



St. John Lutheran Church

Missouri Synod
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7:00 - Candlelight



December 24, 2024

Welcome

to St. John Lutheran Church and our Christmas Eve Celebration Service. We are so glad you have chosen to join us tonight and we pray your time with us will fill you with the love our Lord has for you.

Tonight's service includes the Lord's Supper. If you are a first-time visitor and wish to receive Holy Communion, please speak with one of our Elders or myself prior to service and be sure to fill out the communion card located in your pew.

E-mail: paul@stjohnhl.com

Mobile: 989-992-6030

May God bless your worship with us,

Paul Kruse, Pastor

***'Compelled by the Love of Christ to Live, Learn, Share,
and Serve'***

*'Our Vision is to inspire the vibrant experience of Christian
faith in our community, to all generations,
wherever they may be'*

Prelude (Praise Team)

" What a Glorious Night"

Oo oo ...

The shepherds came to see the baby, stood by His mother's side.
Here laid the Savior inside a manger. Oh what a glorious night!
Oh what a glorious night!

I hear the angels singin', "Hallelujah! Let the earth receive her King."
I know that love has come; sing it out: "Jesus Christ is born! Jesus Christ is born!"

Oo oo ...

The shepherds wondered; they couldn't hide it, told ev'ryone in sight.
All were amazed when they heard how God came down on the glorious night!
God came down on this glorious night!

I hear the angels singin', "Hallelujah! Let the earth receive her King."
I know that love has come; sing it out: "Jesus Christ is born! Jesus Christ is born!"

Glorious, glorious, what a glorious night!
Glorious, glorious, what a glorious night!

I hear the angels singin', "Hallelujah! Let the earth receive her King."
I know that love has come; sing it out: "Jesus Christ is born!"

I hear the angels singin', "Hallelujah! Let the earth receive her King."
I know that love has come; sing it out: "Jesus Christ is born!"
I heard that Jesus Christ is born!

Oo oo ...

All is calm now, all is quiet; a star shining in the sky.
Below, in Bethlehem, the King is sleeping.
Oh, what a glorious night! Oh, what a glorious night!

Opening Song

“O Come, All Ye Faithful” *LSB 379*

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**

Ref 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

In the highest: **Refrain**

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**

Text: tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–80, alt.; John F. Wade, c. 1711–1786

Text: Public domain

Invocation

L In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Confession and Forgiveness

Isaiah 9:2 & 6

L As we prepare to celebrate our Lord's birth, let us also remember the reason it was necessary for a Savior to be born: "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." The darkness in this land that we dwell in, was caused by our walking in the darkness of sin. It is into this darkness that Christ was sent to bring light.

C We confess that we have sinned against God and against one another. We yearn for relief from the darkness, for peace with God, and for reconciliation with one another. Yet we acknowledge that we cannot accomplish these things on our own. Forgive us, Lord, and restore our souls, that our lives would not reflect the darkness of our sin, but the light provided by the birth of Your only Son into the world.

A time of silent reflection

L What we are powerless to do, He has done for us. "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." Know the peace He has come to bring; live it with others and share it with all. To those who believe in Jesus Christ He gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit. May the Lord, who has begun this good work in us, bring it to completion in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C Amen.

Psalm 96

L Sing to the LORD, bless his name;

C Tell of his salvation from day to day.

L Declare his glory among the nations,

C His marvelous works among all the peoples!

L For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised;

C He is to be feared above all gods.

L For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols,

C But the LORD made the heavens.

L Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;

C Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

L Let the field exult, and everything in it!

C Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy

L Before the LORD, for he comes,

- C** For he comes to judge the earth.
- C** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Prayer of the Day

- L** The Lord be with you.
- C** And also with you.
- L** Let us pray together...
- C** **O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our Judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

First Reading

Isaiah 7:10-14

¹⁰Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz: ¹¹"Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." ¹²But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test." ¹³And he said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

1 John 4:7-16

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹In 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. ¹⁰In 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. ¹¹Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. ¹³By this we know that we abide in

him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. ¹⁶ 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.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Christmas Eve Verse

Hebrews 1:1-4

L Long ago, at many times and in many ways,

C **God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,**

L But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son,

C **Whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.**

L He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature,

C **And he upholds the universe by the word of his power.**

L After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

C **Having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.**

C **Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

Holy Gospel

Matthew 1:18-25

L The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the first chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ 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. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ²³ "Behold, the

virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us). ²⁴ When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵ but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

G **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Children’s Message

Message Song

“Now Sing We, Now Rejoice” *LSB 386*

Now sing we, now rejoice,
Now raise to heav’n our voice;
He from whom joy streameth
 Poor in a manger lies;
 Not so brightly beameth
 The sun in yonder skies.
Thou my Savior art! Thou my Savior art!

