



Shepherd of the Bay Lutheran Church

Growing Together in Faith

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www.ShepherdOfTheBay.com

Pastor Nathan Wong

Welcome!

December 14th, 2025 – Third Sunday of Advent

Thank you for joining us today for worship. In our service we gather before our almighty God to offer him our worship and praise. We also gather to strengthen ourselves through the study of God's holy and powerful word. We pray your time with us is edifying and enjoyable. May God bless our worship together this day!

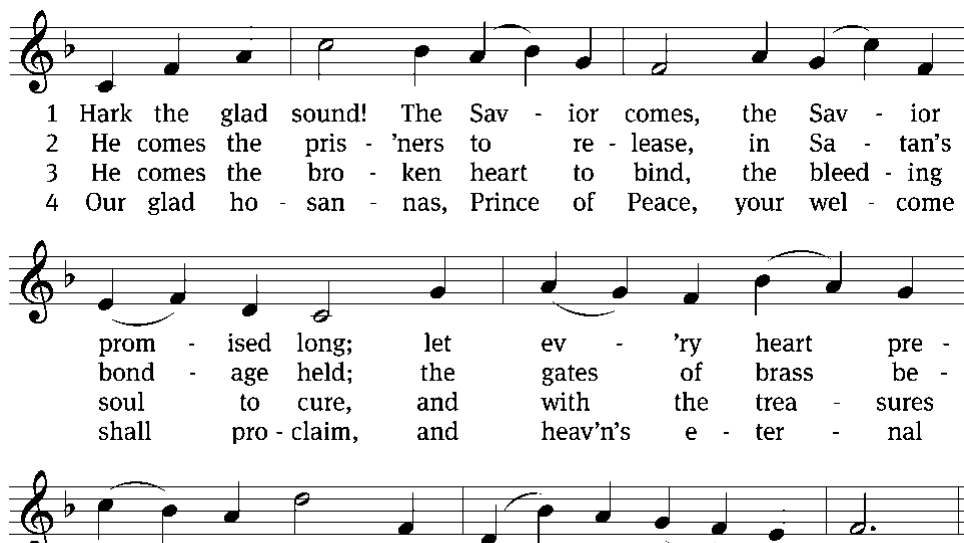
For your assistance:

- **Restrooms** are located down the hallway opposite the entrance to classroom 1, on the right.
- **Ushers** are here to help. Please don't hesitate to ask them if you have any questions.
- We ask guests to sign the **worship register** on the pedestal by the front door so that we might have record of who joined us and invite you to upcoming events. Thank you!
- If you have a young one who gets restless during worship, **Family Room** are available for parents in the church office and in classroom two. A live feed of the service is available in both rooms.

Pastor Wong is available and willing to meet with you anytime. Please give him a call at church, 410-231-2075 or on his cell phone, 507-995-5978. He can also be reached via email, lusbypastor@gmail.com. He would be happy to answer any questions or concerns you might have.

Opening Hymn: 313 Hark the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes

CW 313



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
4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of Peace, your wel - come

prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -
bond - age held; the gates of brass be -
soul to cure, and with the trea - sures
shall pro - claim, and heav'n's e - ter - nal

pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.
fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.
of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.
arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702–1751, abr., alt.
Tune: Thomas Haweis, 1734–1820, alt.
Text and tune: Public domain

INVITATION TO WORSHIP

Dear people of God, in the season of Advent, it is our responsibility and joy to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger.

Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against him until the glorious redemption brought to us by his holy child, Jesus, and let us look forward to the yearly remembrance of his birth with hymns and songs of praise.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION OF SINS

God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.

Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up. (James 4:6,10)

Dear friends, we prepare our hearts to meet him as we humbly pray for his forgiveness:

Lord God, Merciful Father,

I have sinned against you.

I have not loved you with all my heart, soul, and mind.

I have not loved others as I love myself.

Because of my sinfulness, I have fallen short of your glory and deserve your punishment both now and forever.

Trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I ask for your forgiveness.

God's promise to Abraham and his descendants was fulfilled in the coming of his Son. Jesus Christ humbled himself by submitting to God's law. He humbled himself by becoming obedient to death on a cross. God promises to lift up the humble and fill the hungry with good things because of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, so that we through his poverty might become rich. (2 Corinthians 8:9)

Even as we await Christ's second coming, he comes to us here and now in the words he gives his messengers to speak: I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

On this third Sunday of Advent, as we think about the coming of Jesus Christ, we light the candle of joy.

