



11 PM

December 24, 2025

CHRISTmas Eve Vigil

**LOVE**

came  
down  
at

**CHRISTMAS**



**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

Liturgist and Lector:  
Pastor Ben Oesch

Organist:  
Gail Black

# Come to Bethlehem and See!

✠ IN THE NAME OF JESUS ✠

**PRELUDE**

**INVOCATION**

*Matthew 28:19b*

Liturgist (L): We call on the name of the Triune God—the name into which we have been baptized:  
In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Congregation (C): Amen!**

**OPENING SENTENCES**

*John 8:12, 1:5*

L: Jesus Christ is the Light of the world, the light no darkness can overcome.

**C: Let Your Light scatter the darkness and illumine Your Church!**

**SALUTATION AND PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS EVE VIGIL**

L: On this most holy night, the Lord be with you!

**C: And also with you!**

L: We pray: O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. 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!**

**ENTRANCE HYMN # 379:1-2 “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:**

**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!**

**O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,**

**O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!**

**OLD TESTAMENT READING Isaiah 9:2-7**

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. You have multiplied the nation; You have increased its joy; they rejoice before You as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, You have broken as on the day of Midian. For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. 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.

**RESPONSE**

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

**C: Glory to God in the highest!**

**HYMN RESPONSE # 375 “Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising”**

**Come, your hearts and voices raising, Christ the Lord with gladness praising;**

**Loudly sing His love amazing, worthy folk of Christendom!**

**Christ, from heav’n to us descending and in love our race befriending;**

**In our need His help extending, saved us from the wily foe.**

**Jacob’s star in all its splendor beams with comfort sweet and tender,**

**Forcing Satan to surrender, breaking all the pow’rs of hell.**

**From the bondage that oppressed us, from sin’s fetters that possessed us,**

**From the grief that sore distressed us, we, the captives, now are free.**

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Oh, the joy beyond expressing when by faith we grasp this blessing,  
And to You we come confessing that Your love has set us free!

Gracious Child, we pray, O hear us, from Your lowly manger cheer us,  
Gently lead us and be near us till we join Your choir above.

#### **EPISTLE READING** Titus 3:4-7

When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ, our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

#### **RESPONSE**

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Glory to God in the highest!**

*Please stand.*

#### **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** # 367:4-5 “Angels from the Realms of Glory”

Saints before the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear,

Suddenly the Lord, descending, in His temple shall appear.

Come and worship, come and worship; worship Christ, the newborn King!

△ All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son,  
Evermore your voices raising to th’eternal Three in One.  
Come and worship, come and worship; worship Christ, the newborn King!

#### **ACCLAMATION**

L: The Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke, the 2nd chapter.

C: **Glory to God in the highest!**

#### **THE CHRISTMAS GOSPEL**

*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 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.

#### **HYMN RESPONSE** # 361 “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.

For Christ is born of Mary, and, gathered all above while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond’ring love.

O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth, and praises sing to God the king and peace to all the earth!

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!

#### **THE CHRISTMAS GOSPEL**

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

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!”

#### **HYMN RESPONSE** # 393 “Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”

Infant holy, infant lowly, for His bed a cattle stall; oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the child is Lord of all.

Swiftly winging, angels singing, bells are ringing, tidings bringing:

Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!

Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a Gospel true.

Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing, greet the morrow:

Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

#### **THE CHRISTMAS GOSPEL**

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

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.

## RESPONSE

L: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Glory to God in the highest!**

## HYMN # 368 "Angels We Have Heard on High"

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,

And the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains. Glo—ria in excelsis Deo! Glo—ria in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?

What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heav'nly song? Glo—ria in excelsis Deo! Glo—ria in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;

Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King. Glo—ria in excelsis Deo! Glo—ria in excelsis Deo!

## MESSAGE "Let Us Go to Bethlehem!" text: Luke 2:1-20

## RESPONSE OF FAITH

*Martin Luther's Explanation to the Apostles' Creed: 2nd Article*

ALL: I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord. He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true!

## 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](https://ShepherdHillsChurch.org/Give)*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH *In the month of December, we pray with open hearts for those who are lonely.*

## PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION

*One should examine himself before he eats the bread and drinks the cup; one who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. 1Corinthians 11:28-29*

*Since those who take Christ's body and blood without understanding His true presence do so to their harm, and since the sacrament of Holy Communion is a faith statement confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt or hold a confession differing from that of this church and the Lutheran Church -Missouri Synod and desire to receive the sacrament are asked first to speak with a pastor.*

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS OF SIN

*John 20:19-23; LSB # 379:3-4*

L: Come, dear friends in Christ, let us confess our sins, remembering with joy that God kept His promise to send His Son Jesus to this sinful world to save us all!

C: **Holy and gracious God, I confess that I have sinned against You. Some of my sins I know, the thoughts and words and deeds of which I am ashamed, but some are known only to You. In the name of Jesus I ask Your forgiveness. Deliver and restore me, that I may rest in the peace and joy of Your Christmas mercy and grace.**

L: God sent His Son Jesus to die for you, and for His sake He forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I declare to you: Your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen! Glory to God in the highest!**

ALL: *(sung)* Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God, glory in the highest:

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

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning; Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n!

Word of the Father now in flesh appearing! *Refrain:*

## 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!

## THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

*Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19,20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25*

## PAX DOMINI ~ THE PEACE OF THE LORD, AND AGNUS DEI ~ LAMB OF GOD

*John 20:19, 1:29*

L: The peace of the Lord be with you always!

C: And also with you!

ALL: Lamb of God, You came to take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us, and give us Your peace. Amen!

## DISTRIBUTION

- ♦ You will be ushered forward for Communion.
- ♦ When receiving the bread, please extend your hand palm up.
- ♦ If you are not communing but wish to come up and receive a blessing, you may keep your hands folded.
- ♦ Wine without alcohol is in the center of each tray; you may also request a gluten-free wafer.

## DISTRIBUTION HYMN # 384 "Of the Father's Love Begotten"

## POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

**CANDLE LIGHTING** *The sanctuary lights are dimmed and candles are lit. Please tip unlit candle toward lit candle.*

## 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.

## CHRISTMAS PROCLAMATION

*Liturgical text; Isaiah 9:6*

L: When all things were in quiet silence, and night was in the midst of her swift course, Your almighty Word, O Lord, descended from Your royal throne. Hallelujah!

C: To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given! Hallelujah!

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

## BENEDICTION ~ GOD'S GOOD-CREATING WORD OF BLESSING

*Numbers 6:24-26*

L: 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!

## 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:*

## POSTLUDE

✠ TO GOD ALONE ALL GLORY! ✠

