

A “Sola” Christmas

A Children’s Christmas Service Focusing on the “Solos” of the Reformation

by Matthew Manthe

HYMN

Of the Father’s Love Begotten|35

All Children

Of the Father’s love begotten Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending he,
Of the things that are, that have been, And that future years shall see
Evermore and evermore.

Congregation

**Oh, that birth forever blessed When the virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving, Bore the Savior of our race,
And the babe, the world’s Redeemer, First revealed his sacred face
Evermore and evermore.**

**This is he whom heav’n-taught singers Sang of old with one accord;
Whom the Scriptures of the prophets Promised in their faithful word.
Now he shines, the long-expected; Let creation praise its Lord
Evermore and evermore.**

**Let the heights of heav’n adore him, Angel hosts his praises sing,
Pow’rs, dominions bow before him And extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent, Ev’ry voice in concert ring
Evermore and evermore.**

Please stand

**Christ, to you, with God the Father, And the Spirit ceaselessly
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving And unending praises be,
Honor, glory, and dominion And eternal victory
Evermore and evermore.**

INVOCATION

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

RESPONSIVE READING (Psalm 96, selected verses)

M: Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

C: Sing to the LORD, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.

M: Declare his glory among the nations,

C: his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

M: Ascribe to the LORD, all you families of nations,

C: ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

M: Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness;

C: tremble before him, all the earth.

M: Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;

C: let the sea resound, and all that is in it.

M: Let all creation rejoice before the LORD, for he comes,

C: he comes to judge the earth.

M: He will judge the world in righteousness

C: and the peoples in his faithfulness.

Please be seated

SERMON

CONGREGATIONAL HYMN

Now Sing We, Now Rejoice|34

Now sing we, now rejoice, Now raise to heav'n our voice;
He from whom joy streameth Poor in a manger lies;
Not so brightly beameth The sun in yonder skies.
Thou my Savior art! Thou my Savior art!

Come from on high to me; I cannot rise to thee.
Cheer my wearied spirit, O pure and holy Child;
Through thy grace and merit, Blest Jesus, Lord most mild,
Draw me unto thee! Draw me unto thee!

Now through his Son doth shine The Father's grace divine.
Death o'er us had reigned Through sin and vanity;
He for us obtained Eternal joy on high.
May we praise him there! May we praise him there!

Oh, where shall joy be found? Where but on heav'nly ground?
Where the angels singing With all his saints unite,
Sweetest praises bringing In heav'nly joy and light.
Oh, that we were there! Oh, that we were there!



INTRODUCTION

Narration

We all know how important a solid foundation is for a building. A building with a weak foundation may stand for a time, but eventually it will topple. Today, we once again hear the account of the birth of Jesus. Why do we set aside time to do this every year? The answer is that this is an important brick in the foundation of our faith. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 3:11, "No one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ."

Narration

As we close out the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, we are reminded how God used Martin Luther to restore to the Church the true teachings of Scripture. Luther summarized those teachings in five short statements: By Scripture Alone, By Faith Alone, Through Christ Alone, To God's Glory Alone, and By Grace Alone. These phrases form the foundation of the Lutheran Church, and because they are rooted in Scripture, they form the foundation of the Christian faith.

PART ONE
By Scripture Alone
(Sola Scriptura)

Narration

When the earth was new and people lived for hundreds of years, information was passed down from one generation to the next by word of mouth. Many generations were able to talk directly with Adam and Eve about the Garden of Eden, their fall into sin, and God's promise of a Savior. As the first people began dying and the number of generations increased, it became necessary to record God's promises. God tells us through his disciple Peter how this took place:

Recitation Grades 5-8

Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:20,21)

Narration

So how do we know that the baby whose birth we are celebrating is our Savior? Because Scripture tells us. That news can be found nowhere else but in God's Word. God gave his people prophecies—pictures of coming events—so they would recognize the Messiah when he came.

