

CHRISTMAS EVE



THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

Candlelight Eucharist

DECEMBER 24, 2024

WELCOME, GUESTS

Welcome to all who worship with us today. We are thankful for your presence and invite you to share in “the food which endures to eternal life.”

Please sign the visitor’s book at our Welcome Center in the narthex. If you’d like to know more about us or are considering becoming a member, please complete the form found in each pew, return it to an usher or simply put it in the collection plate. There is a cry room down the stairs off the narthex where the service can still be heard. Busy-bags, children’s bulletins and magazines and are also provided in the Narthex.

We’d like for you to learn more about us!

A Reconciling in Christ Congregation: We welcome people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions; and we are committed to work for racial equity.



A Green Congregation: for being stewards of the earth.

In Covenant with Lutheran Campus Ministry (LuMin St. Louis), lcmstl.org

Cuetlaxochitl Donation Thanks



The beautiful Christmas plants gracing the chancel are given by:

Sunny Sholts
Kuhlmann Family in memory of Kevin Sebert and John Sebert
Tim Gutknecht
Brenda Bredemeier
Jessica White and family in memory of Lorraine Chase

In support of our goal of being a caring, inclusive, Christ-centered community, we

- ❖ care for God’s creation
- ❖ promote the non-violence of Christ and care for those who suffer
- ❖ participate in the Spirit toward a global religious community

Prologue

Noël: *Quand le Sauveur Jésus Christ*
 (“When the Savior Jesus Christ Was Born”)
 Variations by Jean-François D’Andrieu (1682–1738)

These variations on an old French *Noël*, or carol, highlight the tone colors of the organ. The thumping rhythmic accompaniment suggests a shepherd’s *tambourin*, or hand drum.

The Prophet Isaiah

Chorale: *Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming*
ES IST EIN ROS’ ENTSPRUNGEN
 Setting by Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)

A delicate meditation on the tender Flower of Jesse’s Stem: foretold by prophets of old, it blossomed “amid the cold of winter”—an earthly winter of sin and death—“when half-spent was the night.”

The Virgin Mary

Noël: *Or nous-dîtes, Marie*
 (“Tell us, blessed Mary”)
 Setting by César Franck (1822–1890)

Based upon the story of the Annunciation, this carol is a dialogue between the Virgin and the Angel: “O tell us, blessed Mary, of the Angel Gabriel; make known to us the message that the angel came to tell.”

Joseph

Noël: *Joseph est bien-marié*
 (“Joseph is well-married”)
 Variations by Claude Balbastre (1727–1799)

Joseph est bien marié à la fille de Jesse.
 Joseph is well married to the daughter of Jesse.

A delightful example of the theme and variation genre of carol settings greatly favored by eighteenth century French organists such as Balbastre, D’Aquin, D’Andrieu, LeBègue, and others. These venerable carol tunes are not sung much in France anymore, but the legacy of this tradition lives on as standard repertoire for organists, even today.

The Shepherds

Largo from *The Christmas Concerto, Op. 3, # 12*
 (“Pastorale per il Santissimo Natale”)
 Music of Francesco Manfredini (1680–1748)

The *pastorale* (like the *Gesù Bambino* which follows), was composed in a lilting rhythmic style, often to a sustained drone (like a bagpipe), which to eighteenth century listeners evoked images of shepherds.

The Angels

Chorale: *From Heaven Above to Earth I Come*

VOM HIMMEL HOCH

Settings by Friedrich Wilhelm Zachau (1663–1712)

Johann Pachelbel (1653–1706)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

In these settings of Luther's Christmas hymn, the first, by Handel's teacher, is a spirited trio, with the chorale suspended above. Pachelbel's *pastorale* is also a trio, in which heavenly voices dialogue excitedly above an earthbound hymn tune in the pedal. Bach's jubilant chorale sets the tune aloft again over a "walking bass" in the pedal, while animated inner voices flutter like angelic wings.

The Magi

Marche des Rois Mages

("March of the Magi Kings")

Music of Théodore Dubois (1837–1924)

A delightful depiction of the Wise Men on their journey to Bethlehem, astride their camels, eyes fixed upon the heavenly luminary which guides them. The star is represented, of course, by the high sustained "pedal point," which, according to the composer's instruction, should be held down by another person, or depressed by a weight upon the key.



