

First Lutheran Church – ELCA

Worship Bulletin: Christmas Eve

December 24, 2021

PRELUDE: Paul Summers

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

ENTRANCE HYMN – “O Come All Ye Faithful” ELW 283 - **Trumpet:** Terry Morrison

1 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!

2 The highest, most holy,
light of light eternal,
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father
now in flesh appearing! Refrain

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

GREETING

L: Eve of Light, Eve of Birth, here is God come to earth. So we gather in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit to celebrate the birth of Immanuel, God with us! **C: Amen.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS (ELW p. 94)

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. Gracious God, **have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of + Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. **Amen.**

SONG – “A Candle is Burning” (*sung to the tune of Away in a Manger*)

We honor Messiah with Christ’s candle flame
Our Christmas Eve candles glad tidings proclaim
O come all you faithful, rejoice in this night
As God comes among us, the Christian’s true light

LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE

Merry Christmas! Today is the day we have been preparing for throughout Advent. Jesus is born. Here is the story as recorded in Luke’s Gospel.

In those days Caesar Augustus declared that everyone throughout the empire should be enrolled in the tax lists. This first enrollment occurred when Quirinius governed Syria. Everyone went to their own cities to be enrolled. Since Joseph belonged to David’s house and family line, he went up from the city of Nazareth in Galilee to David’s city, called Bethlehem, in Judea. He went to be enrolled together with Mary, who was promised to him in marriage and who was pregnant. While they were there, the time came for Mary to have her baby. She gave birth to her firstborn child, a son, wrapped him snugly, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guestroom.

Nearby shepherds were living in the fields, guarding their sheep at night. The Lord’s angel stood before them, the Lord’s glory shone around them, and they were terrified.

The angel said, “Don’t be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people. Your savior is born today in David’s city. He is Christ the Lord. This is a sign for you: you will find a newborn baby wrapped snugly and lying in a manger.” Suddenly a great assembly of the heavenly forces was with the angel praising God. They said, “Glory to God in heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors.”

When the angels returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, “Let’s go right now to Bethlehem and see what’s happened. Let’s confirm what the Lord has revealed to us.” They went quickly and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they saw this, they reported what they had been told about this child. Everyone who heard it was amazed at what the shepherds told them. Mary committed these things to memory and considered them carefully. The shepherds returned home, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. Everything happened just as they had been told.”

All five candles are lit.

We have been waiting for this day, Loving God. We have prepared ourselves for this special day. On this Christmas Day, let us live as those who let hope, peace, joy, and love reign in our lives. As the candles burn brightly and light our path, let us live as those who have the Christ’s light burning inside us today and everyday. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Let us pray. **All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into our world has brightened our weary hearts with peace. Call us out of darkness, and empower us to proclaim the birth of your son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7

The reading may be announced:

A reading from Isaiah.

This poem promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth of a royal child with a name full of promise. While Judah's king will practice justice and righteousness, the real basis for faith lies in God's passion for the people: The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this!

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. ³You 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. ⁴For 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. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For 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. ⁷His 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.

SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14

The reading may be announced:

A reading from Titus.

The appearance of God's grace in Jesus Christ brings salvation for all humanity. Consequently, in the present we live wisely and justly while also anticipating the hope of our Savior's final appearance.

¹¹The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He 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.

CHILDREN'S SERMON**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

All: Alleluia.

P: 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. **All: Alleluia!**

GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-20

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph 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. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And 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 for them in the inn. ⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in

bands of cloth and lying in a manger.”¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”¹⁵ 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.”¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY - “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” (ELW 270)

1 Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king;
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise;
join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain

Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king!"

2 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, incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel! *Refrain*

3 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 we no more may die,
born to raise each child of earth,
born to give us second birth. *Refrain*

APOSTLES CREED (ELW p. 104)

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.* On the

third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. **Amen.**

OFFERING – Sanctuary Choir: “Where Shepherds Lately Knelt” by Carl Schalk

OFFERTORY – “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice” (v. 1) ELW 288

Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today;
ox and ass before him bow,
and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!
Christ is born today!

