

# Confession and Absolution

## 349 Hark the Glad Sound



1 Hark the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, The Sav - ior  
2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, In Sa - tan's  
3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, The bleed - ing  
4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of Peace, Thy wel - come



prom - ised long; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare a  
bond - age held. The gates of brass be - fore Him  
soul to cure, And with the trea - sures of His  
shall pro - claim, And heav'n's e - ter - nal arch - es



throne And ev - 'ry voice a song.  
burst, The i - ron fet - ters yield.  
grace To en - rich the hum - ble poor.  
ring With Thy be - lov - ed name.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702-51  
Tune: Thomas Haweis, 1734-1820  
Text and tune: Public domain

*Stand*

*The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.*

P In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

*Kneel/Stand*

*Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.*

P Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

C **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

*Stand*

# Service of the Word

## Introit

*Psalm 71:14–18; antiphon: Philippians 4:4*

Rejoice in the Lord always;  
again I will say, Rejoice.  
I will hope continually  
and will praise you yet more and more.  
My mouth will tell of your righteous acts, of your deeds of salvation all the day,  
for their number is past my knowledge.  
With the mighty deeds of the Lord GOD I will come;  
I will remind them of your righteousness, yours alone.  
O God, from my youth you have taught me,  
and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.  
So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me,  
until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come.  
**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.**  
Rejoice in the Lord always;  
again I will say, Rejoice.

## Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.  
C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray.  
Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

*Sit*

## Grandma's Nativity Story

**Liesel (Narrator)** Hello and welcome to everyone here  
It's lovely to see you at this time of year.  
I'm sure, there's no doubt that you all know the reason  
For our celebrations at this special season.

It's not about presents, or parties or fun  
Or family games, when all's said and done.  
They do have some value; they all have their worth  
But none is as special as Jesus's birth.

So now as we start our nativity play  
We have a clear message to give you today....  
We start as the children are sat up in bed  
(When each of them should have been sleeping instead!)

**Aubri (Grandchild)** It's the night before Christmas and we should be snoring.  
Normally we would, because bedtime is boring!  
But how can we sleep when we know Christmas Day  
Is quickly approaching? It's well on its way!

**Aubri** How can I sleep when I'm waiting to see  
If anyone has any presents for me?

**Amelia (Grandchild)** Mom told us we shouldn't get overexcited  
But all of our family and friends are invited.

**Aubri and Amelia** We really love Christmas. The presents are great.  
We can't get to sleep and it's getting quite late.

**Liesel** Now, outside the bedroom where no-one is sleeping  
Their Grandma is listening, and slowly he's creeping:  
She bursts through the door and in a stern voice  
Shouts:

**Grandma Joyce** What are you doing, what's all of this noise?

**Liesel** All of a sudden the children sit down  
And Grandma looks cross with a terrible frown.

**Aubri and Amelia** But Christmas is coming, we're sorry, it's just:  
We can't settle down, but we know that we must

**Grandma Joyce** I'll tell you what children, I'll do my best  
To help you calm down and get some rest.  
Now get back in bed and I'll read you a story  
That tells you, at Christmas, who should get the glory.

**Liesel** The children all settled, and while Grandpa read  
They pulled up their blankets and sat up in bed  
And this is the story that Grandma Joyce told;  
The Christmas Nativity Story of old.....

**Grandma Joyce** The story starts a long time ago, in a far away place, when a Roman Emperor called Caesar Augustus was ruling over all the people. He didn't care how poor the people were, he was determined to make sure that no-one escaped his taxes, so he sent his soldiers to make a special announcement.

**Tristin (Soldier)**

Hear ye, hear ye; listen to me  
Caesar Augustus has made a decree  
All of his people, that's everyone here

And all of the empire, far and near.  
Must go to be registered where they were born  
So all of you, get packed, and set off at dawn!