+ The Nativity of Our Lord +

Christmas Eve Candlelight Eucharist

December 24, 2024

Setting: Luther's *Deutsche Messe*

10:30 PM

*The responses of the assembly appear in **bold** type.*

"ELW" refers to Evangelical Lutheran Worship, the cranberry-colored book in the pew racks.

Standing and sitting are corporate acts of the assembly.

When the assembly stands, those who are able stand on behalf of those who cannot.

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.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

INTERLUDE

Gesù Bambino

(*"The Infant Jesus"*)

Music of Pietro Alessandro Yon (1886–1943)

With its quotation of *Adeste Fideles*, this lyrical pastorale suggests the adoration of the shepherds, and indeed, the homage of all the faithful before the Holy Child of Bethlehem. The composer, Pietro Yon, was an Italian émigré, and organist at Saint Patrick's Cathedral in New York City.

After the interlude, a brief silence is kept.

CHRISTMAS PROCLAMATION

A bell sounds. The assembly stands and faces the processional cross. The presiding minister sings the proclamation.

... the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, God made flesh.

GATHERING HYMN *Once in Royal David's City*

ELW # 269

IRBY

Melody by Henry J. Gauntlett (1805–1876)

Harmonization by A. H. Mann

Our Processional is dedicated to the memory of Melvin Bohlmann. This stirring hymn of the Christ Child, sung at Mel's memorial a few days ago, aptly conveys his joyful confidence in our newborn Savior, that "our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love."

GREETING

The presiding minister and the assembly greet each other.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

HYMN OF PRAISE

All Glory Be to God on High
ALLEIN GOTT IN DER HÖH SEI EHR

ELW # 410

1. All 2. High voices 3. Low voices 4. All

High voices = soprano/alto Low voices = tenor/bass

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.

Amen.

The assembly is seated.

WORD

God speaks to us in Scripture reading, preaching, and song

FIRST READING

Isaiah 9:2–7

Light shines: a child is born for us

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!

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

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 exultation, 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. Great will be his authority, and there shall be endless peace for the throne and dominion of David. 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.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSE

He Whom Shepherds Once Came Praising

QUEM PASTORES LAUDAVERE

setting by Michael Praetorius (1571–1621)

Choir sings the verses; **All sing the refrain.**

The singing of the *Quempas Carol* is a long-standing Christmas tradition. Like the Christmas tree, this wonderful tradition has German roots, and is even more ancient. The earliest known references to this carol date back to about 1450. The name of the carol comes from the opening syllables of the original Latin words: *QUEM PASTores laudavere, quibus angeli dixerunt*. “The Quempas goes ’round” describes the custom of singing the hymn from the four corners of the church, representing the north, south, east, and west. In this way, the singers proclaim the holy Birth to the “four corners of the earth.”

1 *Soloist*

He whom shepherds once came praising,
awed by heav’nly light a-blazing,
cheered by angel news amazing:
“King of glory, Christ is born!”

Choir

The glorious angels came today,
aglow with light into the night of darkness deep,
to shepherds who by moon’s bright ray
did in the field o’er sheep their silent vigil keep,
“Joy, great joy and tidings glad we bring from heav’n resounding,
for you, for you and all the world abounding.”

Refrain—all

Refrain—Congregation and Choir



God's own Son is born a child, is born a child;

God the Fa-ther is rec-on-ciled, is rec-on-ciled!

2 *Soloist*


He whom sages, westward faring,
myrrh and gold and incense bearing,
humbly worshiped, off'rings sharing:
Judah's lion reigns this morn!

Choir


God's majesty has come to earth
and sent his only Son to you in humankind;
a chosen virgin gave him birth.
In David's town the holy infant you will find,
lying helpless in a manger, poor and bare and lowly,
to set you free from all your sorrow wholly.

Refrain—all

Refrain—Congregation and Choir



God's own Son is born a child, is born a child;



God the Fa - ther is . rec - on - ciled, . is rec - on - ciled!

3 *Soloist*


Sing with Mary, virgin mother;
praise her Son, our newborn brother;
angel ranks, lead one another,
hailing him in holy joy!

Choir


Then sang the angels this refrain:
"To God on high alone give praise and glory,
and peace on earth again shall reign.
Let all on earth with gladness heed this story
and rejoice in his good will." The Savior came in meekness
for you, for you, to bear your flesh in weakness.

