

A reading from Isaiah chapter 7 verses 10 through 17. You can find this reading on page 572 of your pew Bible.

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz: “Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.” And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted. The LORD will bring upon you and upon your people and upon your father's house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria!”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please join me in praying Psalm 24.

Leader: The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof,
the world and those who dwell therein,

**People: for he has founded it upon the seas
and established it upon the rivers.**

Leader: Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?
And who shall stand in his holy place?

**People: He who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who does not lift up his soul to what is false
and does not swear deceitfully.**

Leader: He will receive blessing from the LORD
and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

**People: Such is the generation of those who seek him,
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.**

Leader: Lift up your heads, O gates!
And be lifted up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

**People: Who is this King of glory?
The LORD, strong and mighty,
the LORD, mighty in battle!**

December 18, 2016

Leader: Lift up your heads, O gates!
And lift them up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

**People: Who is this King of glory?
The LORD of hosts,
he is the King of glory!**

**All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. *Amen.***

**Leader: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Matthew.**

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel"

(which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

**Leader: The Gospel of the Lord
*People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.***