

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church



Nativity of our Lord, Christmas Eve December 24, 2023

In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

Holy Communion

Evangelical Lutheran Worship

(ELW) Setting 5, Page 156

† Congregation stands as able

GATHERING

Prelude

Various selections

Violist, Joe Steinagel

7:30 PM

“O Come, Little Children”

Handbell Choir

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

C: **And also with you.**

Gathering Hymn

“O come, all ye faithful”

ELW #283

Kyrie

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Gloria in Excelsis

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Prayer of the Day:

P: Let us pray,

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

First Reading

Isaiah 9:2-7

²The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

³You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

L: The word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 96

Tone 7

¹Sing to the LORD ¹a new song;
sing to the LORD, ¹all the earth.
²**Sing to the LORD, bless the name ¹of the LORD;
proclaim God's salvation from ¹day to day.**
³Declare God's glory a- ¹mong the nations
and God's wonders a- ¹mong all peoples.
⁴**For great is the LORD and greatly ¹to be praised,
more to be feared ¹than all gods.**
⁵As for all the gods of the nations, they ¹are but idols;
but you, O LORD, have ¹made the heavens.
⁶**Majesty and magnificence are ¹in your presence;
power and splendor are in your ¹sanctuary.**
⁷Ascribe to the LORD, you families ¹of the peoples,
ascribe to the LORD hon- ¹or and power.
⁸**Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the ¹holy name;
bring offerings and enter the courts ¹of the LORD.**
⁹Worship the LORD in the beau- ¹ty of holiness;
tremble before the LORD, ¹all the earth.
¹⁰**Tell it out among the nations: "The ¹LORD is king!
The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved
will judge the peo- ¹ples with equity."**
¹¹Let the heavens rejoice, and let the ¹earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it;
let the field be joyful and all that ¹is therein.
¹²**Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your com- ¹ing, O
LORD, for you come to ¹judge the earth.**
¹³You will judge the ¹world with righteousness
and the peoples ¹with your truth.

Special Music

"What Child is This"

Handbell Choir

Second Reading

Titus 2:11-14

¹¹The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to
renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that
are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and
the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and

purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

L: The word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Solo

“Ava Maria”

Soloist - Lisa Pettit

† Gospel Acclamation

“ Alleluia”

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Gospel

Luke 2:1-20

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 2nd Chapter.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph 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. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And 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. ⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

¹⁵When 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." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Special Music

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

Handbell Choir

Sermon

The Inbreaking

Reverend Taylor Burton Edwards

Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the
dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen**

Choose to stand, kneel, or sit for prayers.

Prayers of Intercession

A: Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world God loves.

A brief silence.

A: Glory to you, God, for the song of the angels, proclaiming to the world Christ's holy birth. Give your church a joyful song to sing, that we bring the good news of peace and salvation to all people. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Glory to you, God, for the stars that shine in the depth of the night. Provoke awe in our hearts at the expansive mystery of the cosmos. Open us to find beauty in the clear darkness of night and in the first glimmers of dawn. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Glory to you, God, for the child born to us who establishes a kingdom of justice and righteousness. Break bonds of oppression, bring reconciliation to warring lands, and establish peace from this time onward and forevermore. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great..

A: Glory to you, God, for Mary's loving care. Lead us to tend to one another in time of need. Share the comfort of your presence with all people tonight who are alone or separated from loved ones due to estrangement, incarceration, or illness. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great..

A: Glory to you, God, for the faithfulness of the shepherds in their vocation. Grant rest to any who feel exhausted from their work during this season: retail and restaurant workers, church musicians, administrative staff, and clergy, organizers of charitable-giving events, and service workers doing essential tasks. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great..

A: For all those who have asked us to pray for them.

C: Your mercy is great..

A: Glory to you, God, for the multitude of the heavenly host. We rejoice in the zeal of all your saints who have witnessed the appearing of your grace, and who reveal to us your salvation for all. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great..

A: Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace.

C: Amen

MEAL

Anthem

"Gentle Mary Laid Her Child"

Choir

The gifts may be brought forward.

Offering Prayer

A: God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.

C: Amen

† Great Thanksgiving	Page 161
Holy, Holy, Holy	Page 162
Acclamation	Page 162
Lord's Prayer "Our Father, who..."	Page 163
Lamb of God	Page 164

Communion

The body of Christ, given for you.
 The blood of Christ, shed for you.
and each person may respond Amen

Table Blessing

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen

† Prayer after Communion

A: God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen

SENDING

Blessing

Sending Hymn *"Go tell it on the mountain"* **ELW #290**

Special Music *"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"* Handbell Choir

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Remember the poor.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Handbell Choir members are: Donna Doughty, Shannon Gardner, Cecil McGouirk, Elizabeth McGouirk, Anna Mion, Tony Mion.
 Director: Sandra Nearhoof
 Clarinet Accompaniment for Hymns -Evelyn Pettit
 Lector - Dave Bonaker
 Worship Assistant - Matt Bonaker
 Communion Assistant - Rose Johnson

CHRISTMAS REMEMBRANCES - 2023

IN MEMORY OF:

Louis and Viola Reichwold, and Melvin and Inez Craven given by
Randall & Sandra Craven

Richard, Charles, Steve and Ryan Davidson given by Betty Davidson

Clarence & Jean Gates and Joseph & Myrle Shediack given by Jeff &
Nancy Gates

Rodger “Dean” Johnson and Margaret Carlson
given by Rose Johnson and family

**Robert & Elsie McGouirk, Herman & Dorothy Hoffman, and Brooks & Ruth
Griffin** given by Cecil & Liz McGouirk

**Andrew McEwen, Bob Meinhold, Patricia Pettit, Herbert & Evelyn
Bernhardt, and Willie & Elise Meinhold** given by the Pettit family

Delbert and Lisa Paul given by Geri Regnier

Diana Sperry, and Walter & Allena Gardner
given by Jim and Allena Sperry

Gary Stickles given by Carla Stickles

Ralph & Ella Wallace, and Hazel Dixon
given by Bill and Maxine Wallace

Wayne Wiley given by Renate Wiley



IN HONOR OF:

Ian & Duncan Jeffery and Sean & Amanda Jeffery given by
John & Karen Jeffery

Our Loving Children given by Mario & Zaiga Mion

Thomas Pettit and Lynne Meinhold given by the Pettit family

Ron Dixon given by Bill & Maxine Wallace