Refrain—all

Refrain—Congregation and Choir



God's own Son is born a child, is born a child;



God the Fa - ther is . rec - on - ciled, . is rec - on - ciled!

4 *Soloist*

To our king, God ever reigning,
yet of Mary manhood gaining,
heav'nly gifts for us obtaining,
raise your hymns of homage high!

Choir

The wond'ring shepherds said; "Behold!
Let us now go with all good speed to Bethlehem
to see this thing the Lord has told;
the cattle leave; he will indeed take care of them."
There they found the wonder babe, in lowly swaddling clothes lying,
yet all the world with his free grace supplying.

Refrain—all

Refrain—Congregation and Choir



SECOND READING

Titus 2:11–14

The grace of God has appeared

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.

A reading from the Letter to Titus.

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.

It is Jesus Christ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Silence for preparation precedes the gradual hymn.

GRADUAL HYMN*O Little Town of Bethlehem*English folk tune: *FOREST GREEN* [music: cf. ELW # 250]

Setting by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)

Words by Phillips Brooks (1835–1893)

The Episcopal clergyman Phillips Brooks was an American patriot and an ardent opponent of slavery. Following the end of the Civil War in 1865, he made a journey to the Holy Land, where he attended Christmas midnight mass at Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity. Brooks reportedly witnessed shepherds tending their flocks in the nearby fields, much as their forebears had done centuries before. These experiences later inspired Brooks to compose his famous hymn.

All.

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.

All.

O morning stars together proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth;
For Christ is born of Mary; and gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love.

Choir.

How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given!
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.

All.

O holy Child of Bethlehem descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born to us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 2:1–20

God with us

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.

As the gospel is announced, a small cross may be traced with the thumb on the forehead, then on the lips, then on the breast, as a prayer that the gospel may dwell in our minds, on our lips, and in our hearts.

The ✠ holy gospel according to St. Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor 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 for them in the inn.

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 the manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom God 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 in 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 the child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But 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, as it had been told them.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

Pastor Scott Benolkin

Silence for reflection follows the sermon.

The assembly stands for the Hymn of the Day to proclaim the word of God in song.

HYMN OF THE DAY *On Christmas Night, All Christians Sing*

ELW # 274

SUSSEX CAROL

Setting by David Willcocks (1919–2015)

1. High voices 2. Low voices 3. All 4. All

High voices = soprano/alto

Low voices = tenor/bass

This joyful English folk melody was first arranged with the present Christmas text by Ralph Vaughan Williams.

NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven;

**was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;**

he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,

and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

The assisting minister invites the assembly into prayer.

Filled with good news of great joy,
let us offer our prayers for the church, the earth, and all people.

After each petition:

God of grace,
receive our prayer.

The presiding minister concludes the prayers:

We commend these prayers to you, O God,
trusting your grace made known to all,
through the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

THE PEACE *The presiding minister and the assembly greet each other in the peace of the risen Christ.*

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace. After greeting one another, the assembly is seated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

OFFERING *An offering is gathered, and the table is set*

VOLUNTARY ANTHEM *The Blessed Son of God*
from the oratorio *Hodie* (“This Day”)
Music of Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)

The blessed son of God only
In a crib full poor did lie;
With our poor flesh and our poor blood
Was clothed that everlasting good.
Kyrie 'leison.

The Lord Christ Jesu, God's son dear,
Was a guest and a stranger here;
Us for to bring from misery,
That we might live eternally.
Kyrie 'leison.

All this did he for us freely,
For to declare his great mercy;
All Christendom be merry therefore,
And give him thanks for evermore.
Kyrie 'leison.