Come from on high to me;
 I cannot rise to Thee.
Cheer my wearied spirit,
 O pure and holy Child;
Through Thy grace and merit,
 Blest Jesus, Lord most mild,
Draw me unto Thee! Draw me unto Thee!

Now through His Son doth shine
 The Father’s grace divine.
Death was reigning o’er us
 Through sin and vanity
 Till He opened for us
 A bright eternity.
May we praise Him there! May we praise Him there!

Oh, where shall joy be found?
Where but on heav’nly ground?

Where the angels singing
With all His saints unite,
Sweetest praises bringing
In heav'nly joy and light.

Oh, that we were there! Oh, that we were there!

Text: Latin and German, 14th cent.; tr. Arthur T. Russell, 1806–74, alt.

Text: Public domain

Message

"Love with Us"

Offering

Would you like to give online? Scan the QR code and it will take you directly to our donation site.



Offering Song - Sung

LSB 192

- ☐ Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free spirit. Amen.**

Nicene Creed

- ☐ I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.**

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one

Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life ✕ of the world to come. Amen.

Prayer of the Church

Sacrament

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** **And also with you.**
- P** Lift up your hearts.
- C** **We lift them to the Lord.**
- P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- C** **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**
- P** It is truly good, right, and proper ... Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and singing.

Holy, Holy, Holy *(Sung)*

LSB 195

- C** **Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth; heav'n and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He, blessed is He, blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

Lord's Prayer

- P** Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:
- C** **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 Peace of the Lord

- P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.
- C** **Amen.**

The Words of Our Lord

Distribution of the Holy Sacrament

The Lord gave this Holy Sacrament to His Church so that His followers might receive His love and forgiveness in a visible, tangible way. When the Church celebrates this Sacrament, believers are also making a public declaration of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 11:26). Holy Communion is offered every Sunday at St. John Lutheran, but because it is possible to receive the Lord's Supper to

one's detriment (1 Cor. 11:27-29), we ask all who wish to partake of it to examine themselves as follows:

1. Do I believe that I am a sinner and therefore deserve God's punishment?
2. Am I truly sorry that by my sins I have offended God?
3. Do I believe that God accepts the death of Jesus as payment for my sins and therefore forgives my sins for Jesus' sake alone and not because of any goodness or effort on my part?
4. Do I intend, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to turn from my sins?
5. Do I seek to forgive others as God has forgiven me?
6. Do I believe Christ's own Word that His body and blood are truly given and received in and with the bread and wine (Matt. 26:26-28)?

If you have been baptized into the Christian faith and can answer **"yes"** to the above questions, you are invited to receive Holy Communion with the assurance of all the blessings Scripture promises.

If you prefer to receive a gluten-free wafer for communion, please place your hand over your heart as you kneel



Non-alcoholic wine is available in the center of the tray for those members who prefer it due to matters of health or conscience.



Communion Song

"Away in a Manger" LSB 364

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

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And take us to heaven to live with Thee there.

Text (sts. 1–2): Little Children's Book, 1885, Philadelphia; (st. 3): Vineyard Songs, 1892, Louisville, alt. Text: Public domain

Praise Team – "Make Room"

A family hiding from the storm found no place at the keeper's door.
It was for this a child was born: To save a world so cold and hollow.

A sleeping town, they did not know that lying in a manger low
a Savior king who had no home has come to heal our sorrows.

Is there room in your heart? Is there room in your heart?

Is there room in your heart for God to write His story?

Shepherds counting sheep at night. Do not fear the glory light.
You are precious in His sight. God has come to raise the lowly.

Is there room in your heart? Is there room in your heart?

Is there room in your heart for God to write His story?

You can come as you are. It may set you apart,
when you make room in your heart and trade your dreams for His glory.
Make room in your heart, make room in your heart.

A mother holds the promise tight. Every wrong will be made right,
the road is straight, the burden's light, for in His hands He holds tomorrow

Is there room in your heart? Is there room in your heart?

Is there room in your heart for God to write His story?

You can come as you are. It may set you apart,
when you make room in your heart and trade your dreams for His glory.
Make room in your heart, make room in your heart, make room in your heart.

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"It Came upon the Midnight Clear" *LSB 366*

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 all,

From heav'n's all-gracious king."

The world in solemn stillness lay

To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heav'nly music floats

O'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hov'ring wing,
And ever o'er its babel sounds
The blessèd 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.

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810–76, alt.

Text: Public domain

Carol for Candle lighting

"Silent Night" LSB 363

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,

Heav'nly 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.

Blessing

- ☞ The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

☞ Amen.

Closing Song

“Joy to the World” *LSB 387*

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,





Acknowledgments

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