

ST. MARK'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

OUR MISSION:

TO PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL
TO MAKE DISCIPLES
TO EMBODY GOD'S LOVE

Introduction

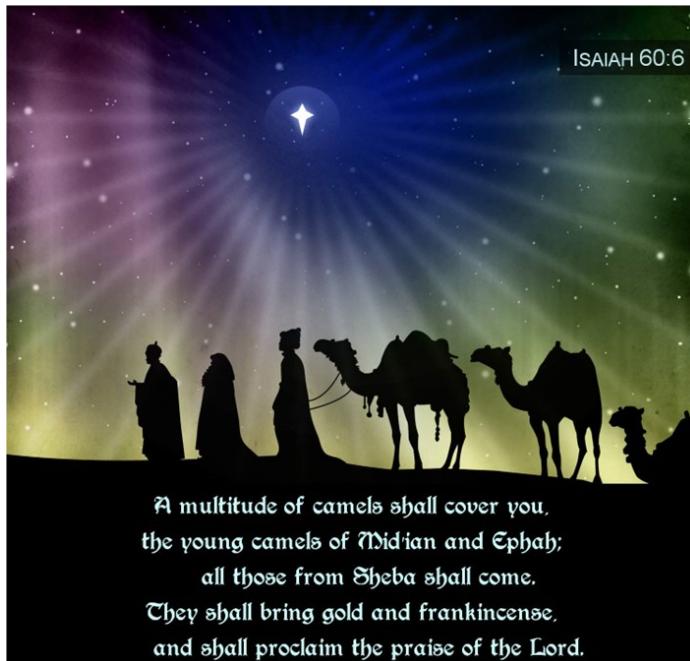
In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice.

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.

Thanks be to God

**The Nativity of our Lord
December 24, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.
Christmas Eve Candlelight
A Service of Word and Sacrament**



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church

The Nativity of Our Lord

4:00 p.m.

December 24, 2025

***Please stand if able** Symbols: P: Pastor; A: Assisting Minister; C: Congregation

SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

We welcome all to this celebration of Christ birth into the world and in our hearts.

You are also welcome to join us for worship and service at any time.

GATHERING

On this Christmas Eve, we gather to proclaim what Isaiah announces, that the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all. In the familiar account of Christ's birth, the evening sky is bright with the heavenly host singing, "Glory to God in the highest." The Prince of Peace is born among us. God comes to us as fully divine and fully human so that we may bask in and be bearers of divine light to the world.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Quentin Surace

PRELUDE AND ACOLYTES LIGHT CANDLES

ENTRANCE HYMN

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

ELW #289

CONFSSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the Holy Trinity, **✚** one God, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty Savior, Prince of Peace.

C: Amen

P: Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness, let us confess our sin....Reconciling God,

C: we yearn for your presence to transform our grief, pain, and despair. We confess that we have not always prepared room in our hearts for your love; we have not always recognized your presence among us; we have not always embraced your message of peace. We cry out, weary with the burden of violence, oppression, and fear. We confess our failure to make room for those seeking refuge; our participation in violent systems that harm your innocent ones; our reluctance to embody your good news. Be born in us today and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation. Amen.

P: God's grace upon grace flows over you. **✚** Christ's presence redeems the whole creation. Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad! As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins.

C: Amen.

***HYMN OF PRAISE**

"O Come All Ye Faithful"

vs. 1 & 3

ELW #283

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: 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.

C: Amen.

The congregation is seated.

HYMN

“Lord, I Lift Your Name on High”

ELW #857

WORD

FIRST READING

Isaiah 9:2-7

Carol Schaefer

A: Light shines: a child is born for us. C: **Thanks be to God.**

The congregation remains seated.

HYMN

“We Three Kings of Orient Are” vs. 1 & 5

WOV #646

PSALM READING

Psalm 96

Carol Schaefer

A: Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad. C: **Thanks be to God.**

The congregation remains seated.

SHARING THE NEWS OF CHRIST’S BIRTH

SECOND READING

Titus 2:11-14

Carol Schaefer

A: The grace of God has appeared. C: **Thanks be to God.**

(Please Stand for the Gospel Reading)

*HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

Pastor Quentin Surace

CHILDREN’S SERMON

Pastor Quentin Surace

SERMON

Pastor Quentin Surace

HYMN

“What Child Is This”

ELW #296

*THE NICENE CREED

ELW p. 104

*PRAYERS BY ASSISTING MINISTER

Carol Schaefer

P: Empowered by the news of Christ’s birth, let us pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need. *A brief silence.* Gathering God, Hear us, O God.

C: **Your mercy is great.**

P: With the joy of Christ’s birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: **Amen.**

*SHARING OF CHRIST’S PEACE

HYMN

“God Rest Ye Merry Witnesses”

vs. 1,3 & 6

CCLI #39441

*OFFERING PRAYER

P: God of glory, great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these Your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior.

C: Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

PROPER PREFACE FOR CHRISTMAS

WORDS OF INSTITUTION FOR HOLY COMMUNION III, EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

ELW p. 110

*THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: Lord, teach us to pray...