Text by Miles Coverdale (1488–1568) after Martin Luther

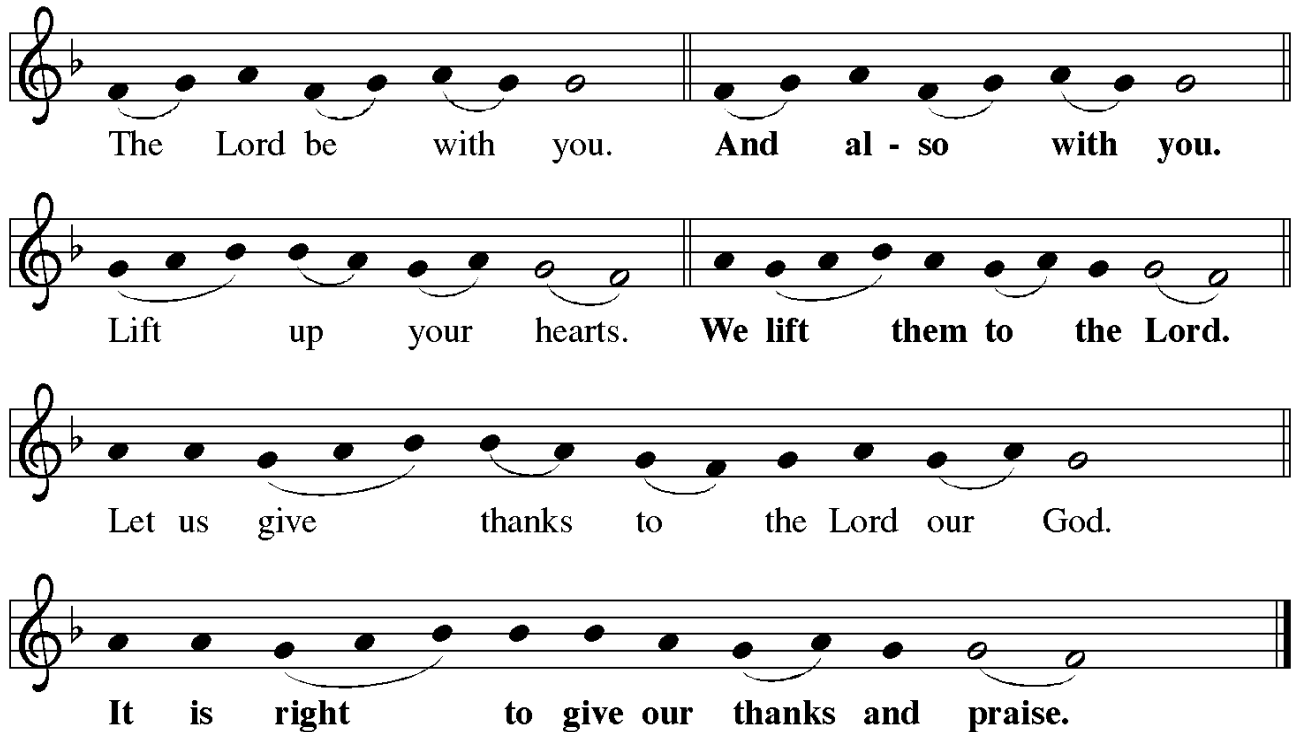
OFFERING PRAYER

The assembly stands. The assisting minister leads the offering prayer.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Believing in the real presence of Christ in the holy meal, this church practices Eucharistic hospitality. All are welcome at God's table.

The presiding minister greets the assembly and invites all present to give thanks.



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The presiding minister continues:

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that ... we praise your name and join in adoring song:



HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (SANCTUS)

Isaiah in a Vision Did of Old
JESAJA, DEM PROPHETEN

[Isaiah 6:1–4]

The prophet's startling vision of the Lord of Hosts.



I - sa - iah in a vi - sion did of old the Lord of hosts en - throned on



high be - hold, whose splen - did train was wide out - spread un - til its stream - ing



glo - ry did the tem - ple fill. A - bove God's throne the shin - ing ser - a - phim



with six - fold wings did rev - 'rence un - to him. With two each ser - aph hid his



glo - rious face, and two a - bout his feet did in - ter - lace, and with the



oth - er two he soared on high, and one un - to an - oth - er thus did cry:



“Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly



is the Lord of hosts! His glo - ry fill - eth all the earth!” The beams and lin - tels



at their cry - ing shook, and all the house was filled with bil - lowing smoke.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life: Blessed are you for the birth of creation. Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light. Blessed are you for your promise to your people. Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams. Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will. Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:



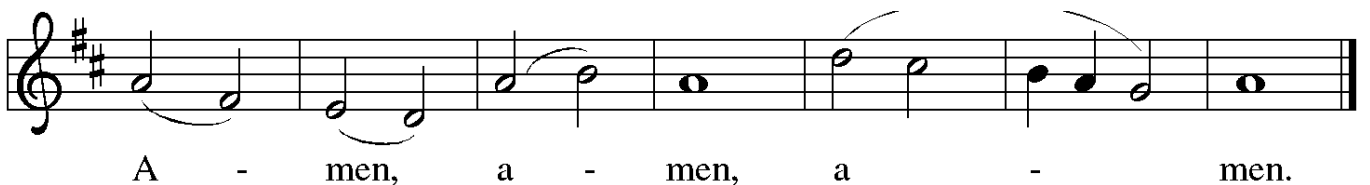
With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.



