

Therefore the LORD himself will give you a sign.  
Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
and shall call his name IMMANUEL.



CHRISTMAS EVE 2025  
ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH OF IRVINE





A FESTIVAL OF NINE  
*Lessons & Carols*

# CHRISTMAS EVE

Saint Paul's Lutheran Church of Irvine  
December 24, 2025 – 7:00 PM

Pre-Service Music ..... *An Advent Prelude for Organ and Flute*

by Charles Callahan

*The congregation shall rise for the Opening Carol.*

The Opening Carol ..... *Once in Royal David's City*



Choir: 1. Once in roy - al Da - vid's ci - ty stood a  
Choir: 2. He came down to earth from hea - ven who is  
ALL: 3. And our eyes at last shall see Him, through His  
ALL: 4. Not in that poor low - ly sta - ble, with the



low - ly cat - tle shed Where a moth - er laid her  
God and Lord of all, And His shel - ter was a  
own re - deem - ing love For that child so dear and  
ox - en stand - ing by, We shall see Him, but in



ba - by in a man - ger for His bed. Mar - y  
sta - ble, and His cra - dle was a stall. With the  
gen - tle is our Lord in heav'n a - bove; And He  
hea - ven, set at God's right hand on high; When like



was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.  
poor and mean and lowly lived on earth our Sa - vior holy. -  
leads His child - ren on to the place where He is gone.  
stars His child - ren crowned all in white His - praise shall sound.

*The congregation shall be seated.*

The Message . . . . . “Christmas Sign” (Isaiah 7:10-14)

Rev. Alfonso O. Espinosa, Ph.D.

*The congregation shall rise for prayer.*

The Bidding Prayer

Pastor: Dear people in Christ, in this joyful season of Christmas,  
let us prepare to hear once again the song of the angels,  
and in heart and mind go to Bethlehem and see this thing  
which has come to pass, the birth of our Savior.  
Let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God  
from the first days of our disobedience  
unto the glorious Redemption brought us by this Holy Child;  
and let us make this place glad with our carols of praise.  
Let us pray for the needs of the whole world and all God’s people;  
for peace on the earth and for love and unity within Christ’s church.  
Let us remember and commend to God’s Mercy,  
the poor, the cold, the hungry, and the oppressed,  
all who are sick, all who mourn, the lonely, the unloved,  
and all who do not know or love the Lord.  
And finally, let us remember all who rejoice with us,  
both here on earth and in heaven, with whom we are one in the Lord.  
We offer these prayers and praises to our Father in heaven,  
in the words that Christ has taught us ...

**ALL: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by thy name,  
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.  
Amen.**

*The congregation shall be seated.*

The Congregational Carol . . . . . ***On Christmas Night All Christians Sing***

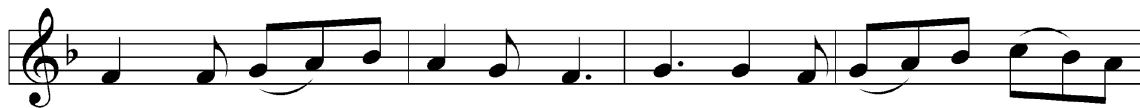
LSB #377



1 On Christ-mas night all Chris - tians sing To hear the news the  
2 Then why should men on earth be so sad, Since our Re - deem - er  
3 When sin de - parts be - fore His grace, Then life and health come  
4 All out of dark-ness we have light, Which made the an - gels



an - gels bring, On Christ - mas night all Chris - tians sing To  
made us glad, Then why should men on earth be so sad, Since  
in its place, When sin de - parts be - fore His grace, Then  
sing this night, All out of dark - ness we have light, Which



hear the news the an - gels bring, News of great joy, news of great  
our Re - deem - er made us glad, When from our sin He set us  
life and health come in its place; An - gels and men with joy may  
made the an - gels sing this night: "Glo - ry to God and peace to



mirth, News of our mer - ci - ful King's birth.  
free, All for to gain our lib - er - ty?  
sing, All for to see the new - born King,  
men Now and for - ev - er - more. A - men."

The First Lesson . . . . . Genesis 3:8-15

*God announces in the Garden of Eden that the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head.*

And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the

trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” The Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

*The reader concludes the lesson by saying* “Thanks be to God.”

The Congregational Carol..... ***Hark the Glad Sound***

LSB #349



1 Hark the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, The Sav - ior  
 2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, In Sa - tan's  
 3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, The bleed - ing



prom - ised long; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare a  
 bond - age held. The gates of brass be - fore Him  
 soul to cure, And with the trea - sures of His



throne And ev - 'ry voice a song.  
 burst, The i - ron fet - ters yield.  
 grace To en - rich the hum - ble poor.

The Second Lesson ..... Genesis 22:15-18

*God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed.*

And the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven and said, “By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.”

*The reader concludes the lesson by saying* “Thanks be to God.”

The Congregational Carol ..... *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*  
LSB #338



1 Come, Thou long - ex - pect-ed Je - sus, Born to set Thy peo - ple free;  
2 Born Thy peo - ple to de - liv - er; Born a child and yet a king!



