

Historic Scripture Lessons for the Nativity of our Lord

Old Testament

Isaiah 9:2-7 NIV The people walking in darkness have seen a great Light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a Light has dawned. 3 You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before You as people rejoice at the harvest, as men rejoice when dividing the plunder. 4 For as in the day of Midian's defeat, You have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. 5 Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. 6 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. 7 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.

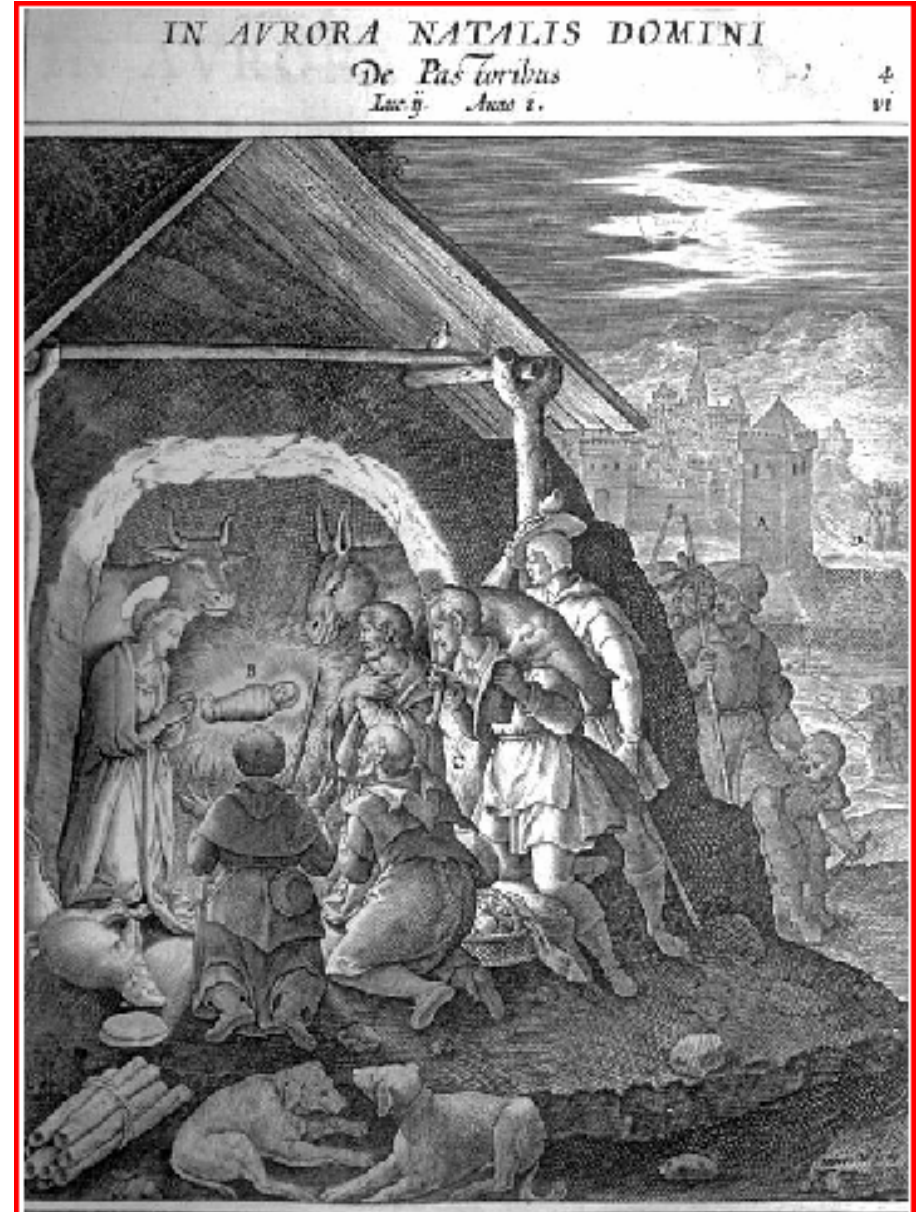
Epistle

Hebrews 1:1-12 In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, Whom He appointed Heir of all things, and through Whom He made the universe. 3 The Son is the Radiance of God's glory and the exact Representation of His Being, sustaining all things by His powerful Word. After He had provided purification for sins, He sat down at the Right Hand of the Majesty in Heaven. 4 So He became as much superior to the angels as the Name He has inherited is superior to theirs. 5 For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are My Son; today I have become Your Father"? Or again, "I will be His Father, and He will be My Son"? 6 And again, when God brings His Firstborn into the world, He says, "Let all God's angels worship Him." 7 In speaking of the angels He says, "He makes His angels winds, His servants flames of fire." 8 But about the Son He says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of Your Kingdom. 9 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, Your God, has set You above Your companions by anointing You with the oil of joy." 10 He also says, "In the beginning, O Lord, You laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your Hands. 11 They will perish, but You remain; they will all wear out like a garment. 12 You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed. But You remain the same, and Your years will never end."

Gospel

John 1:1-14 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In Him was Life, and that Life was the Light of men. 5 The Light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. 6 There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. 7 He came as a witness to testify concerning that Light, so that through him all men might believe. 8 He himself was not the Light; he came only as a witness to the Light. 9 The true Light that gives Light to every man was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through Him, the world did not recognize Him. 11 He came to that which was His own, but His own did not receive Him. 12 Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God -- 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. 14 The Word became Flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, Who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Our Savior Lutheran Church  Lakeland, FL USA