The Great Thanksgiving concludes with the Lord's Prayer.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION AND BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The presiding minister invites the assembly to Christ's table, where all are welcome.

A child has been born for us, a Son given to us. Come, receive the gift of Jesus.

The assembly is seated.

We invite all persons to share in Holy Communion. Those who do not commune are invited to come forward for a blessing. The silver chalices contain wine. In the individual cups, wine is clear; grape juice is a rose color. For sanitary reasons, we do not practice self-intinction: please do not dip the bread into the chalice. Gluten-free wafers are available. If any need to commune under one element (only the bread or only the wine/juice), know that the fullness of the sacrament is present in the one element.

LAMB OF GOD (AGNUS DEI)

from Missa *Dixit Maria ad Angelum*
Music of Hans Leo Hassler (1564–1612)
[Sung in Latin]

*Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,
Have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,
Grant us peace.*

COMMUNION MEDITATION

Noël: À minuit fut fait un Reveil

("At midnight was heard a cry")

Variations (1) by Jean-François D'Andrieu (1682–1738)

"At midnight was heard a baby's cry:

Never was heard its equal

In the land of Judea.

Noël, au pays de Judée."

COMMUNION ANTHEM

carol: *Jesus Christ, the Apple Tree*

music of Elizabeth Poston (1905–1987)

This metaphorical carol, whose text comes from a 1784 New Hampshire hymnal, dwells on agrarian, indeed Biblical imagery, to describe the Savior.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. The tree of life my soul hath seen,
Laden with fruit, and always green:
(The tree of life my soul hath seen,
Laden with fruit, and always green:)
The trees of nature fruitless be
Compared with Christ the apple tree. | 2. For happiness I long have sought,
And pleasure dearly I have bought:
(For happiness I long have sought,
And pleasure dearly I have bought:)
I missed of all; but now I see
’Tis found in Christ the apple tree. |
| 3. His beauty doth all things excel:
By faith I know, but ne’er can tell,
(His beauty doth all things excel:
By faith I know, but ne’er can tell)
The glory which I now can see
In Jesus Christ the apple tree. | 4. I’m weary with my former toil
Here I will sit and rest awhile:
(I’m weary with my former toil
Here I will sit and rest awhile:)
Under the shadow I will be
Of Jesus Christ the apple tree. |
5. This fruit doth make my soul to thrive,
It keeps my dying faith alive;
(This fruit doth make my soul to thrive,
It keeps my dying faith alive;)
Which makes my soul in haste to be
With Jesus Christ the apple tree.

The assembly stands for the prayer after communion.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Merciful God, we thank you for Jesus, who is our heavenly food. Strengthened by this goodness, send us forth to announce your peace, comfort the afflicted, and share the good news of great joy.

Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

BLESSING

May the joy of angels and the eagerness of the shepherds be yours.

Amen.

May the perseverance of the Magi and the obedience of Joseph and Mary be yours.

Amen.

May the peace of the Christ child be yours.

Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the ☩ Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

The assisting minister sends the assembly into mission.

Go in peace. The Word of God dwells in you richly.

Thanks be to God.

THE GOSPEL OF LIGHT

John 1:1–5, 14

The light of the handheld candle is passed from the lector to all in the church.

RECESSIONAL

Silent Night, Holy Night
STILLE NACHT

ELW # 281

Stanzas 1, 2, and 3: Sung in harmony. 4. Sung by the Choir.

POSTLUDE

Noël: À minuit fut fait un Reveil [autre chant]
("At midnight was heard a cry")
Variations (2) by Jean-François D'Andrieu

* * *

Music for this service comes from a variety of European and American traditions. Especially represented are works from the English choral tradition, including settings by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) and David Willcocks (1919–2015).

SCHEDULE

bethelstl.org/events

TUE	12/24	Christmas Eve 5 PM Christmas Eve Lessons and Carols (no communion) 10 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Eucharist Musical prelude at 10 PM, Holy Communion at 10:30 PM
WED	12/25	Christmas Day 10 AM Holy Communion
SUN	12/29	The First Sunday of Christmas 10 AM Holy Communion
SUN	1/5	Epiphany (observed) 10 AM Holy Communion 5 PM Bethel Youth Twelfth Night / Three Kings party

LAND AND PEOPLES ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Bethel Lutheran Church acknowledges and honors the Tribal peoples, including the Osage Nation, Quapaw, Miami, Otoe-Missouria, Kickapoo, and Illinois Confederacy among others, who were unjustly removed from their ancestral homelands on which we gather.