From our fears and sins re - lease us; Let us find our rest in Thee.  
Born to reign in us for - ev - er, Now Thy gra - cious king - dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, Hope of all the earth Thou art,  
By Thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it Rule in all our hearts a - lone;



Dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, Joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.  
By Thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it Raise us to Thy glo - rious throne.

*Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah.*

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone... For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

*The reader concludes the lesson by saying* "Thanks be to God."

The Congregational Carol ..... ***Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming***

LSB #359



1 Lo, how a rose e'er bloom - ing From ten - der stem hath  
 2 I - sa - iah 'twas fore - told it, The rose I have in  
 3 This flow'r, whose fra - grance ten - der With sweet - ness fills the  
 4 O Sav - ior, child of Mar - y, Who felt our hu - man



sprung! Of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing As proph - ets long have  
 mind; With Mar - y we be - hold it, The vir - gin moth - er  
 air, Dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor The dark - ness ev - 'ry -  
 woe; O Sav - ior, King of glo - ry, Who dost our weak - ness



sung, It came, a flow - 'ret bright, A - mid the  
 kind. To show God's love a - right, She bore to  
 where. True man, yet ver - y God, From sin and  
 know: Bring us at length we pray To the bright

*Continued on the next page.*



cold of win - ter, When half - spent was the night.  
us a Sav - ior, When half - spent was the night.  
death He saves us And light - ens ev - 'ry load.  
courts of heav - en, And to the end - less day.

The Fourth Lesson ..... Micah 5:2-4

*The prophet Micah foretells the glory of little Bethlehem.*

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.

*The reader concludes the lesson by saying* “Thanks be to God.”



The Congregational Carol ..... *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

LSB #361



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!  
2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, And, gath - ered all a - bove  
3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly The won - drous gift is giv'n!  
4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, De - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by;  
While mor-tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won-d'ring love.  
So God im - parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of His heav'n.  
Cast out our sin, and en - ter in, Be born in us to - day.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing light.  
O morn-ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth,  
No ear may hear His com - ing; But in this world of sin,  
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad tid - ings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.  
And prais - es sing to God the king And peace to all the earth!  
Where meek souls will re - ceive Him, still The dear Christ en - ters in.  
O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Im - man - u - el!

*The angel Gabriel salutes the blessed virgin Mary / The angel appears to Joseph*

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. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. 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. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. 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." And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy – the Son of God. And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

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.

*The reader concludes the lesson by saying* "Thanks be to God."

The Congregational Carol ..... *See, Amid the Winter's Snow*

LSB#373



1. See a - mid the win - ter's snow, Born for us on  
 2. Lo, with - in a sta - ble lies He who built the  
 3. Sa - cred In - fant, all di - vine, What a ten - der  
 4. Teach, O teach us, ho - ly Child, By Thy face so



earth be - low, See, the gen - tle Lamb ap - pears,  
 star - ry skies, He who, throned in height sub - lime,  
 love was Thine, Thus to come from high - est bliss  
 meek and mild, Teach us to re - sem - ble Thee



*Refrain*  
 Prom - ised from e - ter - nal years. Hail, O ev - er -  
 Sits a - mid the cher - u - bim.  
 Down to such a world as this!  
 In Thy sweet hu - mil - i - ty.



bless - ed morn! Hail, re - demp - tion's hap - py dawn!



Sing through all Je - ru - sa - lem:



*"Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"*

*St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.*

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

*The reader concludes the lesson by saying* “Thanks be to God.”

The Choir Carol . . . . . ***Peace Came to Earth***

Tune by Paul Manz  
Words by Jaroslav J. Vajda  
arr. Nancy Raabe

1. *Peace came to earth at last that chosen night  
When angels clove the sky with song and light  
And God embodied love and sheathed his might.  
Who could but gasp: Immanuel! Who could but sing: Immanuel!*
2. *And who could be the same for having held  
The infant in their arms, and later felt  
The wounded hands and side, all doubts dispelled.  
Who could but sigh: Immanuel! Who could but shout: Immanuel!*
3. *You show the Father none has ever seen  
In flesh and blood you bore our griefs and pains;  
In bread and wine you visit us again.  
Who could but see Immanuel! Who could but thrill: Immanuel!*
4. *How else could I have known you, O my God!  
How else could I have loved you, O my God!  
How else could I embrace you, O my God!  
Who could but pray: Immanuel! Who could but praise: Immanuel!*

*The shepherds go to the manger.*

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!” When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.

*The reader concludes the lesson by saying* “Thanks be to God.”

The Choir Carol . . . . . ***He Whom Shepherds Once Came Praising***

*QUEM PASTORES*

Arr. Carl Heine

1. *He whom shepherds once came praising, awed by heav'nly light ablazing,  
Cheered by angel news amazing: “King of glory, Christ is born!”*
2. *He whom sages, westward faring, myrrh and gold and incense bearing,  
Humbly worshipped, off'rings sharing: Judah's Lion reigns this morn!*
3. *Sing with Mary, virgin mother; praise her Son, our newborn Brother;  
Angel ranks, lead one another, hailing him in holy joy!*
4. *To our King, God ever-reigning, yet of Mary manhood gaining,  
Heav'nly gifts for us obtaining, raise your hymns of homage high!*

*The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.*

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.”

