

SOLOMON'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
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L U K E 3 : 1 6



**ONE WHO IS
MORE
POWERFUL
THAN I
IS COMING**

"Solomon's Evangelical Lutheran Church, following the example of Jesus Christ, seeks to live in the confidence and fullness of God's grace; to preach the Good News boldly and truthfully; to support and serve others in faith; to work in harmony with all creation."

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 15, 2024

December 15, 2024
Third Sunday of Advent

Christ's presence in our midst in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the God in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of one "more powerful" than John, even with a winnowing fork in hand, is good news—and cause for exultation—for us who are being saved. Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent.

CAROLS SING (ELW #267-300)

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

ORGAN PRELUDE *Awake, Awake, and Greet the New Morn - Aaron David Miller*

LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
alive in the world,
reviving creation,
arriving soon.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God
and of one another.

God of mercy,
we confess that we have sinned.
We trust earthly powers and human authority alone.
We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

God of might,
we confess that we have sinned.
We have turned away from our neighbors.
We have trusted false promises.

God in our midst,
we confess that we have sinned.
We plead: come to us.

Bring your mercy to birth in us.
A righteous branch springs forth:
it is Christ the Lord, our Savior,
in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy.
By the power of the Holy Spirit,
receive the grace and forgiveness of God
through ✝ Christ Jesus,
whose day draws near. **Amen.**

***GATHERING SONG *Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn* (ELW 242)**



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for
 2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
 3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when
 4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing. Sing out your joy, for
 man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is
 all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
 dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.
 qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;
 qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.
 crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -
 mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -
 Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in
 Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and
 kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to
 won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and
 sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
 shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.
 weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
 bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950
 Music: REJOICE, REJOICE, Marty Haugen
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GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH "LIGHT OF HOPE"

Responsive Litany

Love is more than a flicker within the human heart.

Lord, reveal your love, and make us new.

In a hurried world with little time for others, Advent calls us to remember that...

Love is patient.

In a world where often we become consumed by our own interests, Advent calls us to remember that...

Love is kind.

In a world where often we are quick to anger and slow to forgive, Advent calls us to remember that...

Love is not easily angered, and through love we come to forgive.

This Advent let us behold the love of God embodied in our Savior's birth.

God is love. Whoever lives in love, lives in God, and God in them.

This morning we light three candles. The **first candle** reminds us of the marvelous hope revealed through the Savior's birth. In a time of despair, God shattered the darkness with the hope of a new future. The **second candle** reminds us of the peace that only Christ can instill in the human heart. In a world that abounds with hostility, Christ alone is the One who speaks, "Peace, be still." The **third candle** helps us remember that God's perfect love made flesh can fill our hearts, ignite our souls, and change our lives.

Light of Hope

A Candle Lighting Ceremony for Advent

Words and Music by
JOEL RANEY

Congregation:

Light of life, Mak-er of day, gath-er our
sha-dows and cast them a-way. Bea-con of
truth, gleam-ing and bright, shine in our
hearts, shat-ter our night.

The musical score is written on four staves in a single system. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The lyrics are: "Light of life, Mak-er of day, gath-er our sha-dows and cast them a-way. Bea-con of truth, gleam-ing and bright, shine in our hearts, shat-ter our night." The score ends with a double bar line.

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Let us pray.

Gracious Lord, as we continue our Advent journey, we pray that being rooted and established in love we may have the power to grasp how wide, how long, how high, and how deep is the love of Christ. True love was not only born at Christmas, but revealed for all to see. May we come to know this love in our lives and share it with those around us. We pray this in Jesus's name. Amen.

FIRST READING: Zephaniah 3:14-20

A reading from Zephaniah.

The prophet Zephaniah's message is mostly one of judgment for sin. This reading, however, which comes from the conclusion of the book, prophesies joy for Judah and Jerusalem. Judgment has led to repentance, and God's salvation is at hand.

¹⁴ Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!

¹⁵ The LORD has taken away the judgments against you,
he has turned away your enemies.

The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.

¹⁶ On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:

Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.

¹⁷ The LORD, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;

he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;

he will exult over you with loud singing
¹⁸ as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.

¹⁹ I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.

And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.

²⁰ At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes, says the LORD.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Isaiah 12:2-6

(read responsively between lector and congregation)

² Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not [|] be afraid,
for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might, and has become [|] my salvation.

³ **With joy you [|] will draw water
from the wells [|] of salvation.**

⁴ And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the LORD, call [|] on God's name;
make known the deeds of the LORD among the nations; proclaim that this name [|] is
exalted.

⁵ **Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done [|] gloriously;
let this be known in [|] all the earth.**

⁶ Shout aloud and sing for joy, O [|] royal Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy [|] One of Israel.

SECOND READING: Philippians 4:4-7

A reading from Philippians.

Despite being in prison, Paul is remarkably upbeat as he writes this letter. Here, he urges his friends in Philippi to trust God with all their worries and concerns with the hope that they will experience God's joy and peace.