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

SHARING OF HOLY COMMUNION

COMMUNION BLESSING BY PASTOR

P: Incarnate God, you are among us at this table. May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence. Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us.

C: Amen.

***CANDLE LIGHTING** During the CANDLE LIGHTING, ushers will light the candles of those nearest the center aisle. Please pass on the light by holding your burning candle UPRIGHT allowing the next person to light his/hers from yours. Church is darkened for the singing of Silent Night. As candles are being lit, we will hum the melody. When all candles are lit, we begin singing "Silent Night" and raise candles according to the instructions given below.

*HYMN

"Silent Night, Holy Night"

ELW #281

After Verse 1 (CANDLES ARE RAISED)

After Verse 2 (CANDLES ARE LOWERED)

After Verse 3 (CANDLES ARE EXTINGUISHED)

READING OF JOHN 1:1-14 (in darkened church)

Pastor Quentin Surace

Lights are turned back on

*BLESSING

P: The triune God, glorious Mystery, holy Incarnate One, abiding Comforter, **☩** bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy. Together let us proclaim our mission:

C: To proclaim the Gospel. To make disciples. To embody God's love. Amen.

*DISMISSAL

P: Glory to God in the highest!

C: And peace to God's people on earth!

P: Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Emily Schuttenberg



SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 9:2-7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them light has shined. You 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. For 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. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For 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. His 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.

Psalm 96

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

Titus 2:11-14

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

Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And 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 in the guest room. Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth 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 heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

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

John 1:1-14

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 came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Special donations given to St. Mark's Preschool:

~In memory of Melanie Stewart Cranford by Jim and Marlene Stewart

She will not grow elderly, as we that are left behind. Age shall not weary her nor the years bend her. At the going down of the sun and in its return in the morning we always remember our dear daughter
Melanie Stewart Cranford (1973-2023).

~In honor of Hilka Cox and in memory of Ron Cox by David Cox



Assisting in Worship

Preaching: Pastor Quentin Surace

Announcements: Pastor Quentin Surace

Lay Reader: Carol Schaefer

Crucifer:

Ushers: Hilka Cox, Deb Crawford

Greeters: Hilka Cox

Communion:

Acolyte:

Assisting Minister: Carol Schaefer

Musician: Emily Schuttenberg

The Poinsettias are Given to the Glory of God

In Honor of

Jeff Arndt by Linda Hewitt
Johnny Arndt by Linda Hewitt
Libby Brown (Mother) by Susan Williams
Marcheta Campbell by Cheryl Brown
Aaron & Jennifer Carpenter & Family by Tim & Judy Carpenter
Ashley & Sherri Carpenter & Family by Tim & Judy Carpenter
Tim & Judy Carpenter by Aaron & Jenn Carpenter
Quentin Caudill by Jean Cloninger
Marlene Epps by Terry & Tamarah Hefner
All of our Family by Terry & Tamarah Hefner
Carolyn Sherrill by Randy Sherrill
Wesley Shook & Christopher Thomas by Patty Little
Ted & Janice Sigmon by Marcheta Campell
St. Mark's Gifts from the Heart Participants & Volunteers by Ken & Nobia Summer
St. Mark's Lutheran Church by Quentin & Raye Surace
Our Family—Sara, Travis, Allison & Jessica Williams by Tony & Susan Williams
Tony Williams (Husband) by Susan Williams

In memory of

Eula Albert (Grandmama) by Cheryl Brown
Maxine Amos (my dear friend) by Tamarah Hefner
Gary Arndt by Denise Arndt
Dorothy Austin by Patricia Walling
Kyle Austin by Patricia Walling
Ed Brown (Daddy) by Cheryl Brown
Harley Brown by Libby Brown & Family
Harley Brown (Father) by Susan Williams
Helen Brown (Moma) by Cheryl Brown
Jim & Betty Carpenter by Tim & Judy Carpenter
Robert & Cora Belle Carpenter by Ken & Dotty Isenhour
Glenn Cloninger Jr by Jean Cloninger
Jerry Craig (my Husband) by Judy Craig
Jamon Deal (our Son) by Steve & Kay Deal
Clyde & Shirley Fisher by Denise Arndt
McDonald & Thelma Ford by Nicky & Evelyn Setzer
Rachel & Glenn Heavner by Patty Little
Celia Hollar by Elaine Simmons
Locke & Elizabeth Isenhour by Ken & Dotty Isenhour
George & Jannie Kenniston by Tim & Deborah Sherrill
Gene & Mabel Medlin by Tim & Judy Carpenter
George & Josephine Setzer by Nicky & Evelyn Setzer
Josephine & George Setzer Sr by George Setzer Jr
Joyce Setzer by George Setzer Jr
J. B. Sherrill by Randy Sherrill
J. B. Sherrill by Tim & Deborah Sherrill
Clyde & Rena Sigmon by Marcheta Campbell
Coyte & Macie Sigmon by Marcheta Campbell