**Grandma Joyce** So, a couple named Mary and Joseph set off from Nazareth where they lived, to travel to Bethlehem where Joseph had been born. Mary was expecting a very special baby, who an angel had told her was God's son, and should be named "Jesus"

*Mary and Joseph (Lilian and Caleb) set off on their journey to Bethlehem*

**Congregational Hymn: 361 O Little Town of Bethlehem**



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!  
2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, And, gath - ered all a - bove  
3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly The won - drous gift is giv'n!  
4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, De - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by;  
While mor-tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won-d'ring love.  
So God im-parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of His heav'n.  
Cast out our sin, and en - ter in, Be born in us to - day.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing light.  
O morn-ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth,  
No ear may hear His com - ing; But in this world of sin,  
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad tid - ings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.  
And prais - es sing to God the king And peace to all the earth!  
Where meek souls will re - ceive Him, still The dear Christ en - ters in.  
O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Im - man - u - el!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-93  
Tune: Lewis H. Redner, 1831-1908  
Text and tune: Public domain

**Grandma Joyce** So, after a long journey, Mary and Joseph finally arrived at Bethlehem, tired and weary, and started to search for somewhere to stay.

**Caleb (Joseph)** Knock, knock. Hello. Is anyone there?  
We need a room. Do you have one to spare?

**Shay (Innkeeper)** We're busy. Can't help you. Please go away.  
We haven't got time for you today.

**Caleb** Knock, knock. Hello. Are you still there?  
We need a room. You must have one to spare.

**Shay** You're too late. We're full up. Please go away.  
We haven't got room for you to stay.

**Caleb** Knock, knock. Hello. I know you're still there.  
We need a room. We'll happily share.

**Shay** I'm sorry, I'd love to invite you both in  
But as you can see, there's no room at the inn.  
I do have a stable; is that worth me saying?  
I know it's not where you would choose to be staying.  
You're welcome to use it. That's up to you.

**Caleb** We're desperate, so even a stable will do!  
Come on now Mary, let's get you some rest  
I know it's not great, but I have done my best.

**Grandma Joyce** So Mary and Joseph settled down for the night in the stable, and while they were there the time came for the baby to be born. He was a beautiful baby boy. Mary called him Jesus, as an angel had told her this was to be His name. She wrapped Him in a cloth, and laid Him in a manger.

*(Mary & Joseph settle down in the stable. Mary picks up the baby, wraps him in a cloth and lays him back down in the manger.)*

### **Younger Children (Grades PreK-2)**

*In Bethlehem, a Babe Was Born (the tune of "O Christmas Tree")*

In Bethlehem a babe was born, and Mary called Him Jesus  
In Bethlehem a babe was born, and Mary called Him Jesus.  
And in a manger for His bed, the baby Jesus laid His head.  
In Bethlehem, a babe was born and Mary called Him Jesus.

### **Grandma Joyce**

Meanwhile, out in the fields, some shepherds were watching over their sheep, to keep them safe from dangerous wild animals. All of a sudden, a dazzling bright light appeared in the sky and the shepherds were terrified.

*(Shepherds walk out to center stage)*

**Tristin (Shepherd)** What's that in the sky, an incredible light?

**Emma (Shepherd)** Yes, what could it be at this time of night?  
The light's moving closer, what could it be?  
It's so bright I'm finding it hard now to see.

**Tristin** Cover your eyes and get down on the ground  
There could be some serious danger around!

*(Shepherds cover eyes and crouch down)*

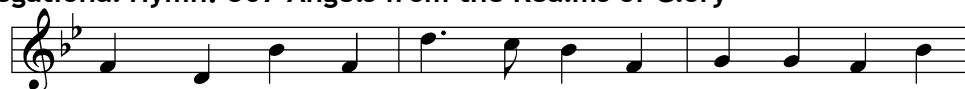
*Angel walks out to center stage to join shepherds*

**Eva (Angel)** Do not be afraid, I bring news of a birth  
God's son has been sent as a baby to earth.  
You'll find Him in Bethlehem, laid in His bed  
But not in a palace: a stable instead!

**Grandma Joyce** Then, all of a sudden, a whole host of angels came from all around and the whole place was filled with beautiful music as they sang praises to God.