Bethel Lutheran Church honors the Native peoples who have cared for, and continue to care for, the lands which they first inhabited, named, and tended.

Bethel Lutheran Church recognizes that the cultural and spiritual life of our Indigenous siblings offers wisdom about living in relationship with creation and with our neighbors.



To make an offering electronically, go to bethelstl.org/give

*Have Something for the Bethel Connection, Bulletin, Website, Narthex Information Board, or Facebook?
Email it to submissions@bethelstl.org by 9 AM Monday morning.*

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Art: *Adoration of the Shepherds*, woodcut by Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528).

OF CHRISTMAS TREES AND SYMBOLS OF CHRIST

On our Christmas trees are white lights and white-and-gold monograms of Christ, often called Chrismons (for **Christ's Monogram**). White is the liturgical color for Christmas, also symbolizing purity; gold represents glory. The white lights represent Christ as the Light of the world, shining into the darkness. These are all placed on evergreen trees, symbolic of eternal life. The 17 different symbols on the trees in the chancel were all made by members of Bethel, and have adorned our trees for decades.

Latin Cross: The most familiar shape of the cross, with a short upward arm and long downward arm.

Latin Cross with Alpha and Omega: The Latin cross combined with the Greek “alpha” and “omega,” the first and last letters in Greek: “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.” [Revelation 21:6]

Greek Cross: Cross with four arms of equal length.

Budded Greek Cross: The Greek cross, with trefoils (three circles) at each end, representing the Trinity.

Crosslet: Four smaller Latin crosses joined in the middle to form a larger Greek cross. This represents the spreading of the Gospel to the four corners of the earth.

Anchored Cross: Hebrews 6:19 tells us that we have “a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul.” The anchor cross combines the image of an anchor representing steadfastness with that of a Latin cross.

Tau Cross: Appearing like a capital letter “T,” the Tau Cross is named after the Greek letter “tau.” It is also called the Advent Cross or Old Testament Cross. It often appears in depictions of the staff with serpent that Moses lifted up [Numbers 21:8], a foreshadowing of the crucifixion as indicated in John 3:14-15: “Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.”

Saint Andrew's Cross: Appearing as the letter “X,” this is both a cross and the letter “chi,” the first letter of Christ in Greek. The disciple Andrew was supposedly crucified on a cross of this shape.

Baptismal Cross: A gold Greek cross is superimposed on a white Greek letter “chi,” the first letter of the Greek word for Christ. It forms a cross with eight equal arms. The Day of Resurrection is called the Eighth Day, the first day of a new creation past the seven days in the first creation. Since the number eight thus symbolizes resurrection and a new creation, this cross is often used as a baptismal cross.

Cross with Iota-Eta-Sigma: The Greek letters “iota” “eta” “sigma” (appearing like “ihs”) are the first three letters of Jesus in Greek.

Jerusalem Cross: One large crosslet (here made of Tau crosses), with a small Greek cross in the each quadrant that was formed by the larger cross. It was worn by crusaders heading to Jerusalem. It symbolizes the four Gospels or the spread of the Gospel to the four corners of the earth. Some see the five crosses representing the five wounds of Jesus.

Cross with Triangle, Alpha/Omega, and Roses: The triangle represents the Trinity, but is also the letter alpha. The letter omega appears covered with roses, the flower of Mary.

Chi-Rho: The Greek letters “chi” (which looks like an “X”) and “rho” (which looks like a “P”) are the first two letters of “Χριστός,” that is, Christos, which is Greek for Christ. The Chi-Rho also appears in the center front of our back altar at Bethel. It is one of the earliest Christian symbols.

Chi-Rho Cross: A variant of the Chi-Rho, this is a Latin cross with the vertical arm forming the Greek letter “rho.” The “chi” here is formed by the cross itself.

Crown: The crown shows Jesus as King of Kings.

Triquetra and Circle: Triquetra is Latin for “three-cornered.” This is a representation of the Trinity, with three Persons interconnected but distinct. Through the white triquetra intertwines a gold circle, representing eternity.