The Nativity of Our Lord      Christmas Day
December 25th, 2014 ✕ 9:30 am



From "Illustrations of Gospel Stories" **Jerome Nadal** – **Luke 2**
Christmas Day: The shepherds at the dawn of the birth of Jesus.

Image courtesy of the Biblical and Religious Art Collection, <http://catholic-resources.org/Nadal/004.jpg>

OSL OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH OSL

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BIBLE CLASS 8:30 AM WORSHIP 9:30 AM FELLOWSHIP 10:45 AM

* A.R. Burmeister 430-5859 * Organ: Janice Thomas (813) 650-9198

December 25, 2014 Christmas Day + Salvation's Here!

TODAY WE CELEBRATE THE LORD'S SUPPER: If you are new to the area or Our worship and have never communed with us before, please speak with the pastor before Communing. If you are not currently a member of an ELS or WELS congregation, we ask that you please **wait to take communion until you can speak with our pastor.** Out of Christian love and consideration to you the guest, we want you to have the opportunity to learn what our church teaches about the Bible and Sacraments before you unite with us in taking Holy Communion. Thank you for your understanding. *Amen.*

ORDER OF WORSHIP On yellow sheets or in red (TLH) hymnal at p.15.

Service		
Opening Hymn	E. 139 (5v)	<-In ELH->Once in Royal David's City
Hymn of the Day	647 (4v)	O Little Town of Bethlehem
Exhortation Verse	79 (1v)	Rejoice, Rejoice, This Happy Morn
Communion Hymn	85 (15)	From Heav'n Above to Earth I Come
Closing Hymn	87 (4v)	Joy to the World, the Lord Is Come!

Suggested Bible readings for the weekdays of the 4th Sunday in Advent(Year)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Isaiah 40:1-11	Malachi 3:1-7	Malachi 4:1-6	Isa. 28:14-19	Isaiah 7:1-17	Micah 5:1-5
Matt. 1:18-25	Luke 1:39-45	Luke 1:46-56	Luke 1:57-66	Luke 1:67-80	Matt.1:1-17

PROPERs for the Nativity of our Lord  Christmas Day + DECEMBER 25

INTROIT For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government will be on His shoulder. And His Name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things. ...from Isaiah 9 & Psalm 96

COLLECT Grant, we beseech You, Almighty God, that the new Birth of Your only-begotten Son in the Flesh may set us free, who are held in the old bondage under the yoke of sin; through Jesus Christ, our Lord; Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one True God, now and forever. C: Amen.

GRADUAL C: All the ends of the earth have seen the Salvation of our God. Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. The Lord has made known His Salvation. He has openly showed His Righteousness in the sight of the heathen. Alleluia! Alleluia! Oh, come, let us sing to the Lord; let us worship and bow down before Him. Alleluia! ...from Psalm 98

SCRIPTURE LESSONS (printed on outside back page of bulletin →)

O.T. **Isaiah 9:2-7** God's own Son is Born a Child in real place time.
 Epi. **Hebrews 1:1-12** God's saving Grace has appeared to *all* people.
 Gos. **John 1:1-14** The eternal Word of God, Christ, is Incarnate.