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *Gospel Acclamation (Taizé)* (ELW 175)

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Verses may be sung by a leader. Then the alleluia is repeated.

Music: "Alleluia 7," Jacques Berthier, 1923–1994, and the Taizé Community
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*GOSPEL: Luke 3:7-18

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

John the Baptist heralds the mighty one who is coming. John teaches that preparation for God's reign is not a matter of identity but of bearing fruits of merciful justice, radical generosity, and vocational integrity.

⁷ John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” ¹¹ In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” ¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” ¹³ He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” ¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

¹⁸ So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON *Defiant Joy!*

***Please stand as you are able for the final verse**

HYMN OF THE DAY *Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers* (ELW 244)



1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear;
2 The watch - ers on the moun - tain pro - claim the bride - groom near;
3 The saints, who here in pa - tience their cross and suf - f'ring bore,
4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;



the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, and dark - er night is near.
go forth as he ap - proach - es with al - le - lu - ias clear.
shall live and reign for - ev - er when sor - row is no more.
a - rise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this be - night - ed sphere.



The bride - groom is a - ris - ing and soon is draw - ing nigh.
The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the gates wide o - pen stand.
A - round the throne of glo - ry the Lamb they shall be - hold;
With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see



Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; at mid - night comes the cry.
A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the bride - groom is at hand.
in tri - umph cast be - fore him their di - a - dems of gold.
the day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple free!

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660–1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823–1907
Music: HAF TRONES LAMPA FÄRDIG, Swedish folk tune

Please join me as we confirm our faith together in the words of the apostles' creed.

***CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.***

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

***PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH** (*Please respond.*)

P: Lord, in your mercy, C: receive our prayer.

***PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

***OFFERTORY** *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* (ELW 254)



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
2 Born thy peo-ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long-ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

***OFFERING PRAYER**

Creator God,
you made the whole world,
even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us.
We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine.
Strengthen us with this food
that we may live in expectation
for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

*GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW p. 207)



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,



heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho-san - na in the high - est.



Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -



san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

***LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

God feeds us with tender mercy.
Come to the table.

COMMUNION

Continuous - Please continue down center aisle at the direction of the usher. After you receive the bread, you may take a cup of red wine or white grape juice from the tray. Please place your empty communion cup in the basket. Gluten free wafers are available, ask the Pastor when you come forward. Notify the Head Usher if you would appreciate receiving Communion at your seat rather than walking up to the altar, the Pastor and Communion Assistant will be happy to bring Communion to you

. COMMUNION SONG (ELW p. 481)



Come to the ta - ble of mer - cy, pre - pared with the wine and the bread.



All who are hun - gry and thirst - y, come, and your souls will be fed.



Come at the Lord's in - vi - ta - tion; re - ceive from his nail - scarred hand.



Eat of the bread of sal - va - tion; drink of the blood of the Lamb.

Text: Claire Cloninger, b. 1942

Music: COME TO THE TABLE, Martin J. Nystrom, b. 1956

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COMMUNION HYMN *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence* (ELW 490)



- 1 Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and trem - bling stand;
- 2 King of kings, yet born of Mar - y, as of old on earth he stood,
- 3 Rank on rank the host of heav - en spreads its van - guard on the way;
- 4 At his feet the six - winged ser - aph, cher - u - bim with sleep - less eye,



pon - der noth - ing earth - ly - mind - ed, for with bless - ing in his hand
Lord of lords in hu - man ves - ture, in the bod - y and the blood,
as the Light of light, de - scend - ing from the realms of end - less day,
veil their fac - es to the pres - ence, as with cease - less voice they cry:



Christ our God to earth de - scend - ing comes full hom - age to de - mand.
he will give to all the faith - ful his own self for heav'n - ly food.
comes, the pow'rs of hell to van - quish, as the dark - ness clears a - way.
"Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia, Lord Most High!"

Text: Liturgy of St. James; tr. Gerard Moultrie, 1829-1885, alt.

Music: PICARDY, French folk tune, 17th cent.

***COMMUNION BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen.

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Generous God,
we thank you for the gift of life,
for the bread of salvation.
We thank you for coming among us,
for leading us into peace.
We thank you for showering us with mercy,
for sending us into the world.
Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us
as we feed the hungry in your name.
Amen.

***BLESSING**

God of endings and beginnings,
God in the darkness and the light,
God, our hope for the journey,
✠ bless and keep you now and forever.
Amen.

***SENDING SONG *Prepare the Royal Highway* (ELW 264)**



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:



Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.
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***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

Thanks be to God.