**Angel Choir** Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Glory to God in the highest!  
And peace to His people on earth,  
On whom His favor rests

### Congregational Hymn: 367 Angels from the Realms of Glory



1 An - gels from the realms of glo - ry, Wing your flight o'er  
2 Shep - herds in the field a - bid - ing, Watch - ing o'er your  
3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, Bright - er vi - sions  
4 Saints be - fore the al - tar bend - ing, Watch - ing long in  
△ 5 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God the Fa - ther,



all the earth; Ye who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry,  
flocks by night, God with us is now re - sid - ing,  
beam a - far; Seek the great De - sire of na - tions,  
hope and fear, Sud - den - ly the Lord, de - scend - ing,  
Spir - it, Son, Ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing



Now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth.  
Yon - der shines the In - fant Light.  
Ye have seen His na - tal star.  
In His tem - ple shall ap - pear.  
To the e - ter - nal Three in One.

*Refrain*



Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship;



Wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.

Text (sts. 1, ref, 2-4): James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt.; (st. 5): Salisbury Hymn Book, 1857, Salisbury, alt.  
Tune: Henry T. Smart, 1813-79  
Text and tune: Public domain

**Tristin** Let's go to Bethlehem, search for this king.

**Emma** But what shall we take as a gift to Him?  
I'm just a shepherd; that's all I am!

**Tristin** Then why don't we take Him our very best lamb.

**Grandma Joyce** So the shepherds set off to Bethlehem to find the special baby.

*Shepherds walk to the stable scene*

### Younger Children (Grades PreK-2)

In Bethlehem a Babe Was Born (to the tune of "O Christmas Tree"):

To Bethlehem the shepherds came to see the baby Jesus  
To Bethlehem the shepherds came to see the baby Jesus  
And for a gift they brought a lamb, and gave it to the "Son of Man"  
To Bethlehem the shepherds came to see the baby Jesus.

### Children's Song: 364 Away in a Manger

1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed,  
2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,  
3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask Thee to stay

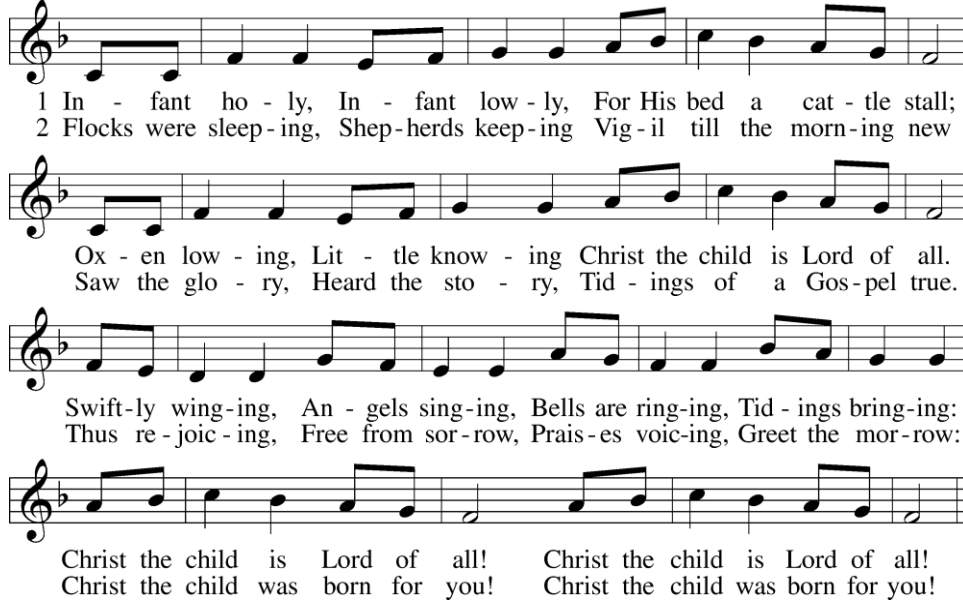
The lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down His sweet head.  
But lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing He makes.  
Close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.

The stars in the sky \_\_\_\_\_ looked down where He lay,  
I love Thee, Lord Je - sus! Look down from the sky,  
Bless all the dear chil - dren in Thy ten - der care,

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.  
And stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.  
And take us to heav - en to live with Thee there.