Recitation Grades 4K-2

"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." (Genesis 3:15)

Recitation Grades 5-6

"The Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel." (Isaiah 7:14)

Recitation Grades 3-4

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times." (Micah 5:2)

Recitation Grades 5-8

“‘The days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will fulfill the good promise I made to the people of Israel and Judah. In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David’s line; he will do what is just and right in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which it will be called: The LORD Our Righteous Savior.’” (Jeremiah 33:14-16)

CHILDREN HYMN

O Come, Emmanuel

Refrain

O come, O come, Emmanuel O come, O come, Emmanuel

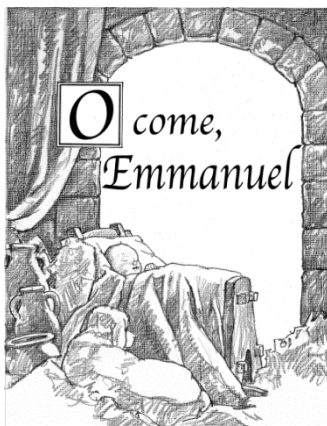
O come, O come, Emmanuel O come, O come, Emmanuel

The prophets told us long ago
a star would come from Jacob.
This child would be born in Bethlehem,
and he would come to save us.

Refrain

The angel said to Mary
that she would have a Son.
His name would be called Emmanuel,
God’s gift from heav’n sent down.

Refrain



PART TWO
By Faith Alone, Through Christ Alone
(Sola Fide, Solus Christus)

Narration

In the 11th chapter of the letter to the Hebrews, we find a definition for faith: "Faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see." When we receive unsettling news, our reaction might be to doubt the truth of this news. Today we see in Mary an example of a strong faith as she reacts to some potentially startling news.

Narration

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said,

Men

"Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

Women

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her,

Men

"Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

Women

Mary asked the angel, "How will this be since I am a virgin?" The angel answered,

Men

"The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail."

Women

“I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled. (Luke 1:26-38)

SOLOIST

My Soul Will Magnify the Lord

By Keith & Kristyn Getty and Stuart Townend

Narration

Mary was chosen by God to give birth to the Savior. Mary was not special in and of herself, but by faith—a gift of the Holy Spirit—she trusted God and his Word. Many people today say they have faith, but too often it is in someone or something that provides no lasting foundation. Scripture tells us that there is only one sure foundation for our faith—Jesus Christ.

Recitation: K4-2

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6)

Recitation: Grades 5-6

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved. (Acts 4:12)

Narration

Thousands of years after making the first promise of a Savior, God finally sent the Messiah. Listen again to those familiar words proclaiming Jesus’ birth:

Recitation: Grades 3-4

“In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn”. (Luke 2:1-7)



HYMN

Once in Royal David's City|50

K4-3

Once in royal David's city Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby In a manger for his bed;
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.

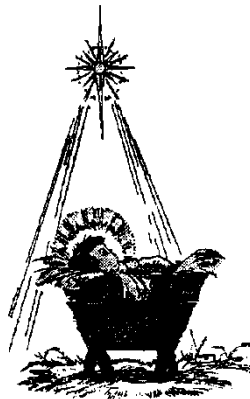
He came down to earth from heaven Who is God and Lord of all,
And his shelter was a stable, And his cradle was a stall;
With the poor and mean and lowly Lived on earth our Savior holy.

Congregation

**But our eyes at last shall see him Through his own redeeming love,
For that child, so dear and gentle, Is our Lord in heav'n above,
And he leads his children on To the place where he is gone.**

K4-3 and Congregation

**Not in that poor, lowly stable With the oxen standing by
Shall we see him, but in heaven, Set at God's right hand on high.
Then like stars his children crowned, All in white, his praise will sound.**



PART THREE
To God's Glory Alone
(Soli Deo Gloria)

Narration

Matthew, the author of the first book of the Bible's New Testament, records the angel's instructions to Joseph concerning Mary's child:

Recitation Grades 5-8

"You are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."
(Matthew 1:21)

Narration

We have no part in saving ourselves. The Bible tells us we are saved through Christ alone. So we give God alone all the glory in thankfulness for sending his Son to save us. Yes, today we see a humble baby in a manger; but the apostle Paul reminds us in his letter to the Philippians of Jesus' honored place:

Recitation Grades 5-8

God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
(Philippians 2:9-11)

Narration

The angels gave us a good example when they praised God after telling the shepherds the news of Jesus' birth.

Recitation Grades 1-2

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."