OPENING HYMN *Once in Royal David's City* ELH #139 (Not in TLH)

1) Once in royal Da-vid's- city
 Stood a lowly cat-tle- shed,
 Where a mother laid- her- Baby
 In a manger for- His- bed;
 Mary was that mother mild,
 Jesus Christ her lit-tle- Child.

2) He came down from to earth from heav'n, 3) Jesus is our child-hood's- pattern;
 Who is God and Lord- of- all, Day by day like us- He- grew,
 And His shelter was- a- stable, He was little, weak-, and- helpless,
 And His cradle was- a- stall; Tears and smiles like us- He- knew;
 With the poor and mean and lowly, And He feedeth for our sadness,
 Lived on earth, our Savior holy. And He shareth in- our- gladness.

4) And our eyes at last- shall- see Him, 5) Not in that poor low-ly- stable
 Through His own redeem-ing- love, With the oxen stan-ding- by
 For that Child, so dear and gentle, Shall we see Him, but- in- heaven,
 Is our Lord in heav'n- a-bove; Set at God's Right Hand- on- high.
 And He leads His children on Then like stars His children, crowned,
 To the place where He- is- gone. All in white ahall wait- a-round!



EXORDIUM HYMN *Rejoice, Rejoice, This Happy Morn* TLH #139 (1 verse)

Rejoice, rejoice, this happy Morn, - A Savior unto us is born,
 The Christ, the Lord of Glory. - His lowly birth in Bethlehem
 The angels from on high proclaim - And sing redemption's story.
 My soul, - extol - God's great favor,
Bless Him ever For salvation, Give Him praise and adoration. Amen.

PRAYER REQUESTS: Member or Relation Pray for...

David&Rachel Divine (Vivian's g'son&daugh) Serving in Alaska in US Army
Everett & Angelyn Dux (Leroy) (Thank God) Ev. & Ang. are both at home
Linda Kryszak We've missed Linda for a number of weeks
Dee Kurczewski (& David) Dee is home after infection (was in hospital)
Theresa Leuck (AnnW daughter-in-law) Ann back from visiting Theresa
Pat & Doug Marsh (Robin's parents) Doug and Pat still battling health issues
Delores Platt (Jim V) We've missed Linda Delores for many weeks also
Janice Thomas (David) Janice completed (6) chemo. treatments. PTL
Marcus Wienke (Bev&Don's) Marcus has (big)up & down swings w/chemos

All have a Blessed and Safe Christmas! Thank you all for the Christmas greetings.

This Sunday: 12/28 Christmas-1 (No L.S. p.5) Hymns 91 103 79 108 87

CHRISTMAS(EVE)DAY John 1:1-14 " WORD BECAME FLESH" 12.24-25.14

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

TEXT: NIV John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In Him was Life, and that Life was the Light of men. 5 The Light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. 6 There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. 7 He came as a witness to testify concerning that Light, so that through him all men might believe. 8 He himself was not the Light; he came only as a witness to the Light. 9 The true Light that gives Light to every man was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through Him, the world did not recognize Him. 11 He came to that which was His own, but His own did not receive Him. 12 Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God -- 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. 14 The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, Who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

INTRODUCTION: God has uttered His final Word, and it turns out to be **His first Word**. God has bared His Holy Arm before the eyes of all the nations, and it turns out to be **His only-begotten Son**. The Word became flesh and dwells among us, and we find a humble little Child born of a virgin mother. All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God, and they will see salvation in the face of the infant of Bethlehem, a manged Baby wrapped in cloths.