Text (sts. 1-2): Little Children's Book, 1885, Philadelphia; (st. 3): Vineyard Songs, 1892, Louisville, alt.  
Tune: James R. Murray, 1841-1905  
Text and tune: Public domain

### Congregation Hymn: 393 Infant Holy, Infant Lowly



1 In - fant ho - ly, In - fant low - ly, For His bed a cat - tle stall;  
2 Flocks were sleep - ing, Shep - herds keep - ing Vig - il till the morn - ing new  
Ox - en low - ing, Lit - tle know - ing Christ the child is Lord of all.  
Saw the glo - ry, Heard the sto - ry, Tid - ings of a Gos - pel true.  
Swift - ly wing - ing, An - gels sing - ing, Bells are ring - ing, Tid - ings bring - ing:  
Thus re - joic - ing, Free from sor - row, Prais - es voic - ing, Greet the mor - row:  
Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!  
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

Text: tr. Edith M. G. Reed, 1885-1933, alt.  
Text and tune: Polish  
Text and tune: Public domain

**Grandma Joyce** So, the shepherds stayed to worship the baby Jesus. How amazing! Nobody liked shepherds in those days, and yet they were the first people to hear about the birth of God’s son; and from an angel as well! That must have made them feel so special.

But, some more people would be on their way to see baby Jesus, even though they were not there that Christmas night; some very important people. They were wise men, respected by everyone, because they knew so much. They studied the stars and found a new star which was so bright that they knew it meant something very special: that the baby who was going to be King of the Jews had been born...

*Star walks on center stage and stands above/ in front of the stable. The wise men partly follow reading books, and point to the star from the side of the stage. After a few moments the star opens his/her arms and begins to speak.*

**Tenley (Star)** The wise men are clever, to them it is clear  
Just what it means now I’ve arrived here.  
I’m guiding the way from high overhead  
To lead the wise men to the Christ child’s bed.

**Grandma Joyce** So, the wise men set off on a very long journey following the star, knowing that it would guide them to Jesus. On their way, they stopped at King Herod’s palace, and were invited in. They told Herod all about the special baby that they were searching for, and he pretended to be just as excited as they were, but really was plotting against Jesus.

*Herod is in his palace, when the wise men walk on stage pointing to the star, as if following it, then stop at Herod’s palace and he shakes their hands and beckons to invite them in. They sit around him and pretend to chat to him briefly then he begins to speak....*

**Liesel (King Herod)** A baby who will be the king of the Jews:  
Please tell me more, this is fantastic news!

**Tristin (Wiseman)** We saw His star, so special and bright  
We came from the East and followed the light.

**Shay (Wiseman)** We've journeyed so long, but we've not far to go  
We'll find Him, then come back, and let you know.

**Emma (Wiseman)** If you want to go to Him, we'll find out where  
Then we can tell you so that you can go there.

*The wise men walk off to the stable*

### **Younger Children (Grades PreK-2)**

In Bethlehem a Babe Was Born (to the tune of "O Christmas Tree")

To Bethlehem the wise men came to see the baby Jesus  
To Bethlehem the wise men came to see the baby Jesus  
And guided by a shining star, the wise men travelled from afar  
To Bethlehem the wise men came to see the baby Jesus.

### **Grandma Joyce**

And as the wise men followed the star to Bethlehem, they saw it come to rest over a stable, so they walked in and saw the most amazing sight....The baby, the one called Jesus, was laid in an animal feeding trough. Can you believe it? Just lying in a manger! But they still recognised Him and knew that this was the baby, born to be king. They bowed down to give him their gifts.

*The wise men approach the manger individually and bow with gift after saying their own line.*

**Tristin** So this is the baby! We've come a long way  
To worship this child of yours today.  
I bring you gold that is fit for a king  
Who will be the ruler of everything.