Recitation all children

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."
(Luke 2:8-14)

HYMN

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing|61

Grades 4-8

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 th' angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Please stand

Grades 5-8 and Congregation

**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 th' incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel!**

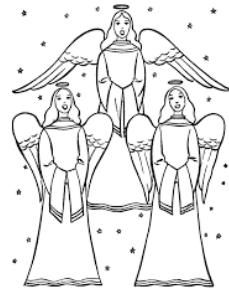
Refrain

**Hail, the heav'nly 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 us from the earth, Born to give us second birth.**

Refrain

Please be seated



PART FOUR
By Grace Alone
(Sola Gratia)

Narration

In the next few days many of you will be opening your Christmas gifts. What did you do to earn those gifts? The moment we do something to earn them, they are no longer gifts. Out of love for us, God gave the most precious gift on that first Christmas night—the Savior who lived a perfect life and suffered and died to pay for our sins. Our sinful nature wants nothing to do with God and his precious gift. Despite that fact, God loves us still. God’s love is undeserved. That is GRACE! The apostle Paul reminds us:

Recitation Grades 1-8

It is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. (Ephesians 2:8,9)

Narration

After you have opened your gifts, do you keep quiet about them? Or do you tell all your friends what you have received? When the shepherds saw God’s gift to the world, they did not keep the news to themselves. They spread the word so that others could experience God’s grace too!

Recitation Grades K4 & K5

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

Recitation Boys Grades 1-4

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

Recitation Girls Grades 1-4

But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. (Luke 2:15-20)

HYMN

To Shepherds as They Watched by Night|53

Grades 4-8

To shepherds as they watched by night
Appeared a host of angels bright;
"Behold the tender babe," they said,
"In yonder lowly manger laid,

"At Bethlehem, in David's town,
As Micah did of old make known.
It is the Christ, your Lord and King,
Who will to all salvation bring."

Oh, then rejoice that through his Son
God is with sinners now at one;
Made like yourselves of flesh and blood,
Your brother is th' eternal God.

Men

**What harm can sin and death then do?
The true God now abides with you.
Let hell and Satan storm and rave,
Christ is your brother—you are safe.**

Women

**Not one he will or can forsake;
His cov'nant he will never break.
Let ev'ry scheme the tempter try,
You may his utmost pow'rs defy.**

Grades 4-8 and Congregation

**You shall and must at last prevail.
God's own you are; you cannot fail.
To God forever sing your praise
With joy and patience all your days.**

OFFERING

Please Stand

RESPONSIVE PRAYER

M: God our Wonderful Counselor, in your Word you reveal to us who you are and what we are.

C: Through your Scriptures alone you show us that you are righteous and we are not. You show us that you are love and that we are forgiven.

M: Mighty God, you provide us with certain hope and redeem us from our sin.

C: Through faith alone we hold to your promises, and through Christ alone we receive salvation.

M: Everlasting Father, you rule the universe, the church, and the hearts of your people.

C: To you alone belongs all glory and praise!

M: Prince of Peace, your love covers us and fills us and moves us.

C: Through grace alone we receive new life and eternal hope.

M: Faithful God, move us to rejoice in our salvation and to share eagerly this Good News with others.

C: Help us to live for you through Scripture alone, by faith alone, in Christ alone, under grace alone, and to your glory alone. Amen.

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.**

**Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

Please be seated

BENEDICTION

RECESSIONAL HYMN

Let All Together Praise Our God|41

All children

Let all together praise our God Before his highest throne;
Today he opens heav'n again And gives us his own Son,
And gives us his own Son.

Congregation

**He leaves his heav'nly Father's throne, Is born an infant small,
And in a manger, poor and lone, Lies in a humble stall,
Lies in a humble stall.**

**He veils in flesh his pow'r divine A servant's form to take;
In want and lowliness must die Who heav'n and earth did make,
Who heav'n and earth did make.**

**A wondrous change which he does make: He takes our flesh and blood,
And he conceals for sinners' sake His majesty as God,
His majesty as God.**

**He serves that I a lord may be—A great exchange indeed!
Could Jesus' love do more for me To help me in my need,
To help me in my need?**

**For us he opens wide the door Of paradise today.
The angel guards the gate no more; To God our thanks we pay,
To God our thanks we pay.**



*Please join us for
these services:*

December 24, 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve (includes children)

December 24, 9:00 p.m. Candlelight

December 25, 9:00 a.m. Christmas Day (with Holy Communion)

NO 6:30 p.m. service

Sunday, New Year's Eve, 8 & 10:30 a.m. (with Holy Communion)

Monday, New Year's Day, 6:30 p.m.(with Holy Communion)

The New Year's Eve/Day services are identical.

There will be NO Sunday School or Bible study on Sunday December 31.

