



IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Sunday, Dec. 24, 2023, 4:00pm & 6:00pm Services

GATHERING

Nativity of our Lord

Welcome to worship! Please complete a Connection Card and place the card in the offering plate. Thank you!

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.

PRELUDE

SPECIAL MUSIC 4:00pm *Mary Did you Know* **Jeff Jennings & Liam Peterson**

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please stand as you are comfortable.)

PROCESSIONAL HYMN *O Come, All Ye Faithful* **#283**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the Word made flesh, our life and our salvation. **Amen.**

Trusting the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of life, you promise good news of great joy for all people, and call us to be messengers of your peace. We confess that too often we hoard our joy, our resources, and our security. We nurture conflict and build barriers. We neglect the needs of our neighbors and ignore the groaning of creation. Have mercy on us. Where we are self-centered, open our hearts. Where we are reluctant, give us courage. Where we are cynical, restore our trust. Renew us with your grace and give us again the hope of eternal life in you. **Amen.**

Hear the good news: We are children of God and heirs of God's promises through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In † Jesus we are forgiven and redeemed. Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth shall know the salvation of God. **Amen.**

GREETING

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.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, we come filled with excitement to hear again the Christmas story, on this holiest of nights. Open wide the crowded inns of our hearts, that we may see with new eyes, what happened that night so long ago. Open our ears that we may hear your voice in the voices of those around us. Fill us with wonder and mystery that we may experience your presence with us now, we pray. **Amen.**

(Please be seated.)

SPECIAL MUSIC *O Holy Night* 4:00pm Jeff Jennings
6:00pm Choir

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!

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.

WORD

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7

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.

Word of God. **Word of Life. Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14

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.

Word of God. **Word of Life. Thanks be to God.**

(Please stand as you are comfortable.)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? Al - le -
 lu - ia. You have the words of e - ter - nal life.
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-20

The holy gospel according to...

Glory to you, O Lord.

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

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.

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." ¹³And 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!" ¹⁵When 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." ¹⁶So 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 our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

(Please be seated.)

CHRISTMAS PLAY

Michael Mouse

(Please stand as you are comfortable.)

HYMN OF THE DAY

In the Bleak Midwinter (v3)

#294

NICENE CREED

P. 104

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world God loves.

A brief silence.

Glory to you, God, for the song of the angels, proclaiming to the world Christ's holy birth. Give your church a joyful song to sing, that we bring the good news of peace and salvation to all people. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Glory to you, God, for the stars that shine in the depth of the night. Provoke awe in our hearts at the expansive mystery of the cosmos. Open us to find beauty in the clear darkness of night and in the first glimmers of dawn. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Glory to you, God, for the child born to us who establishes a kingdom of justice and righteousness. Break bonds of oppression, bring reconciliation to warring lands, and establish peace from this time onward and forevermore. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Glory to you, God, for Mary's loving care. Lead us to tend to one another in time of need. Share the comfort of your presence with all people tonight who are alone or separated from loved ones due to estrangement, incarceration, or illness (especially). Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Glory to you, God, for the faithfulness of the shepherds in their vocation. Grant rest to any who feel exhausted from their work during this season: retail and restaurant workers, church musicians, administrative staff, and clergy, organizers of charitable-giving

events, and service workers doing essential tasks. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Glory to you, God, for the multitude of the heavenly host. We rejoice in the zeal of all your saints (especially) who have witnessed the appearing of your grace, and who reveal to us your salvation for all. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace. **Amen.**

SHARING OF CHRIST'S PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

(Please be seated.)

MEAL

OFFERING

SPECIAL MUSIC **6:00pm There Is Great Joy A Coming** **Choir**

(Please stand as you are comfortable.)

OFFERING SONG **What Child is This** **#296**

OFFERING PRAYER

God of abundance, **receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Amen.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Glory to God in the highest! Come to the table of peace.

COMMUNION HYMNS: ***I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve*** **#271**
 Angels We Have Heard on High **#289**
 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing **#270**
 Love Has Come **#292**

(Please stand as you are comfortable.)



PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

SENDING

DISTRIBUTION OF CANDLELIGHT

Beginning with the Pastor, candlelight is shared across the congregation. Light your candle by tilting it toward the candle giving flame.

HYMN OF LIGHT *Silent Night, Holy Night* **#281**

BLESSING

May you carry with you the wonders of this Christmas Eve:
The unconventional hospitality of the manger,
The painful joy of new birth,
The fearful awe of encountering angels, and
The surprising presence of God in the swaddled Christ child.
Go now in the hope of God,
The peace of Christ,
And the joy of the Spirit
on this holy night and always. **Amen.**

CHILDREN'S SERMON *Pastor Bre Kinnunen*

CLOSING HYMN *Joy to the World* **#267**

POSTLUDE

VOLUNTEERS ASSISTING IN SERVICE

SERVING IN WORSHIP: *Pastor Bre Kinnunen*

ORGANIST/PIANIST/MUSICIAN: *Connie Scanlon*

ASSISTING IN THE SERVICE:

4:00pm

6:00pm

USHERS *NEED VOLUNTEER*
NEED VOLUNTEER

Dennis Partanen
Kathleen Partanen

LECTOR *Hayley Smith*

Judy Hallgren

COMM ASSTS *Walter Scanlon*
Alice Mutkala
Hayley Smith

Lori Marta
Larry Marta
Danielle Songer

TECH TEAM *Ben Raymond*

Luanne Skrenes

INSTRUMENTALISTS: Doug Lindblom, Dan Lindblom, Cody Scanlon, Sarah Kempainen, Karen Fitchett, Connie Lindblom, Adam Hall and James Uchytli.

