer Heller: Isaiah the prophet foretells this about Jesus, "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 increase 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).

Shelby Larcom: Isaiah also reveals that this man would suffer for us. "Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:4-6).

Shelby Larcom: Who is he? We still do not have a complete description of this man. However, these prophecies fill in greater detail about him and his mission.

HYMN BY CONGREGATION: CW 358, Of the Father's Love Begotten

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.

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.

This is he whom seers and sages sang of old 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.

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3. WHO IS HE? THE NEWBORN ONE

Madelyn Kannas: For thousands of years, God provided prophecy after prophecy about the one he had promised to send to save humankind from their sin. The world was now ready. Peace prevailed in the Roman Empire. God sent his angel to a virgin named Mary, a descendant of King David's family who was living in the lowly town of Nazareth, to give her some wonderful news.

Duane Buttenhoff: "In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you" (Luke 1:26-28).

Jenna Claussen: "Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High" (Luke 1:29-32a).

Libby Larcom: The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end" (Luke 1:32b-33).

Gabe Johnson: Mary lived in Nazareth, about 90 miles from Bethlehem where the Promised One was to be born. But God used the Roman emperor to get Mary to Bethlehem so she would give birth to the Savior there, just as Micah had prophesied.

Liam Sindelir: "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" (Luke 2:1-3).

Valen Marks: "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" (Luke 2:4,5).

Indira Dols: "While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born" (Luke 2:6).

Arabella Buttenhoff: "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" (Luke 2:7).

HYMN: CW 344, What Child Is This

Children – Stanza 1

Congregation – Stanzas 2 and 3

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 oxen now 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!

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Weston Marks: The one promised in the Garden of Eden finally came into this world! But how would people know that he had come? There were no news agencies to get the word out. The message could not be tweeted to the world in an instant. But God had a plan. He sent an angel to a small band of shepherds to announce the birth of the Savior.

Finley Heller: “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” (Luke 2:8,9).

Nolan Claussen: 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" (Luke 2:10).

All Children: “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” (Luke 2:11-12).

Ella Kannas: “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.’ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about’” (Luke 2:13-15).

Ben Pedersen: “So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger” (Luke 2:16).

HYMN BY CONGREGATION: CW 335, To Shepherds as They Watched by Night

To shepherds as they watched by night
appeared a host of angels bright;
“Behold the tender babe,” they said,
“in yonder lowly manger laid,

“At Bethlehem, in David’s town,
as Micah did of old make known.
It is the Christ, your Lord and King,
who will to all salvation bring.”

O then rejoice that through his Son
God is with sinners now at one;
made like yourselves of flesh and blood,
your brother is th’ eternal God.

What harm can sin and death then do?
The true God now abides with you.
Let hell and Satan storm and rave,
Christ is your brother—you are safe.

Not one he will or can forsake;
his promise he will never break.
Let ev’ry scheme the tempter try,
You may his utmost pow’rs defy.

You shall and must at last prevail;
God’s own you are, you cannot fail.
To God forever sing your praise
with joy and patience all your days.

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4. WHO IS HE? THE ONE TO BE SHARED

Sophia Kannas: The Savior had come. And what wondrous news this was! The shepherds believed the message of the angel. So they left their sheep to see their Savior. They were so excited that the long-awaited one had finally come! And they could not help but tell everyone they met what they had witnessed.

Logan Sindelir: “When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them” (Luke 2:17,18).

Violet Zvorak: “But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart” (Luke 2:19).

Titus Dols: The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told” (Luke 2:20).

HYMN BY JESUS CARES GROUP: CW 361, Go, Tell It On The Mountain

Refrain: Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills, and ev'rywhere; go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born.

While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light. (Refrain)

The shepherds feared and trembled
when lo, above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth. (Refrain)

Down in a lowly manger
the humble Christ was born,
and God sent us salvation
that blessèd Christmas morn. (Refrain)

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Shelby Larcom: Now we have the answer to the question “Who is he?” He is Jesus—Christ the Lord come to save us from our sins. That is good news! Like the shepherds, we want to share that news with others so that they also may have the peace the angel spoke of—peace between God and sinners. Jesus himself tells us how, and what, we are to share: the Good News of his birth, of his death and of his resurrection, all for the forgiveness of our sins in order to bring us to heaven.

HYMN: CW 346, Angels We Have Heard on High

Children – Stanzas 1 and 2
Congregation – Stanza 3

Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains. (Refrain)

Refrain: 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? (Refrain)

Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. (Refrain)

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Offering – *During the offering, the preschool children through second graders sing Away in a Manger.*

PRAYER: Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true light. Grant that as we have known on earth the wonder of that light, we may also behold him in all his glory in the life to come; through your only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN: CW 342 O Jesus Christ, Your Manger Is

Children – Stanza 1
Congregation – Stanzas 2-5

O Jesus Christ
your manger is
my paradise at which I am reclining.
For there, O Lord,
we find the Word
made flesh for us—your grace is brightly shining.

He whom the sea
and wind obey
comes down to serve the sinner in great meekness.
Now God's own Son
with us is one
and joins us and our children in our weakness.

Dear Christian friend,
on him depend;
be of good cheer and let no sorrow move you.
For God's own Child
in mercy mild
joins you to him—how greatly God must love you!

Ponder again
what glory then
the Lord will give you for your earthly sadness.
The angel host
can never boast
of greater glory, greater bliss or gladness.

The world may hold
her wealth and gold;
but you, my heart, keep Christ as your true treasure.
To him hold fast
until at last
a crown is yours and honor in full measure.

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BLESSING

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

Congregation: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: CW 353, Joy to the World

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.

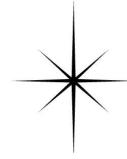
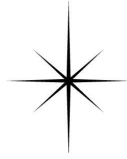
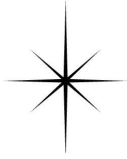
Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

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.

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Invitation: Everyone is invited to come to the Fellowship Hall downstairs for a meal following our worship this afternoon.

Thank You: We thank everyone who helped to make today such a special day to proclaim the gospel message of Christ Jesus. We especially thank Jen Heller for planning, preparing and directing the service; Maria Claussen for accompanying the children on the piano; Joanne Malkuch for playing the organ; the Sunday school teachers for helping the children prepare; the Buppenhoff family for preparing the Christmas bags; and everyone who brought and served food for our meal tonight.

Christmas Bags: The ushers will distribute Christmas bags following the service.