



3 & 7 PM

December 24, 2024

CHRISTMAS EVE



If needed,
a Cry Room is located
off the Welcome Center.



CONNECT CARDS

Guests and members,
please: fill out a
Connect card, or scan
the QR code to connect
with us online.

Cards are in the pew
racks in front of you.
These methods include
a space to share prayer
requests with our
pastors.

We look forward to
praying for and
connecting personally
with YOU!

Serving Tonight...

Message:
Pastor Brad Stoltenow

Worship Assistant:
7p Travis Jarvi

Musicians:
3p Susan Shoaf, organ
7p Gail Black, organ
Brad Gillund, pianist
Shepherd's Chorale



✠ IN THE NAME OF JESUS ✠

RINGING OF THE BELL ~ CALL TO WORSHIP

PRELUDE

LIGHTING OF THE WREATH CANDLES

Candles remind us Jesus Christ came to conquer sin's darkness and to lead us into the light of His glorious Kingdom. The colors also have significance: blue is for hope; pink is for joy; white is for CHRISTmas morning: the purity of God as He comes as the Christ Child.

May God's Spirit warm our hearts and homes as we celebrate the birth of Jesus! Joy to the world!

INVOCATION

Divine Service, Setting 1 ~ LSB p. 151; Matthew 28:19b

Pastor (P): In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation (C): Amen!

HYMN OF PROMISE # 366:1, 3 & 4 "It Came upon the Midnight Clear"

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, goodwill to men, from heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

All you, beneath your heavy load, by care and guilt bent low,
Who toil along a dreary way with painful steps and slow:
Look up, for golden is the hour, come swiftly on the wing,
The Prince was born to bring you peace; of Him the angels sing.

For lo, the days have come to pass by prophets seen of old,
When down into the circling years came Christ as was foretold.
His word of peace shall to the earth God's ancient promise bring,
And all who take this gift will hear the song the angels sing.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION ~ FORGIVENESS OF SINS *Romans 13:11-12; John 20:19-23*

P: The apostle Paul reminds us, "You know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light." As we hear again the beautiful Good News of how the Savior of the world came to rescue us all, let us confess our sin and our need for a Savior.

C: Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, I confess to You that I have walked in the darkness of sin, that I have sinned in my thoughts and in words and actions toward others—all of it in disobedience to Your commands. I pray You to send forth the light and truth of Your Son, my Savior. Have mercy on me, forgive me my sins, and bring me to everlasting life.

P: The Lord sends out His Light and His Truth—His only Son, Jesus—to find you and to save you. Upon this, your confession, I, by virtue of my office as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God to all of you. In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen. Glory to God in the highest!

OPENING SENTENCES

Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 98:1

P: To us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder.

ALL: And His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

P: Sing to the LORD a new song for He has done marvelous things!

HYMN OF PRAISE # 379:1-3 "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant! O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him born the king of angels:

Refrain: O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

Highest, most holy, Light of Light eternal, born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
Son of the Father now in flesh appearing! Refrain:

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, glory in the highest: Refrain:



Old Testament

Reading: The Lord sent the prophet Isaiah to confront King Ahaz and to call him to trust the Lord. Ahaz was a king in the family line of King David, which was also the family line of Jesus.

Sheol: the realm of the dead



Epistle Reading:

propitiation means the act of gaining or regaining the favor or goodwill of someone; Christ is "the propitiation," because by His becoming our substitute and assuming our obligations, he covered our guilt by the punishment which he endured on our behalf

Gospel Reading: In Jesus' day, being betrothed was a legally binding pledge to be married

SALUTATION AND PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

A: The Lord be with you!

C: **And also with you!**

A: We pray: O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true light, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we have known the mysteries of that light on earth we may also come to the fullness of His joys in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen!**

GUESTS AND MEMBERS CONNECT

Please fill out the Connect Card, either by hand or with the QR code. Thank you!

OFFERING *For giving options: ShepherdHillsChurch.org/Give*

VOLUNTARY *Rock-a-Bye, My Dear Little Boy*

OLD TESTAMENT READING Isaiah 7:10-14

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz [the king], "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 Isaiah 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.

RESPONSE

A: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God!**

HYMN RESPONSE # 361:1, 3 & 4 "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!

Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;

Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.

The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv'n!

