Children's Christmas Service
A Shepherd's Christmas

✝ *In Nomine Jesu* ✝

Prayer

O God, because You once caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light, grant that we who have known the mystery of that Light here on earth may come to the full measure of its joys in heaven; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Theme

Today's service follows in part a tradition that goes back several hundred years known as the *Quempas* service. The name *Quempas* comes from the first two words of a carol in the original Latin language: "Quem pastores", which means "Whom Are the Shepherds". You can find the carol in our hymnal as "Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising" (LSB # 375)

Although it can be done in various arrangements, our celebration of the *Quempas* service is a simple one that focuses on two features. First, the children will read the Christmas story from the Gospel of Luke along with reflections from Martin Luther at various spots in the sanctuary to remind us both that God's love in Christ surrounds us and that we are to carry this Good News all around the world. Second, we will sing familiar Christmas carols to show that we support and build one another up in Christ's love for us. God bless your worship as we celebrate Christ's birth under the theme: "A Shepherd's Christmas."

Shepherd's Christmas

A Christmas Service for School-age Children

Note to the user: This copyright information is legally required to be in the front of any printed copies of this service.

Copyright © 2005 Concordia Publishing House
3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, MO 63118-3968
1-800-325-3040 • www.cph.org

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without purchasing this product from Concordia Publishing House. **Through this registered purchase, your congregation is allowed to adapt and duplicate the contents for your local, one-time Christmas service use.**

Written by Reverend Bart Day

Edited by Pamela Nielsen

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

The text of Psalm 98 is taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved.

Portions of the liturgy are taken from *Hymnal Supplement 98* copyright © 1998 Concordia Publishing House.

The quotations marked AE are from Luther's Works, American Edition: vol. 52 copyright © 1974 by Augsburg Fortress, used by permission of the publisher.

Psalm 98 antiphon written by Janet Muth.

"He Whom Shepherds Once Came Praising" © 1969 Concordia Publishing House.

Text for "Magnificat" © 1991 Stephen Starke, administered by Concordia Publishing House.

Text for "Lo, How a Rose Is Growing" © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*. Used by permission of Concordia Publishing House.

Manufactured in the United States of America

PRESERVICE MUSIC

HYMN *Oh Come, All Ye Faithful* Stanzas 1–3

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:

***Refrain*:**
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***

PSALMODY Psalm 98 (spoken)

L. Sing to the LORD a new song, for He has done marvelous things; His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for Him.
C. The LORD has made His salvation known and revealed His righteousness to the nations.
L. He has remembered His love and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.
C. Sing to God a new song: He has done marvelous things! Sing to God a new song.

L. Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth, burst into jubilant song with music;
C. make music to the LORD with the harp, with the harp and the sound of singing,
L. with trumpets and the blast of the ram's horn shout for joy before the LORD, the King.
C. Sing to God a new song: He has done marvelous things! Sing to God a new song.

L. Let the sea resound, and all that is in it, the world, and all who live in it.

C. Let the rivers clap their hands, let the mountains sing together for joy;
L. let them sing before the LORD, for He comes to judge the earth.
C. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples with equity.

C. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

C. Sing to God a new song: He has done marvelous things! Sing to God a new song.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

THE CHRISTMAS STORY

READING Luke 2:1–5

Jackson: A reading from Luke
In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town.

Hayden: And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

HYMN *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep And dreamless sleep The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting light.
The hopes and fears Of all the years Are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, And, gathered all above
While mortals sleep, The angels keep Their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing To God the king, And peace to all the earth!

How silently, how silently The wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts To human hearts The blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming; But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will Receive him, still The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, And enter in, Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell;
Oh, come to us, Abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!

READING Luke 2:6–7

Caden: A reading from Luke
And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

CAROL *Away in a Manger* Children

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
And stay by my cradle 'til morning is nigh.

Be near me Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay,
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care.
And take us to heaven, to live with Thee there.

READING Luke 2:8–11

Greyson: A reading from Luke
And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled

with fear.

Carson: And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

This is the Word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

RECITATION FROM LUTHER

Annalee: It is written in Haggai 2:6 & 21 that God says: "I will move the heavens and the earth when he will come whom all people desire." This has been fulfilled today. For the heavens, that is, the angels who are in heaven and who were praising God with their song, and the earth, that is, the people on earth, were moved. AE 52:7

CAROL *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

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 angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

***Refrain*:**
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!
Refrain

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.
Refrain

READING Luke 2:12

Cayleigh: A reading from Luke
"And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."