When Christ comes into our lives, He brings the fullness of joy.

He anoints our hearts with the oil of gladness. (Isaiah 61:3)

When Jesus was born, the angels said that His coming was good news of great joy for all the people. (Luke 2:10)

Because Christ has come to us, we can live every day in the joy of the Lord.

Praise to His name!

HYMN: *Peace, Peace, Peace, st. 4

Please sing when the volume of the hymn increases.

**Joy, joy, joy - We praise You, Christ, with joy!
Joy, joy, joy - We praise You, Christ, with joy!
Our peace, our hope, our love and treasure,
Highest calling, deepest pleasure!
Joy, joy, joy - We praise You, Christ, with joy!**

Words by Ken Bible

Music: Traditional Austrian Melody; arr. by Ken Bible

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THE WORD

Prayer of the Day

Hear our prayers, Lord Jesus Christ, and come with the good news of your mighty deliverance. Drive the darkness from our hearts, and fill us with your light; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

First Reading

Isaiah 35

¹The desert and the parched land will be glad;
the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.
Like the crocus, ²it will burst into bloom;
it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy.
The glory of Lebanon will be given to it,
the splendor of Carmel and Sharon;
they will see the glory of the LORD,
the splendor of our God.

³Strengthen the feeble hands,
steady the knees that give way;
⁴say to those with fearful hearts,
"Be strong, do not fear;
your God will come,
he will come with vengeance;

with divine retribution

he will come to save you."

⁵Then will the eyes of the blind be opened
and the ears of the deaf unstopped.

⁶Then will the lame leap like a deer,
and the mute tongue shout for joy.

Water will gush forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert.

⁷The burning sand will become a pool,
the thirsty ground bubbling springs.

In the haunts where jackals once lay,
grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.

⁸And a highway will be there;
it will be called the Way of Holiness;
it will be for those who walk on that Way.

The unclean will not journey on it;
wicked fools will not go about on it.

⁹No lion will be there,
nor any ravenous beast;
they will not be found there.

But only the redeemed will walk there,
¹⁰and those the LORD has rescued will return.

They will enter Zion with singing;
everlasting joy will crown their heads.

Gladness and joy will overtake them,
and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

Choir Anthem "We Wait"

by Ruth Elaine Schram

*In the flame of a flickering candle,
we see a hint of a starry light
that led the shepherds and kings to the tiny child.
We wait.
We wait.*

In the flame of a flickering candle,

*we see the promise of hope and joy
A promise of peace, a promise of love in a baby boy.
We wait.
We wait.*

*Advent candle burning bright
gently reflecting heaven's light.
Lead us to the Prince of Peace.
Oh guide us to the perfect light.*

*We long to bow before our Savior.
We long to hear His precious voice.
We long to worship the King of Kings
and at his appearance, rejoice!
We wait.
We wait.*

*Advent candle burning bright
gently reflecting heaven's light.
Lead us to the Prince of Peace.
Oh guide us to the perfect light.*

*We wait.
We wait.
We wait.*

Second Reading

James 5:7–11

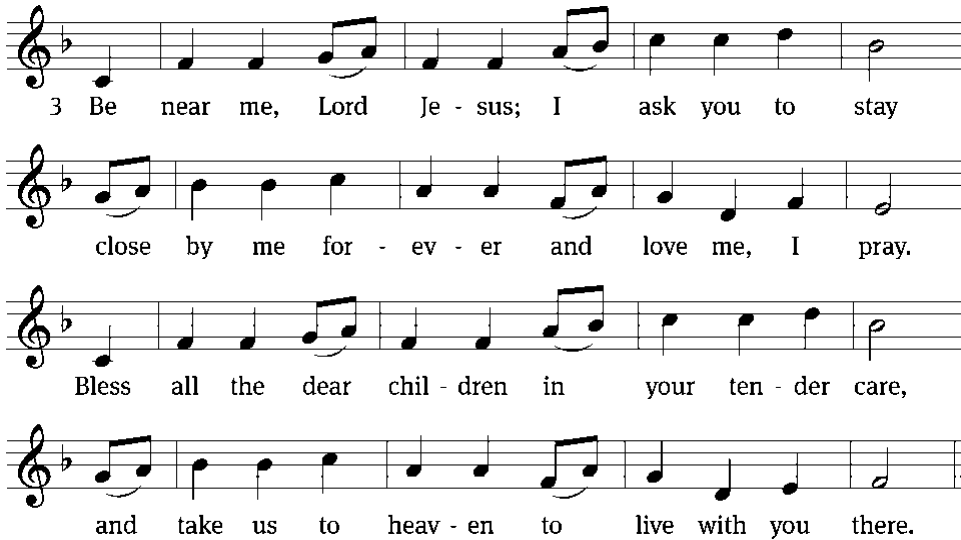
⁷Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. ⁸You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. ⁹Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

¹⁰Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

Hymn: 341 Away in a Manger

CW 341 st. 3

Children are invited to make their way to the front during this stanza.



