

***Welcome, visitors! Welcome members and friends of St. Matthew Ev. Lutheran Church.
Thank you for joining us in church and on our online service today.***

HOLY COMMUNION is celebrated in our service this morning. +Guests who are baptized Christians, who acknowledge and confess their sinfulness, who confess Jesus Christ as their Savior from sin, and who believe that He is really present in Holy Communion to bring us His forgiveness and life, are welcome to the Lord's Table.



4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 22, 2024

HOLY COMMUNION SETTING 3 pg. 138

Prelude – “O Come, Little Children” arr. Anna Laura Page
(Piano and four Hand Bells)

WELCOME

(Please rise)

GATHERING HYMN

**Oh, come, little children, oh, come one and all,
To Bethlehem haste to the manger so small.
God's Son for a gift has been sent you this night
To be your Redeemer, your joy and Delight.**

At every beginning there is a yearning.

O Emmanuel, surprise us by your coming.

Be born anew in our hearts..

O Emmanuel, surprise us by your coming.

We welcome your presence now with the lighting of this candle whose flame brings warmth to winter and fills this place with the glow of hope.

Cong - Amen.

CANDLELIGHTING HYMN – ELW “Christ the Lord is Coming”

(Choir sings Advent 4, then Congregation joins at ALL)

Cantor/Choir:



Advent 1: Christ the Lord is com - ing, bring - ing hope and light,
Advent 2: Christ the Lord is com - ing to this wea - ry land!
Advent 3: Christ the Lord is com - ing, sent from God a - bove
Advent 4: Christ the Lord is com - ing! Sing this hap - py morn



Re - a - wake - ning hearts now bur - dened by the night.
Rise, re - pent, pro - claim the King - dom is at hand!
to re - veal God's mer - cy, jus - tice, truth, and love.
of the Word In - car - nate in whom we are re - born!

All:



"No - ël" sing with glad - ness, "No - ël" sing with cheer, put a -



way all fear and sad - ness, Christ the Son of God is near!



"No - ël" sing with glad - ness, "No - ël" sing with cheer, put a -



way all fear and sad - ness, Christ the Son of God is near!

Text: Michael Burkhardt, and copyright © 2020 Birmamwood.
Tune: Traditional French carol (PD).

GREETING

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

Cong – And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, you gave us your only Son to take on our human nature and to illumine the world with your light. By your grace adopt us as your children and enlighten us with your Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Cong – Amen.

(Please be seated)

FIRST READING: Micah 5:2a-5

Justin Stacy

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me, one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace.

**RESPONSE – ELW 279 O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM
(Bells)**

SECOND READING: The Annunciation - Luke 1:26-28

Madelyn Berger

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her. "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

Elizabeth Berger

Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; Let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

RESPONSE - ELW 265 THE ANGEL GABRIEL FROM HEAVEN CAME

THIRD READING: The Visitation - Luke 1:39-45

Gabrielle Newman

In those days, Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." And Mary said,

RESPONSE - (for verses 46-55) ELW 251 MY SOUL PROCLAIMS YOUR GREATNESS

FOURTH READING: The Birth of Jesus - Luke 2:1-7, 8-14, 15-20

Ian Berger

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

RESPONSE – ELW 277 AWAY IN A MANGER

v. 1 – Children

vs. 2 & 3 - All

Jaxen Kincaid

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great Joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

RESPONSE – ELW 289 ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

Ariel Newman

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

RESPONSE – ELW 276 INFANT HOLY, INFANT LOWLY

(Please rise)

APOSTLES’ 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

Pastor – Lord, in your mercy,

Cong – Receive our prayer.

Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Cong - Amen.

May the Peace of the Lord be with you always!

Cong – And also with you.

PEACE

(Please be seated)

OFFERING – “O Jesus So Sweet, O Jesus So Mild” – G. F. Kaufman

(Please rise)

OFFERTORY – (ELW 188) “Create In Me a Clean Heart, O God.....”