So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heav'n.

No ear may hear His coming; but in this world of sin,

Where meek souls will receive Him, still the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;

Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.

We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;

O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Immanuel!

EPISTLE READING 1 John 4:7-16

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and His love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

RESPONSE

A: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God!**

ANTHEM *A Christmas Gloria*

ACCLAMATION

A: The Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew, the 1st chapter.

C: **Glory to You, O Lord!**

THE HOLY GOSPEL Matthew 1:18-25

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.

RESPONSE

A: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ!

HYMN # 373:1-3 "See Amid the Winter's Snow"

See amid the winter's snow, born for us on earth below,
See, the gentle Lamb appears, promised from eternal years.

Refrain: Hail, O ever-blessed morn! Hail, redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem: "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Lo, within a stable lies He who built the starry skies,
He who, throned in height sublime, sits amid the cherubim. *Refrain:*

Sacred Infant, all divine, what a tender love was Thine,
Thus to come from highest bliss down to such a world as this! *Refrain:*

MESSAGE "Promise Kept!" text: Matthew 1:18-25

HYMN RESPONSE # 370 "What Child Is This"

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!

Why lies He in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary!
So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, peasant, king, to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!

STATEMENT OF FAITH ~ THE APOSTLES' CREED

ALL: 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!

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

1 Timothy 2:1-4

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4

ALL: 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!

CANDLE LIGHTING *The sanctuary lights are dimmed. As the CHRISTmas Gospel is read, candles are lit.*
Please tip unlit candle toward lit candle.

HISTORY of CHRISTmas

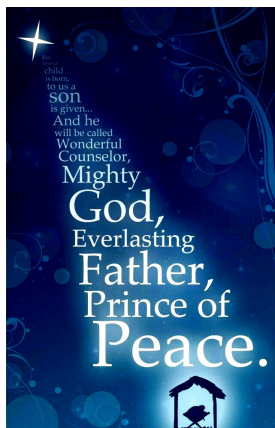
from Chapter 2 of the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. 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

Holy Gospel: Under the Holy Spirit's inspiration, Matthew's main purpose in writing is to prove to his Jewish readers that Jesus is their Messiah. He does this primarily by showing how Jesus, in His life and ministry, fulfilled all Old Testament Scriptures.

The custom of preparing the manger scene mirrors the act of Christians preparing our hearts for the arrival of Immanuel ~ God with us. On this night, we open our hearts to receive the gift of the Christ Child, born among us. On this first night of the Christmas season, we ourselves become the manger, inviting Christ to dwell within us just as He found rest in that Bethlehem stable.

To you this night is born a child....
He will on you the gifts bestow prepared by God for all below,
that in His kingdom, bright and fair, you may with us His glory share.
Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
prepare a bed, soft, undefiled,
a quiet chamber set apart for You to dwell within my heart.
~Martin Luther, LSB # 358



The greatest Gift ever given wasn't placed under the tree; it was placed on the Tree, and His name is Jesus.

Jesus is God's gift to the world, not just for Christmas, but for every single day your whole life through and even beyond for all eternity!



Anchored in God's promises through Word and Sacrament, we leave this house of worship to share HISTory!



Lutheran Service Book ©2006 Concordia Publishing House. Reprinted with permission. Scripture, The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. ©2001 Crossway Bibles, div. of Good News Pub. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Created by Lutheran Service Builder ©2006 CPH. Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series C, Quarter 1 © 2024 CPH. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

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.

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 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. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

HYMN # 363 "Silent Night, Holy Night"

**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.**

**Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly 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.**

BENEDICTION ~ GOD'S GOOD-CREATING WORD OF BLESSING

Numbers 6:24-26

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.

C: Amen!

*Please extinguish the candle in your hand.
Carry Jesus, the Light of the World, with you in your heart!*

HYMN # 380 "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

**Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
With th'angelic host proclaim, 'Christ is born in Bethlehem!"**

Refrain: Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

**Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, hail th'incarnate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel! *Refrain:***

**Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, ris'n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by, born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth. *Refrain:***

ANNOUNCEMENTS

POSTLUDE

✠ TO GOD ALONE ALL GLORY! ✠

**MERRY
CHRISTMAS**

**From our Shepherd Family to yours:
We wish you a Blessed CHRISTmas
and a Christ-filled New Year!**