3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay
close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear chil - dren in your ten - der care,
and take us to heav - en to live with you there.

Children's Message

“Away in a Manger” Continued

CW 341 st. 1

Children of the congregation will sing this stanza.

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

Please join in singing this stanza.

CW 341 st. 2



2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,
but lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes.



Text: The Myrtle, Boston, 1884
Tune: William J. Kirkpatrick, 1838–1921
Text and tune: Public domain

Gospel Acclamation

The Gospel according to Matthew chapter eleven.
Glory be to you, O Lord.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 11:2–11

²When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples ³to ask him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”

⁴Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. ⁶Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.”

⁷As John’s disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? ⁸If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings’ palaces. ⁹Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written:

“ ‘I will send my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.’

¹¹Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to you, O Christ.

Hymn of the Day: 324 O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

CW 324



- 1 O Lord, how shall I meet you, how wel - come you a - right?
- 2 Love caused your in - car - na - tion; love brought you down to me.
- 3 Re - joice, then, you sad-heart - ed, who sit in deep-est gloom,
- 4 Sin's debt, that fear - ful bur - den, let not your souls dis - tress;
- 5 He comes to judge the na - tions, a ter - ror to his foes,



Your peo - ple long to greet you, my hope, my heart's de - light.
 Your thirst for my sal - va - tion pro - cured my lib - er - ty.
 who mourn o'er joys de - part - ed and trem - ble at your doom.
 your guilt the Lord will par - don and cov - er by his grace.
 a light of con - so - la - tion and bless - ed hope to those



O Je - sus, let your Word be a lamp to light my way,
 Oh, love be - yond all tell - ing that led you to em - brace
 De - spair not; he is near you, he's stand - ing at the door
 He comes, for you pro - cur - ing the peace of sin for - giv'n,
 who love the Lord's ap - pear - ing. O glo - rious Sun, now come,



to show me how to please you, to guide me ev - 'ry day.
 in love, all love ex - cel - ling, our lost and fall - en race!
 who best can help and cheer you and bids you weep no more.
 his chil - dren thus se - cur - ing e - ter - nal life in heav'n.
 send forth your beams most cheer - ing, and guide us safe - ly home.

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607–1676, D. M. Luther's ... Geistliche Lieder, Berlin, 1653, abr.; tr. composite

Tune: Johann Crüger, 1598–1662, alt.

Text and tune: Public domain

Take Your Doubts to the One

Apostles' Creed

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

**I believe 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From there 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.**

Thank Offering

The members of Shepherd of the Bay Lutheran Church have joined together to do the Lord's work in this community and around the world. Visitors need not feel obligated to participate in this offering which supports our ministry. If you prefer to give electronically, open your camera app and use the QR code.



Prayer of the Church

Gracious Lord, you sent your Son into our world to destroy the power of Satan and restore the human race as your children and heirs. Work in us during this Advent season so that we may rejoice in the coming of our Savior and long for his coming again.

Make us eager to receive the King who comes to save us.

Use the preaching of your holy law to rid us of all delusions that we can gain your love with our own efforts. Move us to realize how hopeless we are because of sin and to feel sorrow for what we have done wrong.

Lead us to be honest about our sinful status in your sight.

Lift up our hearts to see the King who comes to save. Reveal to us his willingness to take on our human form and stand in our place. Show us the power he extends in his Word and sacraments to make us your children and keep us in faith. Thrill us with his promise to come and take us to our eternal home to live with you forever.

Open our eyes to see and believe the wonders of the Savior's love.

As we live with Christ and trust in him, move us to turn away from sin day after day with the strength your Holy Spirit provides. When we fall, forgive us and renew us to love and serve you and all people.

Empower us and guide us to walk with Christ by faith.