**Shay** I bring you frankincense, fragrant and sweet,  
I'm glad to be able to bow at your feet.

**Emma** I bring you myrrh, expensive perfume.  
Like Jesus's presence it fills the room.

*The wise men sit in place in the stable, and Grandpa continues.*

**Grandma Joyce** Now, Herod had a plan. He didn't like the idea of a new king being more important than him, so he was very jealous, and he planned to find out where the baby was, and he would have him killed.

But God warned them in a dream not to go back to King Herod, so he never did find out who the baby was who would be the King of the Jews..... And as for Herod and his horrible, jealous behaviour.....well, that's another story.

But, even so on the very first Christmas day, people celebrated Jesus's birthday with gifts, and today we give presents to each other to remember that very first Christmas.

So now all you children, you must do your best  
To get a good sleep now, and plenty of rest.  
And when you wake up in the morning light  
Remember the story I've read you tonight.

**Liesel (Narrator)** So now that they're sleeping, and wrapped up in bed  
There's nothing but laughter and presents ahead  
For Christmas Day's coming and as you can see  
Presents will be gathering under the tree.

But the very best gift of all  
Is Jesus, our Savior and king.

### Congregation Hymn: 392 God Loves Me Dearly



1 God loves me dear - ly, Grants me sal -  
2 I was in slav - 'ry, Sin, death, and  
3 He sent forth Je - sus, My dear Re -  
4 Je - sus, my Sav - ior, Him - self did  
5 Now I will praise You, O Love E -



va - tion, God loves me dear - ly, Loves e - ven me.  
dark - ness; God's love was work - ing To make me free.  
deem - er, He sent forth Je - sus And set me free.  
of - fer; Je - sus, my Sav - ior, Paid all I owed.  
ter - nal; Now I will praise You All my life long.



*Refrain*  
There - fore I'll say a - gain: God loves me



dear - ly, God loves me dear - ly, Loves e - ven me.

Text: August Rische, 1819-1906; tr. composite  
Tune: German  
Text and tune: Public domain

### Offering

*Stand*

## Prayer of The Church

### Lord's Prayer

### Concluding Collect

### Benediction

LSB 166

P The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and T give you peace.



☐ A - men.

### 386 Now Sing We, Now Rejoice



1 Now sing we, now re - joice,      Now raise to heav'n our voice;  
2 Come from on high to me;      I can - not rise to Thee.  
3 Now through His Son doth shine      The Fa - ther's grace di - vine.  
4 Oh, where shall joy be found?      Where but on heav'n - ly ground?



He from whom joy stream - eth      Poor in a man - ger lies;  
Cheer my wea - ried spir - it,      O pure and ho - ly Child;  
Death was reign - ing o'er us      Through sin and van - i - ty  
Where the an - gels sing - ing      With all His saints u - nite,



Not so bright - ly beam - eth      The sun in yon - der skies.  
Through Thy grace and mer - it,      Blest Je - sus, Lord most mild,  
Till He o - pened for us      A bright e - ter - ni - ty.  
Sweet - est prais - es bring - ing      In heav'n - ly joy and light.



Thou my Sav - ior art!      Thou my Sav - ior art!  
Draw me un - to Thee!      Draw me un - to Thee!  
May we praise Him there!      May we praise Him there!  
Oh, that we were there!      Oh, that we were there!

Text: Latin and German, 14th cent.; tr. Arthur T. Russell, 1806-74, alt.  
Tune: German, 14th cent.  
Text and tune: Public domain

### Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Setting One from Lutheran Service Book

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Thank you to the Sunday School Staff and Micki Shorey for helping put together today's Children's Christmas Program to the praise and glory of God. Our cast for today's program:

Amelia Alan: Grandchild

Caleb Graun: Joseph

Joyce Mueller: Grandma

Emma Nemitz: Shepherd, Wiseman

Tristin Nemitz: Soldier, Shepherd Wiseman

Tenley Wiegel: Star

Amelia Alan: Grandchild

Eva Mueller: Angel

Liesel Mueller: Narrator, King Herod

Lilian Nemitz: Mary

Shay Wiegel: Innkeeper, Wiseman

Younger Children (Grades PreK-2):

Angel Choir: The Sunday School Kids

Handbell Choir: The Sunday School Kids