EXTINGUISHING THE CANDLES/SILENT PRAYER

POSTLUDE *Canticle of Joy* - J. S. Bach

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SERVING TODAY

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Organist Mary-Jo Bedsworth
Head Usher Janice McEntire
Acolyte Norm Kuykendall
Lector..... Bonney Coldsmith
Securing Offering Janice McEntire & Sam Mull
Communion Set-Up..... Jerry & Ilona Laney
Communion Clean-Up Jerry & Ilona Laney
Communion Bread Marjorie Dale
Communion Assist
Attendance last Sunday

Glimpses of Vibrancy

This week we give thanks for the many gifts Solomons Lutheran continues to share into the surrounding community. Today we lift up the gift of *Serving banquets for service groups*. May this gift continue to be a significant **Glimpse of the Vibrancy** of the love of Jesus Christ!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The altar flowers this morning are placed to the Glory of God in honor of my children; Heather, Kevin, and Christopher given by Linda Berberich.

Welcome Visitors! We welcome you to our worship service. We hope your visit with us will be a time of blessing. If you have any concerns, please talk to the Head Usher. We invite you to worship with us again!

Prayer requests for the following: *Karen Wolfinger, Fran Stouffer, Marty Wenger, Don Wildeson, Nancy Marshall, Betty Amt, our world & country, Debbie Aschmann, Donna, Karen, Chuck Bedsworth, Millie Kulkusky, Linda Mumaugh, Katy Klutz, Bonnie Hudson, Malvern Zimmerman, Becky Ensinger, Sam Mull, and all the Homebound. If anyone has a prayer request, please call Janice McEntire, 717-264-3702.*

Please Be Aware: *We wish to be a praying congregation, and especially for those who are sick or experiencing difficult times. We will continue to name person's (first name only) aloud each Sunday, and we will hold each name for a month. In order to keep our list updated we ask that by the final Thursday of the month, but please call Janice McEntire 717 264-3702 to keep the name on for an extra month. Any name can remain for as long as desired, but we need to hear from the person adding the name, or we will presume the name can be removed. Thank you for your understanding.*

Weekly Calendar Reminders:

December 17 - Property – Time TBA

19 - Choir 7pm

Christmas Eve is quickly approaching. We are planning special music that evening for worship, beginning at 7:10 PM. The music will include organ arrangements on familiar carols, our choir, and a possible guest soloist. Be sure to arrive early for worship to let the music help prepare your hearts and minds to receive the Gift given to us at Christmas, so very long ago.

Do you have a favorite Christmas carol that you love to sing? Prior to worship today and for the remaining Sundays of Advent, we will use a few minutes to sing Christmas carols of your choice. Carols begin with #267-300 in our hymnal. We'll be asking for your favorite carol and will sing a verse or two as time allows.

Communion Cards – to maintain accurate records, we ask that each member fill out a communion card **only once per calendar year**, at a service when you partake of Holy Communion.

The 2025 Chart for Altar flowers is on the table in the Sunday School room. The cost of the two vases will be \$50.00 per week. You will continue to provide Kimberly with the information for the bulletin prior to the week before the Sunday you choose. Include the cost of \$50.00 with the bulletin information.

The 2025 sign-up charts for Acolyte, Lector etc. are on the table in the Sunday School room. Please sign up for as many as you can.

SpiriTrust Lutheran Chambersburg Auxiliary has cookbooks for sale, \$15 each. Lots of great recipes! Great for Christmas gifts! All proceeds go to support programs at Luther Ridge. If interested, see Becky Pecha, Frances Reichard, Margie Dale, or Bonney Coldsmith.

Sunday Morning Bible Study - Pastor Mike 's Bible study is held every Sunday, beginning at 9:00 a.m. We conclude at 9:50 a.m., to prepare for worship. We look at one of the Scripture texts for the following Sunday. If you cannot join us every week, please join us when you are able! The Bible is our Book of Faith!

Copies of today's sermon can be found in the office room at the rear of the worship space. Pick one up before service if this will be helpful in hearing the sermon; or, pick one up to take home if you wish to use it reflect on throughout this upcoming week.

Power Pack Meals: The need for nutritious food for New Franklin Elementary School students in need is an on-going project. If you would like to give a monetary donation, please make your check payable to Solomon's Lutheran Church and put Power Pack Meals in the memo of your check.

If you are not taking your altar flowers home, please let Kathy Bowen know to whom or to where you would like them donated. Thanks.

Bulletin Announcement Forms are in both pamphlet racks. Please submit all bulletin announcements to the office by the Wednesday prior to the Sunday for inclusion in the bulletin.

Music Notes/Hymn Notes:

One of the lesser sung Christmas hymns, this paraphrase of Gerard Moultrie's "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silent" is based on a text that has been used by the church since the late fourth century: the Liturgy of St. James. Moultrie's words come from a part of that liturgy known as the "Cherubic Hymn", which would be chanted as the bread and wine of Holy Eucharist were brought forward. This old text evokes a sense of majesty at the incarnation of Christ, and the slow, almost chant-like melody wonderfully expresses that awe and mystery. We come before Christ in silence and in awe to reflect upon the mystery of the incarnation, joined even by the hosts of heaven to witness the miracle. While singing this hymn, imagine yourself standing in the stable, angels above, in reverent silence to worship the King, born a child to banish the darkness away. (Hymnary.org)