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right

spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your

pres-ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -

store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion,

and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

Music: J. A. Freylinghausen. 1670-1739

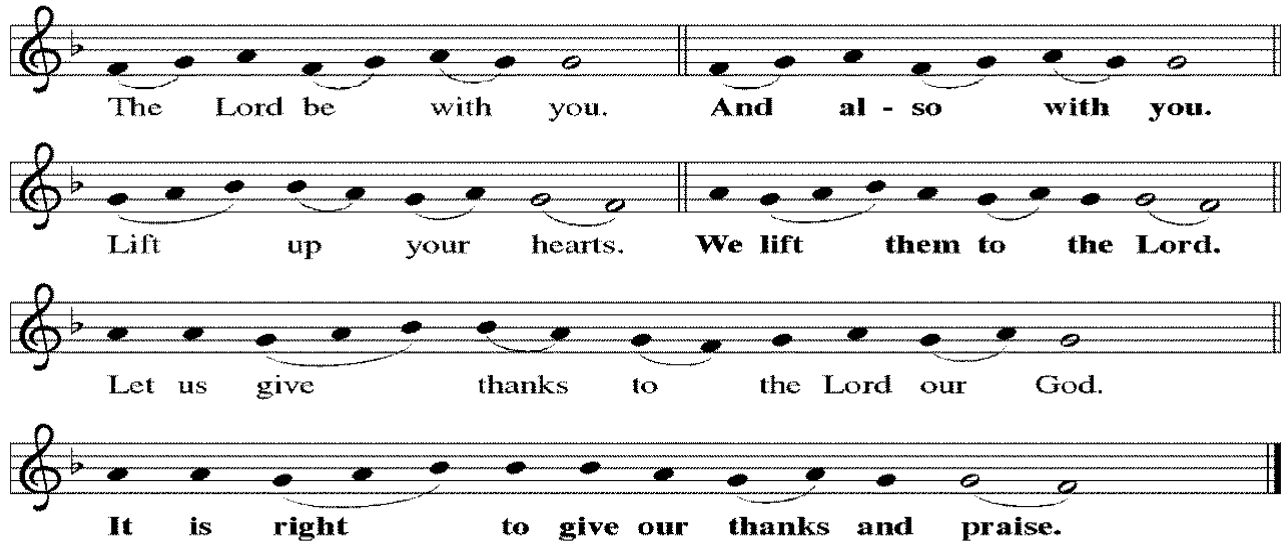
OFFERING PRAYER

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.

Cong – Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

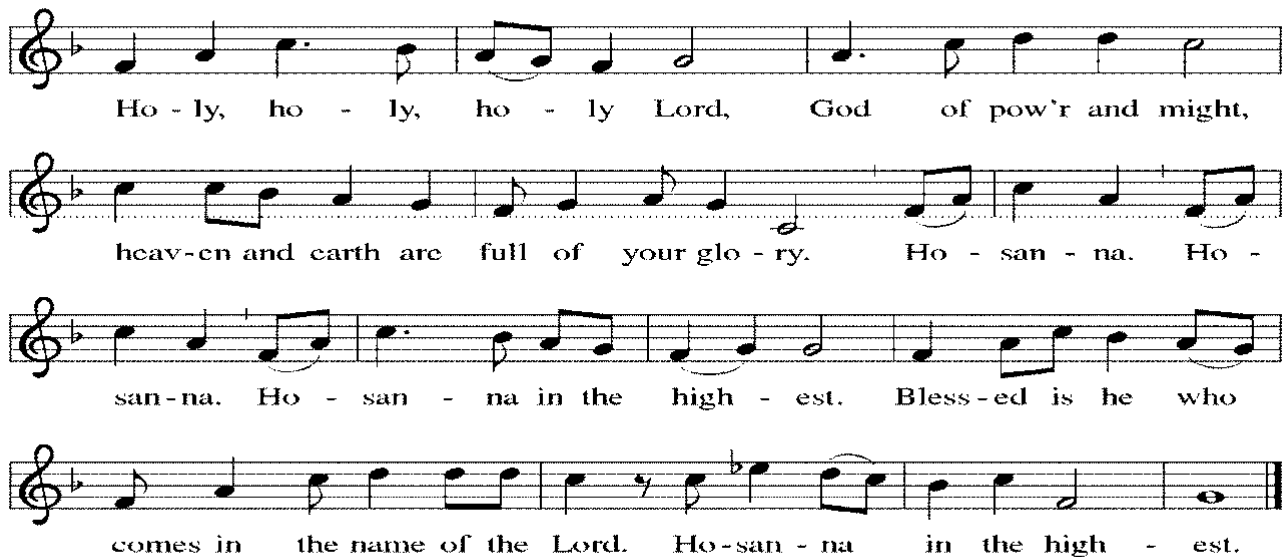
Preface Dialogue



The Lord be with you. And al - so 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.

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



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
san-na. 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.

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PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING III (ELW pg. 110)

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life: Blessed are you for the birth of creation. Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light. Blessed are you for your promise to your people. Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams. Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will. Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

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. Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Cong – Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

Cong – Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Cong – Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

Cong – Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

(Please be seated)

Lamb of God

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

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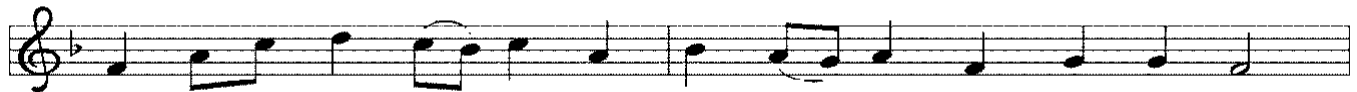
COMMUNION HYMN - ELW 286 YOUR LITTLE ONES, DEAR LORD

(Please rise)

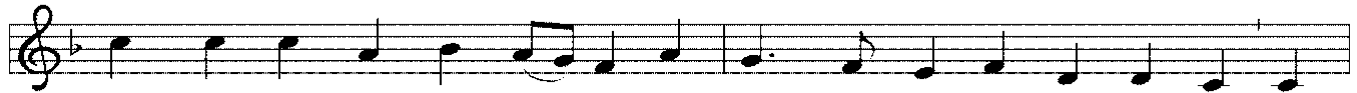
POST-COMMUNION HYMN – (ELW 204)