Rose and Star: The gold rose symbolizes the birth of Jesus and his human nature. The white Epiphany star refers to the revelation of Jesus as the Son of God. Together, they symbolize the union of the two natures of Christ.

SERVING TONIGHT

Celebrant and Preacher	Pastor Scott Benolkin
Assisting Minister	Silas Johnson
Lectors and Communion Assistants	Ruth Meitzen-Dick
Musicians	Bethel Chancel Choir
	<i>Quempas</i> carolers: Jessica White
	Kasia White
	Avery White
	Haven White
	Charlotte White
	Stephen Mager, Organist and Music Director
Ushers	Carroll Dick
Audio-Visual Engineers	Nathan Schroeder



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The Rev. Scott K. Benolkin (he/him), Pastor, pastor.scott@bethelstl.org

Stephen Mager, DM, Organist and Music Director

The Rev. Tina Reyes (she/her/ella), Campus Pastor, LuMin St. Louis, pastor.luminstl@gmail.com

Anna Burkemper, Church Administrator, office@bethelstl.org

Have a prayer request? Email it to prayers@bethelstl.org anytime.

Note that the information you send to this address will get shared with a number of people who will be praying for you as well as the Sunday Holy Communion bulletin.

Once in Royal David's City



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,
2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and Lord of all,
3 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re - deem - ing love;
4 Not in that poor low - ly sta - ble, with the ox - en stand - ing by,



where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a man - ger for his bed:
and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall;
for that child so dear and gen - tle is our Lord in heav' n a - bove;
we shall see him; but in heav - en, set at God's right hand on high;



Mar - y was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.
with the poor and meek and low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
and he leads his chil - dren on to the place where he is gone.
there his chil - dren gath - er round, bright like stars, with glo - ry crowned.

Text: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818–1895
Music: IRBY, Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805–1876

All Glory Be to God on High



1 All glo - ry be to God on high, who has the world be -
2 O Fa - ther, for your lord - ship true we give you praise and
3 Lord Je - sus Christ, the on - ly Son of God, cre - a - tion's
4 O Ho - ly Spir - it, per - fect gift, who brings us con - so -



friend - ed; to us no harm shall now come nigh, the
hon - or; we wor - ship you; we trust in you; we
au - thor, re - deem - er of your wan - d'ring ones, and
la - tion: to men and wom - en saved by Christ as -



strife at last is end - ed. God shows good-will to
give you thanks for - ev - er. Your will is per - fect,
source of all true plea - sure; O Lamb of God, O
sure your in - spi - ra - tion. Through sick - ness, need, and



one and all, and peace when trou - bled sin - ners call. Thank
and your might re - lent - less - ly con - firms the right; your
Lord di - vine, con - form our lives to your de - sign, and
bit - ter death, grant us your warm, life - giv - ing breath; our



God for grace and mer - cy!
lord - ship is our bless - ing.
on us all have mer - cy.
lives are in your keep - ing. A - - men.

Text: Nikolaus Decius, 1485–1550; tr. composite

Music: ALLEIN GOTT IN DER HÖH, plainsong; adapt. Nikolaus Decius

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On Christmas Night



1 On Christ-mas night all Chris-tians sing to hear the news the
2 Then why should we on earth be sad, since our re-deem-er
3 When sin de-parts be-fore his face, then life and health come
4 All out of dark-ness we have light, which made the an-gels



an-gels bring. On Christ-mas night all Chris-tians sing to
made us glad? Then why should we on earth be sad, since
in its place. When sin de-parts be-fore his face, then
sing this night. All out of dark-ness we have light, which



hear the news the an-gels bring: news of great joy, news of great
our re-deem-er made us glad, when from our sin he set us
life and health come in its place. An-gels re-joice with us and
made the an-gels sing this night: "Glo-ry to God in high-est



mirth, news of our mer-ci-ful king's birth.
free, all for to gain our lib-er-ty?
sing, all for to see the new-born king.
heav'n; peace on earth, and good-will. A-men."

Text: Luke Wadding, d. 1686, alt.
Music: SUSSEX CAROL, English traditional

Silent Night, Holy Night!

Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht!



Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,
 1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,



ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.
 all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
 at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,



Hold - er Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher
 Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
 heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your



Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh.
 peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792–1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820–1885
 Music: STILLE NACHT, Franz Gruber, 1787–1863