Behold **the sublime Mystery of the feast of Christmas** - the Eternal Word who made all things, who upholds all things, who is the light and life of all, is born a tiny helpless infant of a virgin mother for the sole purpose of saving our humanity from sin and death. Dare we believe it? **Can we afford not to believe it?!**

The Word became flesh. **That is Christmas in a nutshell**. God and man have come together in one Person. The Infinite has become the finite. The Transcendent has become Imminent. The Creator is one with the creature. The Eternal breaks into time. The fullness of the Deity dwells bodily among us. **It's almost too much for the mind to bear**. How can the Word who fills all things, who made all things, who is before all things, limit Himself in this way, becoming bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, yet still remain God? Here reason must bow in humility as the shepherds bowed before the manger, **just as we bow at the altar before the Bread that is His Body and the Wine that is His Blood**. We are in no better position to understand **that** mystery than we are to understand the mystery of Christmas. In fact, they are tied together. Just as we cannot separate the Body of Christ from the Bread of His Supper, so we cannot separate the **Eternal Word from the Baby of Bethlehem**.

We do try though. **Our old Adam** would let reason have the upper hand over God's Word. It creeps in when you hear people say that Mary is the mother of Jesus but not the "Mother of God." Or Mary is the mother of the "human part" of Jesus. It even slips in to one of our traditional Christmas hymns: *"The Word becomes incarnate, and yet remains on high."* Yes, you can, and we must, understand this correctly. The Word becomes Flesh and yet remains the eternal Word, even in His sweet humility. The infinite, Eternal Word remains the infinite, eternal Word even as He takes up residence in the finite. But the door is opened in that little phrase to separating Christ's humanity from His divinity, or at the very least having something more than this Baby lying in a manger or this Word spoken from mouth to ear or this Bread placed on the tip of your tongue. **The old Adam always wants "something more" than what God is giving.**

Luther was fond of saying things like, *"I look for no other God than the one lying in the crib, nursing at the breast of His mother, and hanging dead on a Cross."* **St. John** would say, *"You're right, Dr. Luther. No one has ever seen God; the only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He has made Him known."* Do you want to see God? Do you want to behold the glory of God? Do you want to see the true grace of God? Don't go looking into space or groping in your heart to find God. Go to the baby in the manger, as the shepherds did. Go to the **young Child in the house, as the wise men** did. Go to **Man on the Cross**. And since we can't literally do any of those, go **the Word and the Supper** where the Son of God is "manged" for us so that we might be able to **perceive and receive Him**.

The Word became Flesh and dwelt among us. **This is the essential core of Christmas: the Incarnation of God**. I've noticed something over the last (almost) ten years as a pastor and preacher. Perhaps you've noticed it too. **Cultural Christmas seems to be on the wane**. Political correctness, atheism, apathy, and the ACLU have all had their way with cultural Christmas. I did a little emergency shopping yesterday. No, not Christmas shopping, but a couple (more) bags of Clementines and some colored light bulbs. Yes, some stores have a Christmas tree near the front door, and one of the salesmen was dressed in a Santa suit, but that was the extent of it. The gal behind the parts counter told me to *"Have a great holiday,"* not sure which of the many possibilities I celebrated, not wanting to offend me. I smiled and said, "You too." There seem to be fewer light displays on our block. I used to be one of the few holdouts. Perhaps I've started a trend. Or maybe the neighbors are doing their part to conserve energy. Part of it may be the influx of other cultures. An Asian-American (at Chen's Wok) asked me, *"Why do people decorate their houses with lights in December?"* I answered, *"I don't know. You'll have to ask them."*

I suspect that some of our holiday **ennui** may be the accumulated heaviness of bad news that seems to permeate our days. The **wars and killing, ISIS**(or ISAL?), the endless hand-wringing over our dying planet, as if that should come as some sort of surprise. The **violence** of our **youth**, many raised without fathers, hardened to suffering by violent movies and mindless

video games. The **broken-ness** of our families, decimated by divorce and adultery. The uncertainty of our economy, the high cost of homes and gas, the uncertainty of the future. I see that in many of our kids today who don't look to the future with hope but wander aimlessly in the present moment.

It's difficult, if not impossible, **to sustain much Christmas joy** for even one day (let alone twelve), **if you don't believe anything**. All the Christmas trees and poinsettias and lights and chestnuts roasting on an open fire won't do a thing to fill an empty heart. There is no present under that tree that will **quiet a restless conscience or atone for a single sin**. There are no Christmas lights that can bring light to a darkened soul **save this One**, the **Light that shines from Bethlehem's crib** and Calvary's Cross to you in the Word of your Baptism, in the Word of forgiveness, in the Body and Blood born of Mary and there for you at the altar in the Holy Supper of the Lord.