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rejoicing in the good news of Christ’s birth and dwelling in hope, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

Holy God, you raise up leaders throughout the church to proclaim your word of hope. Unite the church through the good news of salvation, so that all will know and experience your glory. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Holy God, you created mountains and hills, seas and rivers, and all creatures. Reveal to us the goodness of all you have made so that we live wisely with these your gifts. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Holy God, you desire that all people live in peace. Guide all in positions of authority to lead with equity, and give courage to advocates who speak for the voiceless. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Holy God, you sent your Son to be our physician and remedy. Strengthen medical professionals and counselors to care for the sick and grieving (*especially*) **Members:** Winora Hallstrom, Don Grant, Todd Poppema, Dave Livingston, Linda Towne, Al Luing, Janice Berger, Sandy Rogers, Todd Hallstrom, Charlene Wachter, Marilyn Frisch, Julie & Denny Christensen, Dianne Sanderson, Betty Nelson; **Members in Nursing Homes:** Lois Graf, Gunnie Mahlberg, Albert Mattisen, Bobbie Elvin, Sandra Marsh; **Members in Care Facilities:** Fred Wietzema, Joan Doeden, Jean Bender; **Family Members & Friends:** Joe Christensen (son of Nora Leinen & Gene Christensen), Arlene (Fern Burmeister’s sister), Butch Zeiner (Valerie Veen’s brother), Maverick Thalberg (Fern Burmeister’s great-grandson), Josh Hansen (Mary Ingenthron’s son), Tom Morgan (Sandy Randall’s dad), Brad Martens (Valerie Veen’s son); **Our service men and women and Love INC.**, so that all people experience healing and consolation. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Holy God, you gather us together in community, blessing us with friends and family. Make yourself known to all who participate in worship today, and send us forth to serve our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Holy God, you show your love and faithfulness in every generation. Through the witness of our ancestors in the faith, you have shown us how to testify to your grace and truth. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Hear the prayers of your people, glorious God, for the sake of the one who took on our nature and form to redeem the whole world, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION (ELW p. 145)

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER (ELW p. 145)

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.

COMMUNION Taste and See that the Lord is Good.

COMMUNION HYMN – “O Little Town of Bethlehem” ELW 279

1 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.

2 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!

3 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.

4 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;
oh, come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Immanuel!

COMMUNION HYMN – “It Came Upon the Midnight Clear” ELW 282

1 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, good will to all,
from heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.

2 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 blessed angels sing.

3 And you, beneath life's crushing load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way
with painful steps and slow:
look now, for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing;
oh, rest beside the weary road
and hear the angels sing!

4 For lo! The days are hast'ning on,
by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years
shall come the time foretold,
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendors fling,
and all the world give back the song
which now the angels sing.

COMMUNION HYMN – “Away in a Manger” ELW 277

1 Away in a manger, no crib for his 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.

2 The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.

I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

3 Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay
close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE – “Go Tell It On The Mountain” (v.3) ELW 290

Refrain

Go tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and ev'rywhere;
go tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born!

3 Down in a lonely manger
the humble Christ was born;
and God sent us salvation
that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. Radiant God, with our eyes we have seen your salvation, and in this meal we have feasted on your grace. May your Word take flesh in us, that we may be your holy people, revealing your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

CANDLELIGHT SOLO – “O Holy Night” – Ashley Hein, soloist

LIGHTING OF CONGREGATIONAL CANDLES

CANDLELIGHT HYMN – “Silent Night” ELW 281

1 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.

2 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!

