

St. John's Lutheran Church & School



Christmas Eve

24 December 2023

Welcome, dear worshiper, to the holiest night of the year. Lift your heart and raise your voice with joy, for the Lord, our Savior, has come! We cordially invite our guests to return and consider becoming a permanent part of our church family. In our worship tonight, may our Lord Jesus be honored and glorified.

Prayer of Meditation

“Ah, dearest Jesus, holy child,
Made Thee a bed, soft undefiled,
Within my heart, that it may be
A quiet chamber kept for Thee.”

+INI+

Prelude



379 O Come, All Ye Faithful



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, Joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
 2 High - est, most ho - ly, Light of Light e - ter - nal,
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, Sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come — ye to Beth - le - hem;
 Born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal He comes;
 Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
 Je - sus, to Thee — be — glo - ry giv'n!



Come and be - hold Him Born the king of an - gels:
 Son of the Fa - ther Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
 Glo - ry to God — In — the — high - est:
 Word of the Fa - ther Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!

Refrain



O come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a - dore Him,



O come, let us a - dore Him, Christ the Lord!

Invocation and Christmas Dialog

- P In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.**
P The Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen His glory.
C **Oh, come, let us worship Him.**
P The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.
C **The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.**
P Those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined.
C **We have seen Christ's glory, the glory as of a Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.**
P For a Child has been born for us, a Son has been given to us.
C **What has come into being in Him was life, and the life was the light of all people.**
P This night Christ is born; today salvation has appeared.
C **Glory to God in the highest! Alleluia!**

Prayer of the Day

- P The Lord be with you.
C **And also with you.**
P Let us pray:
P O Almighty God, You have made this night to shine with the brightness of the true Light, Jesus Christ, Your only Son. Give us great joy in the angels' message of peace on earth and lead each of us to receive Jesus as God-with-us, our Immanuel.
All This we ask for His love's sake. Amen.

Sit

First Lesson

Isaiah 9:2-7

Isaiah promises joy among the people, for Messiah, the Light of the world, is come to establish His Kingdom forever.

R The first lesson is from the ninth chapter of Isaiah.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil.

For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. *ESV*

R This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

412 The People That in Darkness Sat

1 The peo - ple that in dark - ness sat A glo - rious
3 To us a Child of hope is born, To us a

light have seen; The light has shined on them who long In
Son is giv'n, And on His shoul - der ev - er rests All

shades of death have been, In shades of death have been.
pow'r in earth and heav'n, All pow'r in earth and heav'n.

Text and tune: Public domain

Second Lesson

Micah 5:2-5a

Micah prophesies the Promised Ruler will be born in Bethlehem.

R The second lesson is from the fifth chapter of Micah.

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.

And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. And he shall be their peace

R This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

361 O Little Town of Bethlehem



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!
2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, And, gath - ered all a - bove



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by;
While mor-tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won-d'ring love.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing light.
O morn-ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth,



The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.
And prais - es sing to God the king And peace to all the earth!

Text and tune: Public domain

Third Lesson

Luke 1:26-35

Luke foretells the birth of Jesus.

R The third lesson is from the first chapter of Luke.