Were we to take away the glowing candles, the pretty poinsettias, the Christmas tree and the lights, the banners and all the other stuff, we would still have the essence of Christmas in the Word of Jesus and His Body and Blood. You can take away all the tinsel and mistletoe and family parties and endless expectations and have **nothing more than two or three poor, miserable sinners huddled around the Word of Christ**, and you will have everything of Christmas. The Word became Flesh and dwelt among us. **Nothing in this world can take that away from you!**

Now please don't misunderstand me. I **like the adornments. I love the way our church looks at Christmas**. It's very warm and inviting. Some visitors commented on that last night, how beautiful everything was bathed in candlelight. Your homes are decorated too with all sorts of Christmas stuff. I love the trees with their eclectic ornaments and the nicely wrapped gifts. I like all that stuff, and I'd be sad if those Christmastime warm fuzzies weren't there. **Yes, even I get the warm fuzzies on occasion**. But I've come to recognize something. **Those warm fuzzies aren't about Jesus and about my salvation**. Those feelings aren't necessarily "spiritual" or "religious." They are nostalgia for sure, a longing for the comforts of home and hearth and family. Those things, while important to us, are not the core of the feast of Christmas, but only the outer shell.

CONCLUSION Ponder this in your hearts today as you enjoy these (coming Twelve) **Days of Christmas**. **The Word became Flesh and dwells with you**, so that you might dwell with God. The Word became Flesh so that your flesh might rise from the dead to see God. The Word became Flesh to rescue your flesh from sin, death, and hell. The Word became Flesh so that in your flesh you might know the One who is your **Light**, your **Life**, and your **Salvation**.

The Word became Flesh and dwelt among us. Alleluia!
We have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. Alleluia!
No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, He has made Him known. Alleluia! In Jesus' Name, Amen. SDG

Our Savior Lutheran Church  Lakeland, FL USA

The Nativity of Our Lord      **Christmas Eve**
Possible Prayer of Church for the Nativity + Christmas Eve + December 24

Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs. (Possible Brief silence)

For the Church throughout the world, that all the baptized, by their faithful witness to the Gospel, would bear the joy of the light and life of Christ into the darkness and death of this world, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For the nations, that all those entrusted with leadership would be given grace to serve with wisdom, courage and integrity, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all who wander in the darkness still, unaware of the love of Christ, that the Holy Spirit would enlighten their hearts so that they may join us in confessing and praising Him who became the child of the blessed Virgin Mary in order to make us the children of God, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For this parish [*and for our school*], that our members would find joy overflowing in their adoption by the heavenly Father through Holy Baptism, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For the hospitalized, for those taking treatments and for all who are sick,

PRAYER REQUESTS: Member or Relation	Pray for...
Everett & Angelyn Dux (Leroy)	(Thank God) Ev. & Ang. are both at home
Linda Kryszak	We've missed Linda for a number of weeks
Dee Kurczewski (& David)	Dee is home after infection (was in hospital)
Theresa Leuck (AnnW daughter-in-law)	Ann back from visiting Theresa
Pat & Doug Marsh (Robin's parents)	Doug and Pat still battling health issues
Delores Platt (Jim V)	We've missed Linda Delores for many weeks also
Janice Thomas (David)	Janice completed (6) chemo. treatments. PTL
Marcus Wienke (Bev&Don's)	Marcus has (big)up & down swings w/chemos

that in Emmanuel — the **God Who Is With Us** in our sufferings — they may be given peace, confidence and grace to entrust themselves to His wisdom and goodness, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For those who grieve, for the lonely and the forsaken, that in Christ they would find the comfort of that light no darkness can overcome, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all who approach Christ's altar today, that worthily receiving the gift of His very body and blood, the Eternal Word of the Father would dwell in them with His life and light, and that they would abide in Him forevermore, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For the blessed Virgin Mary, St. Joseph and all the faithful who rejoice with us but upon another shore and in a greater light, let us give thanks and praise, asking that we may be brought to join them in their endless worship of Him who is both Son of God and Son of Mary, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.** + Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**