

First Christian Reformed Church
Lynden, Washington
December 8, 2024 ~ 6:00 PM Worship Service

Call to Worship: *Psalm 97:1a, 6, 9, 12*

*The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice!
The heavens proclaim his righteousness,
and all the peoples see his glory.
For you, O Lord, are most high over all the earth;
you are exalted far above all gods.
Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous,
and give thanks to his holy name!*

Opening Prayer

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 ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."

Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold Him come, offspring of the Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the God-head see; Hail the incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, risen with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by, born that man no more may die;
Born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."

("Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" words by Charles Wesley, tune by Felix Mendelssohn, © Public Domain, descant by descant by Paul Lijesstrand © 1976 Paragon Associates, Inc., CCLI #358926, Streaming License #20317932)

The First Noel

The first noel the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay.
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Noel, noel! Noel, noel! Born is the King of Israel!

They looked up and saw a star shining in the east, beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night.
Noel, noel! Noel, noel! Born is the King of Israel!

Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
That hath made heaven and earth of naught, and with His blood mankind hath bought.
Noel, noel! Noel, noel! Born is the King of Israel!

("The First Noel" words English Carol music English Melody © Public Domain, CCLI #358926 Streaming License #20317932)

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall;
Oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the child is Lord of all.
Swiftly winging angels singing, bells are ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!

Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new
Saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing, greet the morrow:
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

("Infant Holy, Infant Lowly" words Polish, tr. Edith M. G. Reed (1921), Public Domain, CCLI #358926, Streaming License #20317932)

Profession of Faith: Our World Belongs to God, Art. 4

**Our world has fallen into sin;
but rebellion and sin can never dethrone God.
He does not abandon the work of his hand;
the heavens still declare his glory.
He preserves his world, sending seasons, sun, and rain,
upholding his creatures, renewing the earth,
directing all things to their purpose.
He promised a Savior;
now the whole creation groans in the birth pangs of a new creation.**

Jesus, Name Above All Names

Jesus, name above all names, Beautiful Savior, Glorious Lord,
Emmanuel, God is with us, Blessed Redeemer, Living Word. *Repeat All*

("Jesus, Name Above All Names" Naida Hearn © 1994 Scripture in Song, CCLI #358926, Streaming #20317932)

Offering: Mission and Outreach Fund

Evening Prayer

Scripture: *Esther 1:1-3, 11-12, 19*

¹ Now in the days of Ahasuerus, the Ahasuerus who reigned from India to Ethiopia over 127 provinces, ² in those days when King Ahasuerus sat on his royal throne in Susa, the citadel, ³ in the third year of his reign he gave a feast for all his officials and servants. The army of Persia and Media and the nobles and governors of the provinces were before him.

¹¹ Bring Queen Vashti before the king with her royal crown, in order to show the peoples and the princes her beauty, for she was lovely to look at.

¹⁹ If it please the king, let a royal order go out from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes so that it may not be repealed, that Vashti is never again to come before King Ahasuerus. And let the king give her royal position to another who is better than she.

Esther 2:15, 17

¹⁵ When the turn came for Esther the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her as his own daughter, to go in to the king

¹⁷ The king loved Esther more than all the women, and she won grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins, so that he set the royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.

Esther 3:13-14

¹³ Dispatches were sent by couriers to all the king's provinces with the order to destroy, kill and annihilate all the Jews— young and old, women and children—on a single day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, and to plunder their goods. ¹⁴ A copy of the text of the edict was to be issued as law in every province and made known to the people of every nationality so they would be ready for that day.

Esther 4:13-16

¹³ Then Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, "Do not think to yourself that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews. ¹⁴ For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" ¹⁵ Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai, ¹⁶ "Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish."

Esther 7:3-6, 10

³ Then Queen Esther answered, "If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be granted me for my wish, and my people for my request. ⁴ For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. If we had been sold merely as slaves, men and women, I would have been silent, for our affliction is not to be compared with the loss to the king." ⁵ Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who has dared to do this?" ⁶ And Esther said, "A foe and enemy! This wicked Haman!" Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen.

¹⁰ So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the wrath of the king abated.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Message: *A Walk Through the Bible – Esther*

O Father You Are Sovereign

O Father, You are sovereign in all the worlds You made;
Your mighty Word was spoken and light and life obeyed.
Your voice commands the seasons and bounds the ocean's shore,
Set stars within their courses and stills the tempest's roar.

O Father, You are sovereign in all affairs of man;
No powers of death or darkness can thwart Your perfect plan.
All chance and change transcending supreme in time and space,
You hold Your trusting children secure in Your embrace.

O Father, You are sovereign the Lord of human pain;
Transmuting earthly sorrows to gold of heav'nly gain.
All evil overruling as none but conq'ror could,
Your love pursues its purpose our souls' eternal good.

("O Father, You Are Sovereign" Margaret Clarkson | Melchior Teschner, © Words: 1982 Christianity Today, Assigned 1983 To Hope Publishing Company, Music: Public Domain CCLI License # 358926, Streaming License 20317932)

God's Blessing

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

Refrain: Go, tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere;
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*

("Go, Tell It On the Mountain" words: Traditional; music: American Folk Song; © Public Domain CCLI #358926 Streaming License #20317932)

Pastors: Zac H, Robert W
Music: Nancy Z

Offering will be received for the Missions and Outreach Fund, used to help organizations that fall outside of the realm of our benevolence fund but still need support. This fund allows the church to help organizations when our offering schedule is full. Worship services are also broadcast live in the church basement and streamed online for anyone unable to worship in the sanctuary. An assistive listening system is available in the sanctuary; to use this system, switch hearing aids to "T".

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