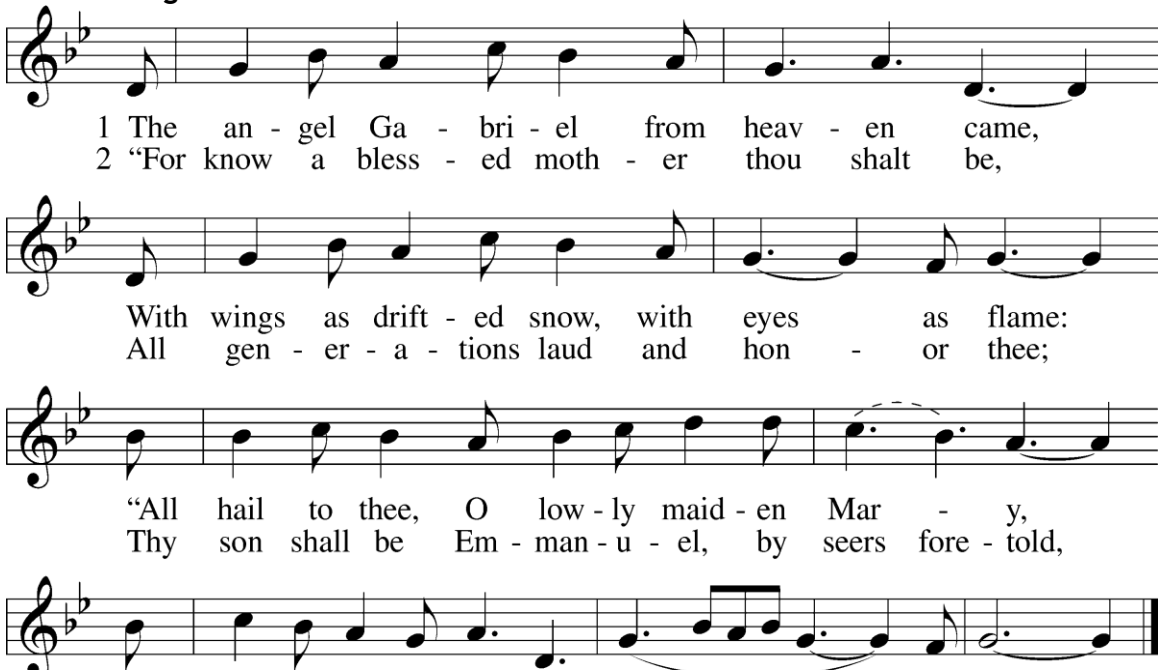
In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.

And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?” And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.” *ESV*

R This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

356 The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came



1 The an - gel Ga - bri - el from heav - en came,
2 “For know a bless - ed moth - er thou shalt be,

With wings as drift - ed snow, with eyes as flame:
All gen - er - a - tions laud and hon - or thee;

“All hail to thee, O low - ly maid - en Mar - y,
Thy son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told,

Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy.” Glo - ri - a!
Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy.” Glo - ri - a!

Text and tune: Public domain

Fourth Lesson

John 3:16-21

John writes the reason for Jesus' coming.

R The fourth lesson is from the third chapter of John.

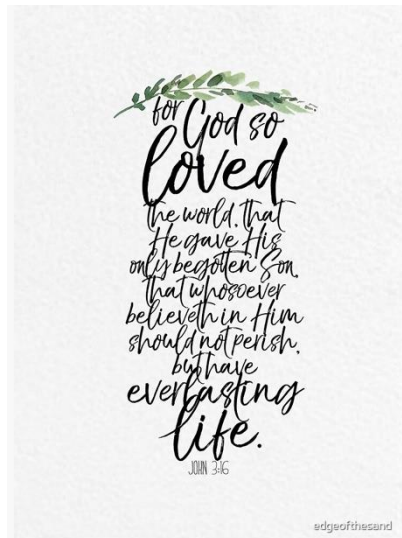
[Jesus said:] "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been carried out in God."

R This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**



Stand

Processional Hymn

367 Angels from the Realms of Glory

1 An - gels from the realms of glo - ry, Wing your flight o'er
all the earth; Ye who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry,
Now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth.
Refrain
Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship;
Wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.

The musical score is written for a single voice part in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of five staves. The first three staves contain the main body of the hymn, and the last two staves contain the refrain. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a mix of quarter, eighth, and dotted notes. The lyrics are printed below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across notes. The refrain is marked with the word 'Refrain' above the first staff of the section.

Text and tune: Public domain

To symbolize the unity we share in Christ and His centrality in our lives, the Gospel will be read from the middle of the congregation

Fifth Lesson

Luke 2:1-20 (KJV)

The Christmas Gospel narrates the birth of our Savior.

P The fifth lesson is from the second chapter of Luke.

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

¹ And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.

² (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

³ And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

⁵ To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

⁶ And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

⁷ And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

⁸ And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

⁹ And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

¹⁰ And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

¹² And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, 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, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

¹⁵ And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

¹⁶ And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

¹⁷ And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

¹⁸ And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

¹⁹ But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

²⁰ And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

Gospel Response

367 Angels from the Realms of Glory

2 Shep - herds in the field a - bid - ing, Watch - ing o'er your
flocks by night, God with us is now re - sid - ing,
Yon - der shines the In - fant Light.
Refrain
Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship;
Wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.

Text and tune: Public domain

Sit

Children's Sermon

Solo.