Protect us from the distractions that come at this time of the year. Even in gift-giving and celebrating, keep our hearts focused on Christ and his forgiving love.

Give us joy at his coming at Christmas, his coming in the gospel, and his coming again.

Move us to share with others the most important gift of this season, the truth about Jesus. Even in busy times lead us to pray for those whose joy is diminished because of sickness, pain, or loss. [Especially bless... *here name the person and the cause of the petition.*] Give us opportunities to provide help to those in need.

May others see the love of Christ in our words and actions.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

Loving Lord, work in us during this Advent season so that our joy may be genuine and may rest in the promises of the King who comes to save.

Come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be 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.**

Blessing

Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another.
Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and (+) give you peace.

Closing Hymn: 517 Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness

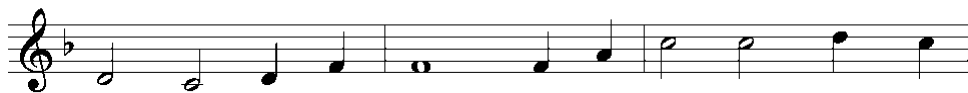
CW 517



1 Praise the one who breaks the dark - ness with a lib - er -
2 Praise the one who blessed the chil - dren with a strong, yet
3 Let us praise the Word in - car - nate, Christ, who suf - fered



at - ing light; praise the one who frees the pris - 'ners, turn - ing
gen - tle, word; praise the one who drove out de - mons with the
in our place; Je - sus died and rose vic - to - rious that we



blind - ness in - to sight. Praise the one who preached the
pierc - ing, two - edged sword. Praise the one who brings cool
may know God by grace. Let us sing for joy and



gos - pel, heal - ing ev - 'ry dread dis - ease, calm - ing
wa - ter to the des - ert's burn - ing sand; from this
glad - ness, see - ing what our God has done; let us



storms and feed - ing thou - sands with the Fa - ther's word of peace.
well comes liv - ing wa - ter, quench - ing thirst in ev - 'ry land.
praise the true Re - deem - er, praise the one who makes us one.

Text: Rusty Edwards, b. 1955, alt.

Tune: The Sacred Harp, Philadelphia, 1844

Text: © 1987 Hope Publishing Co. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 721755

Tune: Public domain

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Sunday Hosts

| | Today | Next Week |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Councilman: | Terry Johnson | Travis Grah |
| Greeter: | Dana Godfrey | Bonner |
| Usher: | Travis Grah | Sean Case |
| Acolyte: | - | Abel Kassulke |
| Altar: | Karen Engelhaupt | Karen Engelhaupt |
| A/V: | Terry Johnson | Terry Johnson |
| Flowers: | - | - |
| Counters: | Sam, Maria | Chuck, Travis |
| Print bulletins: | Anna Williams | Travis Grah |

Upcoming Events

Setup for MwM *Today, after worship*

Catechism Class *Tuesday, December 16 at 4:15 pm*

Mornings with Mommy *Thursday, December 18 at 9:30am*

Bible Study & Sunday School *Sunday, December 21 at 9:30am*

Worship with Holy Communion *Sunday, December 21 at 10:30am*

News for You

THANK YOU

Thank you to Edie for donating the poinsettias for our church! They are beautiful, and we appreciate your continued involvement at SotB from afar! Thanks, also, to those who helped at Solomons Christmas Walk! We connected with over 200 members of our community with worship invitations and warm cups of cocoa!

SECRET SISTER

Are you interested in uplifting another woman in the congregation throughout 2026? Get involved in SotB's "Secret Sister" program today! You'll be anonymously assigned a "sister" for whom you will provide prayer, support, and encouragement through notes and cards. Next December, we'll have a "reveal" party where you will learn who your secret sister was!

MORNINGS WITH MOMMY

Encourage those you know with little ones to attend this month's "Mornings with Mommy!" Caregivers and their kids (infants to pre-k) are sure to have a blast celebrating Christmas as the stations and activities for this Thursday at 9:30am center around the theme "Birthday Party for Jesus!"

INVITE A FRIEND!

Have you chatted with anyone lately about their Christmas plans? That's a great chance to invite them to join you at Shepherd of the Bay to hear the good news of Christ's birth! Friends and neighbors are often more open than we realize to attending church, especially when they know they'll be worshipping with you! Extend an invitation to our 6:00pm Christmas Eve service and 10:00am Christmas Day service, so others can hear about the hope, peace, and joy that comes from Jesus!