

Jesse Tree: Jesus' Family Tree

A Christmas Service for Young Children

The Processional Hymn: Joy to the World

LSB 387

[Children enter through Sacristy hallway with electric candles and stand across the front and sing verse one.] [Lights off except front spotlights]

Children:

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her 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.**

[Lights on for congregation] [Children process into choir loft pews after singing first stanza and stand as congregation continues to sing. Candles are collected after the hymn]

Congregation:

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let men 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 sins and sorrows 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.

He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.

The Invocation

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

All: Amen.

Responsive Reading: (Congregation)

Pastor: The Jesse Tree, Christ's fam'ly tree,

People: Points us the way to Jesus.

Pastor: From Eden down to Calvary,

People: Our loving Savior frees us.

Pastor: The promise is for you and me

People: And points the way to Jesus.

The Christmas Meditation

The pastor may offer a brief meditation or use the children's message for this service.

Offering

The Message Presented by the Children

[congregation lights off]

Walter: There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

Greyson: And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

Korbin: And His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

Elena: He shall not judge by what His eyes see, or decide disputes by what His ears hear, but with righteousness He shall judge the poor. . . .

Isabella: In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of Him shall the nations inquire, and His resting place shall be glorious. *Isaiah 11:1–4, 10*

(Place **SYMBOL A: APPLE** on display.)

Preschool & Kindergarden & 1st Grade:

Now Eve and Adam were the first,
And through their sin, the world was cursed.
But by God's love, these two were blessed,
And through their fruit, we, too, find rest.

Song: O Jesse Tree

Verse 1

O Jesse Tree—Christ's fam'ly tree—point us the way to Jesus.
God's promise shows His love for all, and with His Son, He frees us!
*When Eve and Adam took that bite,
God promised to make all things right.*
O Jesse Tree—Christ's fam'ly tree—point us the way to Jesus.

(Place **SYMBOL B: RAINBOW** on display.)

All Children:

The world was sinful, mean, and bad.
The people made God very sad.
The waters made the world anew—
Like Noah's fam'ly, me, and you!

Song: O Jesse Tree

Verse 2

O Jesse Tree—Christ's fam'ly tree—point us the way to Jesus.
God's promise shows His love for all, and with His Son, He frees us!
*God cleansed the world from evil sin;
Another promise would begin.*
O Jesse Tree—Christ's fam'ly tree—point us the way to Jesus.

Hymn: What Child Is This (possible congregation hymn or leave this out)

LSB 370:1

What child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The babe, the son of Mary!

(Place SYMBOL G: CROWN on display.)

2nd & 3rd graders:

This David, shepherd, lowly boy,
Was blessed by God to sing with joy!
He ruled, he conquered—he still sinned—
But God still loved him to the end.

Song: O Jesse Tree

Verse 7

O Jesse Tree—Christ's fam'ly tree—point us the way to Jesus.
God's promise shows His love for all, and with His Son, He frees us!
*Though Jesse's son was frail and small,
His offspring would be King of all!*
O Jesse Tree—Christ's fam'ly tree—point us the way to Jesus.

(Place SYMBOL I: HIS NAME IS JOHN on display.)

4th & 5th Graders:

Messenger to Zechariah:
Time was near for the Messiah.
His son, John, would spread the story
Of God's coming grace and glory!

Song: O Jesse Tree

Verse 9

O Jesse Tree—Christ's fam'ly tree—point us the way to Jesus.
God's promise shows His love for all, and with His Son, He frees us!
*Though dear Elizabeth was old,
Her boy—a prophet—was foretold.*
O Jesse Tree—Christ's fam'ly tree—point us the way to Jesus.

Naomi: In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David.

Alexa: And the virgin's name was Mary.

Arian: And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!"

Lynna: But she was greatly troubled at the saying,

Ledger: and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be.

Sylvia: And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.

Kambree: He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.

Teagan: And the Lord God will give to Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." *Luke 1:26–33*

[Place SYMBOLS K, L, AND M: MARY, JOSEPH'S HAMMER, AND JESUS' MANGER on display.]

All Children:

Since Adam, Eve, and through the years—
Through sin and triumph, joy and tears—
God kept His Word, His family;
The Christ has come for you, for me!

Song: O Jesse Tree

Verse 13

O Jesse Tree—Christ's fam'ly tree—point us the way to Jesus.
God's promise shows His love for all, and with His Son, He frees us!
*The promise of the Jesse Tree:
Our Savior came for you and me!*
O Jesse Tree—Christ's fam'ly tree—point us the way to Jesus.

(If presenting a live nativity enactment, those appointed to be Mary, Joseph, and so on take their places in the foreground while others give this action rhyme.)

Action Rhyme: A Family for You and Me

A family for you and me: *(Point out and to self.)*
The Son of God has set us free! *(Spread arms far apart.)*
The Father sent Lord Jesus down *(Point up, then down.)*
To give us all a holy crown. *(Encircle head with hands, fingers up.)*

He died and rose to save us all, *(Hold fingers as a cross.)*
For old and young, for big and small. *(Hold hands over heart.)*
Now I have life eternally, *(Wave hands in the air.)*
And I am in God's fam'ly tree! *(Hold arms up, fingers wide like a tree)*

(Live nativity actors can remain in place. The other children may return to places.)

[congregation lights on]

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

(children return to choir loft.)

Prayer *(other prayers and intercessions may be added)*

Pastor: We pray:

All: Father in heaven, You sent Your Son—the Son of Adam, of Jesse, of David. You promised a Messiah through a special family tree. Thank You for making us all sons and daughters in Your family through our Savior, Jesus Christ. In His name we pray. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Responsive Reading: (Congregation)

Leader: The Jesse Tree—Christ's fam'ly tree—

People: Points us the way to Jesus.

Leader: From Eden down to Calvary,

People: Our loving Savior frees us.

Leader: The promise is for you and me

People: And points the way to Jesus.

Benediction

Pastor: Our promised Savior is born, and we are made children of God! May the peace of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be with you today and every day. Amen.

[Children stand up front]

[Lights off]

Recessional Hymn: Silent Night

LSB 363

Children stanza 1 in German:

Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!
Alles schläft, einsam wacht
Nur das heilige Elternpaar
Das im Stalle zu Bethlehem war,
Bei dem himmlischen Kind,
Bei dem himmlischen Kind.

Children stanza 1 in English:

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright.
Round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

[Lights on]

[Children create final manger scene]

Congregation:

*Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!*

*Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.*

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Written by Lisa M. Clark | Edited by Lisa A. Krenz

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