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

*The reader concludes the lesson by saying* “Thanks be to God.”

The Congregational Carol ..... *As with Gladness Men of Old*

LSB #397



1 As with glad-ness men of old Did the guid-ing star be-hold;  
2 As with joy-ful steps they sped, Sav-ior, to Thy low-ly bed,  
3 As they of-fered gifts most rare At Thy cra-dle, rude and bare,



As with joy they hailed its light, Lead-ing on-ward, beam-ing bright;  
There to bend the knee be-fore Thee, whom heav'n and earth a-dore;  
So may we with ho-ly joy, Pure and free from sin's al-loy,

;



So, most gra-cious Lord, may we Ev-er-more be led by Thee.  
So may we with will-ing feet Ev-er seek Thy mer-cy seat.  
All our cost-liest trea-sures bring, Christ, to Thee, our heav'n-ly King.

The Ninth Lesson ..... John 1:1-14

*St. John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.*

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all

who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

*The reader concludes the lesson by saying* “Thanks be to God.”

The Congregational Carol ..... *Of the Father's Love Begotten*

LSB #384



1. Of the Fa - ther's love be - got - ten Ere the worlds be - gan to be,  
 2. Oh, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed, When the vir - gin, full of grace,  
 3. This is He whom seers in old time Chant - ed of with one ac - cord,



He is Al - pha and O - me - ga, He the source, the end - ing, He,  
 By the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing, Bore the Sav - ior of our race,  
 Whom the voic - es of the proph - ets Prom - ised in their faith - ful word.



Of the things that are, that have been,  
 And the babe, the world's Re - deem - er,  
 Now He shines, the long - ex - pect - ed;



And that fu - ture years shall see Ev - er - more and ev - er more.  
 First re - vealed His sa - cred face Ev - er - more and ev - er more.  
 Let cre - a - tion praise the Lord Ev - er - more and ev - er more.

*The congregation shall rise for prayer.*

## The Prayer

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**ALL: And with thy spirit.**

Pastor: Let us pray together the Collect for Christmas Eve.

**ALL: O God, who makes us glad with the yearly remembrance  
of the birth of Your only Son, Jesus Christ;  
Grant that, as we joyfully receive Him for our Redeemer,  
we may with sure confidence behold Him,  
when He shall come to be our judge;  
who live and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, world without end. Amen.**

*The congregation shall be seated.*

## The Choir Carol ..... *'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime*

*The Huron Carol* (Canadian Christmas Hymn)

From a setting by Robert A Benson – Edited by Mark Howard

1. *'Twas in the moon of wintertime when all the birds had fled.  
That God the Lord of all the earth sent angel choirs instead.  
Before their light the stars grew dim, and wand'ring shepherds heard the hymn:  
(Refrain) Jesus your king is born! Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria!*
2. *Within a lodge of broken bark the tender babe was found,  
No kingly robe of satin fine enwrapped his beauty round;  
But as the shepherds all drew nigh, the angel song rang loud and high:  
(Refrain) Jesus your king is born! Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria!*
3. *The earliest moon of wintertime is not so round and fair  
As was the ring of glory on the helpless infant there.  
The kings from far before him knelt with gifts exquisite and heartfelt.  
(Refrain) Jesus your king is born! Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria!*
4. *O children of the forest free, the angel song is true;  
The holy child of earth and heav'n is born today for you.  
Come, kneel before the radiant boy, who brings you beauty, peace and joy.  
(Refrain) Jesus your king is born! Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria!*

*The congregation shall rise for the Blessing.*

## The Blessing

Pastor: May He who by His incarnation gathered into one, things earthly and heavenly,  
fill you with the sweetness of inward peace and goodwill.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be upon you and remain with you always.

**ALL:** Amen.

*At this time, please turn on your candle.*

## The Closing Carol ..... *Silent Night*

LSB #363



1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,  
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake  
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,



all is bright Round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.  
at the sight; Glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,  
love's pure light Ra - diant beams from Thy ho - ly face



Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, Sleep in heav - en - ly  
Heav'n - ly hosts sing, Al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is  
With the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy



peace, Sleep in heav - en - ly peace.  
born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!  
birth, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth.

*At the conclusion of this carol, please turn off your candle.*

**Worship Servants for Tonight's Service:**

Preacher: ..... Rev. Alfonso O. Espinosa, Ph.D.  
Organist and Pianist: ..... Gerald Dahlin  
Choir Director: ..... Mark Howard  
Guest Musicians: ..... Rachel Okonski, Flute  
Stephanie Wright, Soprano  
Anna Menotti, Alto  
Adam Gerling, Bass  
Dale Gerling, Bass

**SAINT PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH OF IRVINE**

Senior Pastor: Rev. Alfonso O. Espinosa, Ph.D.

Assistant Pastor: Rev. Steven P. Mueller, Ph.D.

Administrative Coordinator: Jackie Johnson

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*Please join us for our Christmas Day Service tomorrow at 9:30 am*

Concordia University Irvine Spectrum Campus

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