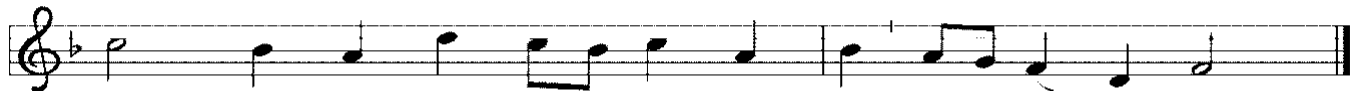
Thank-ful hearts and voic - es raise; tell ev-'ry-one what God has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and bear Christ's ho - ly name.



Send us with your prom - is - es and lead your peo - ple forth in joy with



shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980
Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923
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POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

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.

Cong– 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.

Cong – Amen.

SENDING HYMN – ELW 290 GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

(Please be seated)

Postlude

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

Cong - Thanks be to God.

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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.
 oh, come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Im - man - u - el!

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

265

1 The an - gel Ga - bri - el from heav - en came,
 2 "For know a bless - ed moth - er thou shalt be,
 3 Then gen - tle Mar - y meek - ly bowed her head;
 4 Of her, Em - man - u - el, the Christ, was born

with wings as drift - ed snow, with eyes as flame:
 all gen - er - a - tions laud and hon - or thee;
 "To me be as it pleas - eth God," she said.
 in Beth - le - hem all on a Christ - mas morn,

"All hail to thee, O low - ly maid - en Mar - y,
 thy son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told,
 "My soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy God's ho - ly name."
 and Chris - tian folk through - out the world will ev - er say:

most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."
 most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."
 Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy,
 "Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy." Glo - ri - a!

My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness

251

1 My soul pro-claims your great-ness, Lord; I sing my Sav - ior's praise!
 2 To all who live in ho - ly fear your mer - cy ev - er flows.
 3 To Is - ra - el, your ser - vant blest, your help is ev - er sure;

You looked up - on my low - li - ness, and I am full of grace.
 With might - y arm you dash the proud, their schem - ing hearts ex - pose.
 the prom - ise to our par - ents made their chil - dren will se - cure.

Now ev - 'ry land and ev - 'ry age this bless - ing shall pro - claim—
 The ruth - less you have cast a - side, the low - ly throned in - stead;
 Sing glo - ry to the Ho - ly One, give hon - or to the Word,

great won - ders you have done for me, and ho - ly is your name.
 the hun - gry filled with all good things, the rich sent off un - fed.
 and praise the Pow'r of the Most High, one God, by all a - dored.

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

Je - sus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked
 Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes. I love you, Lord Je - sus; look
 ev - er and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil - dren in

down where he lay, the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 down from the sky and stay by my cra - dle till morn-ing is night.
 your ten - der care and fit us for heav-en, to live with you there.

Angels We Have Heard on High

1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
 2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;

and the moun - tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
 What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav' - n - ly song?
 come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.

Refrain

Glo - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o; glo - ri - a

ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

276



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: Polish carol; tr. Edith M. G. Reed, 1885-1933, alt.
Music: Polish carol

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Your Little Ones, Dear Lord

286

1 Your lit - tle ones, dear Lord, are we, and
 2 With songs we has - ten you to greet, and
 3 Oh, draw us whol - ly to you, Lord, and
 4 Un - til at last we too pro - claim, with

come your low - ly bed to see; en - light - en ev - 'ry
 kiss the ground be - fore your feet. Oh, bless - ed hour, oh,
 to us all your grace ac - cord; true faith and love to
 all your saints, your glo - rious name; in par - a - dise our

soul and mind, that we the way to you may find.
 sweet - est night that gave you birth, our soul's de - light.
 us im - part, that we may hold you in our heart.
 songs re - new, and praise you as the an - gels do.

Go Tell It on the Mountain

290

Refrain



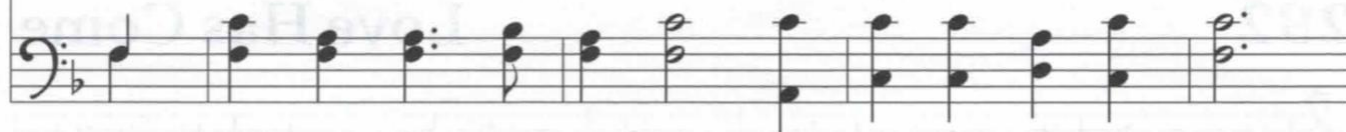
Go tell it on the moun - tain, o-ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;



go tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!



- 1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
- 2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when, lo, a - bove the earth
- 3 Down in a lone - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born;



be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless - ed Christ-mas morn.



Text: African American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work Jr., 1872–1925, stanzas, alt.
Music: African American spiritual

GO TELL IT
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