3 Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS

L: Let us pray. 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. **All: Amen.**

CHRISTMAS EVE BENEDICTION

Tonight, as we celebrate God is with us in the birth of Jesus, let us continue to live lives of hope, peace, joy, and love. Share God's love with the shepherds you meet on the hillside. Let the communion of the Holy Spirit fill your heart with glad tidings like the angels. And the Prince of Peace born again tonight, may He live in your heart to comfort and challenge you as you seek to live as one of his disciples. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace. Christ has come! C: **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE MUSIC

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

The money received from your Christmas offering envelope along with the loose offering given at the Christmas Eve services supports outreach ministry. Thank you for your generous donation that supports local Christian outreach ministry!

The office will be closed on Monday, December 27 for the Christmas Holiday.

Annual Reports are due to the church office by Thursday, December 30.

2022 OFFERING ENVELOPES: Your offering envelopes for 2022 are in your mail box. If you didn't get a box but would like envelopes, please contact the church office.

The office will be closed Friday, December 31 – Monday, January 3, 2022 for the New Year Holiday.

2021 Offering – The last day to get your offering in for 2021 will be Tuesday, December 28.

POINSETTIAS: The poinsettias adorning our sanctuary this Christmas Season are given to the glory of God by the following people:

In memory of Keith Larson by Mary & family.

In memory of loved ones by Kevin & Pam Fleming.

In celebration of the upcoming birth of our first grandchild by Kevin & Pam Fleming.

In memory of Karen Almjeld by her family.

In memory of Ron Almjeld by his family.

In memory of loved ones by Lonnie & Nancy Myrom.

In memory of my cousin Carole, uncle Don, mom & dad by John Kramer.

In memory of John Vihlen by Vona Mae Vihlen.

In memory of loved ones by Sandy Poppema.

In memory of Keith Larson by Roger & Marjorie Larson.

In memory of our parents by Ron & Winora Hallstrom.

In memory of our fathers by Robert & Bonnie Bents.

In memory of Olaf & Henritta Vogen & Harold & Lorna Benson by Bob, Jane & Ryan Benson & Kirk Vogen.

In loving memory of Byron by Cindy Swart.

In loving memory of Mitchel Benson by Cindy Swart.

In loving memory of Allen, Alvin & Jerry Larson & Fred & Rose Hurlbut by Brenda Hurlbut & family.

In memory & in honor of all our veterans for their service in the US Armed Forces by Brenda Hurlbut.

In memory of our loved by Jim & Cindy Russell & family.
In memory of George & Florence Koster (parents of Kathy Craun) by Don & Kathy Craun.
In memory of Roberta & Elden Good & Connie Good by Glenda & Roger Lais, Dustin, Tiffany, Dyson & Kinsley Neugebauer.
In memory of our parents, Martha & Lester Anderson & Elsie & Paul Zierke by Dennis & Janet Zierke.
In memory of Dick Frisch by his family.
In memory of Ray & Betty Lu Kaiser by John & Nora Leinen.
In memory of Larry & Jeanne Leinen by John & Nora Leinen.
In memory of Elaine Morrison by Terry.
In loving memory of Cindy, Ruth, Daryl, & other loved ones by Larry & Norma Woodbury.
In loving memory of Clarence Wasmund by Marie & family.
In loving memory of Vernon Mews by Marie.
In loving memory of Martin & Jeanette Waage & Sam & Ruth Casper by Alan & Barb Waage.
In loving memory of loved ones by Doug & Ardys Jacobson, Jeff & Lynnette Faragher family, Glen & Lynnea Faragher family & Mark & Susan Jacobson family.
In loving memory of Donald Mahlberg by Rolf & Joan Mahlberg.
In memory of Dale & Gertrude Eckerson by Rolf & Joan Mahlberg.
In honor of Pastor Jeanette.
In memory of Craig Nienkerk, Iven & Helen Wachter & Merle & Lois Nienkerk by Lori & family.
In memory of loved ones by Keith & Linda Towne.
In memory of Gary Milbrath by his family.
In memory of Lloyd & Viola Johnson by Diana White & family.
In memory of Albert Cross by Agnes Cross, John & Nancy Cross, Dan Cross & Rick & Sarah Cross.
In memory of Cal & Nancy Zuehlke by their family.

Merry 
 *Christmas*