"Still, Still, Still"

Sofie Hemminger, voice

*Still, still, still, He sleeps this night so chill. The Virgin's tender arms enfolding,
Warm and safe the Child are holding. Still, still, still, He sleeps this night so chill.*

*Sleep, sleep, sleep, He lies in slumber deep. While angel hosts from heav'n come winging,
Sweetest songs of joy are singing. Sleep, sleep, sleep, He lies in slumber deep*

380 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King;
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3 Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righ-teous-ness!



Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
Late in time be - hold Him come, Off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with heal - ing in His wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God-head see, Hail the in-car - nate De - i - ty!
Mild He lays His glo - ry by, Born that man no more may die,



With the an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Je - sus, our Im - man - u - el!
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec - ond birth.



Hark! The her-ald an-gels sing, "Glo-ry to the new-born King!"

Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon

"Looking Upward on Christmas Eve"

Pastor Stapleton

Gathering Of Tithes and Offerings

Voluntary

“Christmas Candle”

Words by Kate Louis Brown

Music by Elmor Remick Warren

Rebecca Hemminger, voice

Kneel/Sit

Prayer of the Church:

P Rejoicing in the wonder of Immanuel, God – With – Us, let us pray for the church, the whole creation, and all who yearn for salvation.

(As each petition is offered pastor will say “we pray” to which the people respond “hear us, Mighty God.” The prayer concludes with the words...)

Exulting in the birth of our Savior, abiding in His love, and looking forward to His coming again, we entrust all for whom we pray to You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Stand

Lighting of the Worshippers’ Candles

Candles are extinguished after singing Silent Night

Lord’s Prayer

All Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

363 Silent Night, Holy Night

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,

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 Thy ho - ly face

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 Thy

peace, Sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Text and tune: Public domain

Benediction

P The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve us.
 C **Amen.**

387 Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive her
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their songs em -
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow Nor thorns in - fest the
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the na - tions



King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare Him
 ploy, While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
 ground; He comes to make His bless - ings
 prove The glo - ries of His righ - teous -



room And heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture
 plains Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing
 flow Far as the curse is found, Far as the curse is
 ness And won - ders of His love, And won - ders of His



sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, Far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, And won - ders, won - ders of His love.

Text and tune: Public domain

Announcements

Dismissal

P Go in peace, serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God!

Postlude

Serving in Worship

Homilist: Rev. Mark Stapleton

Liturgist: Rev. Ronald Weidler

Trumpeter: Mr. Mark Olen

Director of Music: Mr. Gregory Ceurvorst

Flowers

at the altar are given to the Glory of God in celebration of Christ's birth.



The Altar Guild would like to thank all who purchased poinsettias to beautify the Sanctuary in celebration of Jesus' birth this Christmas!

Given to the Glory of God for Blessings Received

Jeff Baker and Beth Zeiter
Don and Kathy Bezek
Amy Buonassisi
Marie A. Fukar
Harlan and Judy Hirt
Ron and Ruth Gallman
Jack and Jeannette Nord

Given To the Glory of God:

Sharon Broz
Marie A. Fukar
Ron and Ruth Gallman
Ralph and Chris Kirchenberg
Chris Hubacek
Marjorie Newpher
Mary Newren
Art Schroeder

Given to the Glory of God in memory of loved ones:

In memory of Victor Ayala, Chuck Kline, Gaby Ronces, and Javier Castellanos, from the Flores and Kline Families

In memory of Ken Fukar, Ken Adams, and Julia Fukar, from Marie A. Fukar

In memory of our son, Ron Gallman, Jr.; our parents, Karl and Ethel Stodden, and Henry and Duean Gallman; and the rest of our family and friends celebrating in heaven with our Lord, from Ron and Ruth Gallman

In memory of Ann and George Hubacek and Faith Knight from Chris Hubacek

In memory of John D. and Mary A. Mark; Benjamin and Bernice Pilarczyk; and loving husband and father David J. Pilarczyk, from Nancy and Benjamin Pilarczyk

In memory of Bob and Shirley Pyritz, and William Pyritz, from Joann Pyritz
In loving memory of Pastor David Smith from Marnie Smith and Family



Equipping ♦ Engaging ♦ Encouraging

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505 S. Park Rd. La Grange, IL 60525

www.sjlagrange.com

708-354-1690