This is the Word of the Lord

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

RECITATION FROM LUTHER

Jackson: How could God have demonstrated more pleasantly that he is gracious to all those who are lowly and despised on earth than by this lowly birth, from which the angels derive joy and which he reveals to none but the poor shepherds? AE 52:14

POEM *Little Baby Jesus*

Danahlia and Blakelee:

Little baby Jesus, sleeping on the hay
Little baby Jesus, born on Christmas Day.

Little baby Jesus, sleeping on the hay
Little baby Jesus, came on earth to stay.

Little baby Jesus, sleeping on the hay
Little baby Jesus, for our sins He paid.

Little baby Jesus, sleeping on the hay
Little baby Jesus, stay with me always.

READING Luke 2:13–14

Hayden: A reading from Luke
And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!"

This is the Word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

RECITATION FROM LUTHER

Caden: Now, what sort of honor is it that all the angels in heaven cannot contain themselves for joy, that they burst forth giving poor shepherds in the field a chance to hear them, that they preach, praise, sing, and pour out their joy beyond measure? Can the joy and honor of all the people of Bethlehem, indeed that of all kings and lords on the earth, be compared to this joy and honor? AE 52:13

HYMN *Angels We Have Heard on High*

Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.

***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

READING Luke 2:15–16

Carson: A reading from Luke
When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another,

Greyson: "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

RECITATION FROM LUTHER

Annalee: This faith persists, in both life and death, even as in hell and heaven, and nothing can overthrow it; for it rests on the word alone, without regard to any person. These shepherds also had such a faith; for they agree and they adhere to the word so much that they forget the angels who told it to them. They do not say: "Let us go and see the story

which the angels have told us," but "which the Lord has told us." The angels are quickly forgotten, and only the word of God remains.
AE 52:33

CAROL *Lo, How a Rose Is Growing* Stanzas 1–3

Lo, how a rose is growing, A bloom of finest grace;
The prophets had foretold it: A branch of Jesse's race
Would bear one perfect flow'r Here in the cold of winter
And darkest midnight hour.

The rose of which I'm singing, Isaiah had foretold.
He came to us through Mary, Who sheltered him from cold.
Through God's eternal will This child to us was given
At midnight calm and still.

The shepherds hear the story The angels sang that night:
How Christ was born of Mary; He was the Son of light.
To Bethlehem they ran To find him in the manger
As angel heralds sang.

READING Luke 2:17–20

Cayleigh: A reading from Luke
And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

HYMN *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 lonely manger The humble Christ was born;
And God sent us salvation That blessed Christmas morn.
Refrain

Offering

The Litany

L. For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.
C. Lord, have mercy.
L. For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.
C. Lord, have mercy.
L. For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.
C. Lord, have mercy.
L. For our pastors in Christ, for all servants of the Church, and for all the people, let us pray to the Lord.
C. Lord, have mercy.
L. For our public servants, for the government and those who protect us, that they may be upheld and strengthened in every good deed, let us pray to the Lord.
C. Lord, have mercy.
L. For those who work to bring peace, justice, health, and protection in this and every place let us pray to the Lord.
C. Lord, have mercy.
L. For those who bring offerings, those who do good works in this congregation, those who toil, those who sing, and all the people here present who await from the Lord great and abundant mercy let us pray to the Lord.
C. Lord, have mercy.
L. For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times let us pray to the Lord.
C. Lord, have mercy.
L. For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and need let us pray to the Lord.
C. Lord, have mercy.

L. For the faithful who have gone before us and are with Christ let us give thanks to the Lord.

C. Alleluia.

L. Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

L. Rejoicing in the fellowship of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ, our Lord.

C. To You, O Lord.

L. Let us pray.

C. I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

L. 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.

L. Let us bless the Lord.

C. Thanks be to God.

L. The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✞ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve us.

C. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN *Joy to the World* (Paraphrase of Psalm 98)

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive its 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 all 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 sin and sorrow 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.

Thank you to everyone who helped with the Children's Christmas this year.
Thank you to the children for participating.

May your Christmas be blessed as we celebrate the best present ever, the birth of our Savior,