

CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP

December 25, 2025



LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE CROSS-LCMS

*Welcoming all to walk together
toward abundant life in Christ.*

2024 THEME: JOY COMES IN THE MORNING

For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime.

Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning. Psalm 30:5 (ESV)

A WORD TO OUR FRIENDS ABOUT COMMUNION:

As members of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, we believe that the body and blood of Christ are truly present “in, with, and under” the bread and wine when we receive the Sacrament. We do *not* believe that the bread and wine somehow mystically “change” into something other than bread and wine, *nor* do we believe that the bread and wine merely “represents” Christ’s body and blood; rather, we are bound by the words of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, when He said “Take eat, this is my body” and “Take drink, this is my blood.” We believe and teach that when we receive the bread and wine, we are also truly receiving the body and blood of Christ (because of His divine Word.) We also believe that the Sacrament of Holy Communion is more than just a memorial, we believe it is Christ truly coming to us and offering His body and his blood in an outward sign of His love for us and as an outward assurance of the forgiveness He won for us by His death on the cross. This is our belief and confession regarding the Sacrament of Holy Communion. If you are not a member of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and if you have any questions or concerns about our Communion practices and desire to partake of Holy Communion, will you please consult with the pastor beforehand. *Gluten free communion wafers are available* by taking one from the paten (plate) that is sitting separately in a white container. *Non-alcoholic wine* (clear liquid) *is available* in the center of the tray containing individual cups of regular wine (red liquid). Having read this Communion Statement and prayerfully considered what you believe and confess, please complete the Pew Card found in the pew rack. After you place your tithes and gifts in the offering plate, please pass your Pew Card to the center aisle and the ushers will pick them up. May God truly bless our Communion Service this day.

COMMUNION OPTIONS FOR THOSE WITH ALLERGIES:

- *Gluten-free communion wafers* are available by taking one from the paten (plate) that is sitting separately in a white container.
- *Grape Juice* (clear liquid) is available in the center of the tray containing individual cups of regular wine (red liquid).

A REMINDER: Please turn your cell phone to mute or to vibrate during the worship service. Thank you.

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC, WELCOME & TOLLING OF THE BELLS

ENTRANCE HYMN

Angels from the Realms of Glory *LSB 367 sts. 1, 2, 5*



1 An - gels from the realms of glo - ry, Wing your flight o'er
2 Shep - herds in the field a - bid - ing, Watch - ing o'er your
5 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God the Fa - ther,



all the earth; Ye who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry,
flocks by night, God with us is now re - sid - ing,
Spir - it, Son, Ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing



Now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth.
Yon - der shines the In - fant Light.
To the e - ter - nal Three in One.



Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship;



Wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.

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INVOCATION AND CALL TO WORSHIP

(Based on John 1:1–18)

P We begin our worship on this holy day in the Name of the heavenly Father:

C **Who sent His Son to be born of a virgin.**

P We call upon Jesus Christ, the only Son of the Father:

C **Who is our Savior.**

P We pray for the Holy Spirit's presence and power,

C **In our thoughts and in our hearts.**

P In the beginning was the Word,

C **And the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

P All things were made by Him,

C **And without Him nothing was made.**

P In Him was life,

C **And that life was the light of men.**

P The light shined in the darkness

C **But the darkness did not understand.**

P The Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

C **Full of grace and truth.**

P We have seen His glory,

C **The glory of the One and Only Son of the Father.**



CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P Lord Jesus, we praise You for this opportunity to celebrate Your birth among us. Yet we must confess to You that much of the newness has worn off. The angel's message has grown old in our hearts, and too often, Your birth has become more of a tradition for us to observe rather than the life-changing reality into which You invite us to participate by faith.

C **Lord, our spirits remain restless and unsatisfied despite our abundance of possessions. Often our souls are weighed down by guilt, sin, and shame. Lord, we need to know Your forgiveness. We desire to experience the peace, the power, and the joy of Your presence in our lives.**

(Silence for personal reflection and confession)

P God has heard our prayer and He has answered it with the same great message He's been giving for over 2000 years: "Unto you has been born a Savior; He is Christ the Lord." Dear friends, this was not just His message to the shepherds then; it is God's message to us here, now, this day. Come let us celebrate His joy and forgiveness anew, in Jesus' powerful Name.

C **Amen! Emmanuel—God is with us!**

SALUTATION & COLLECT

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray. Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of sin; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT READING

¹⁰Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
behold, his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.

¹¹He will tend his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms;
he will carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead those that are with young.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Praise be to God.**



HE WILL
FEED HIS
FLOCK
LIKE A
SHEPHERD.

ISAIAH 40:11, NRSV

Isaiah 40:10–11

HYMN OF FULFILLMENT

Now Sing We, Now Rejoice

LSB 386 sts. 1, 3

1 Now sing we, now re - joice, Now raise to heav'n our voice;
 3 Now through His Son doth shine The Fa-ther's grace di - vine.



He from whom joy stream - eth Poor in a man-ger lies;
 Death was reign-ing o'er us Through sin and van - i - ty



Not so bright-ly beam - eth The sun in yon - der skies.
 Till He o - pened for us A bright e - ter - ni - ty.



Thou my Sav - ior art! Thou my Sav - ior art!
 May we praise Him there! May we praise Him there!

EPISTLE*Galatians 4:1-7*

¹I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything, ²but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. ³In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. ⁴But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Praise be to God.**

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 2:1–20

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

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

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

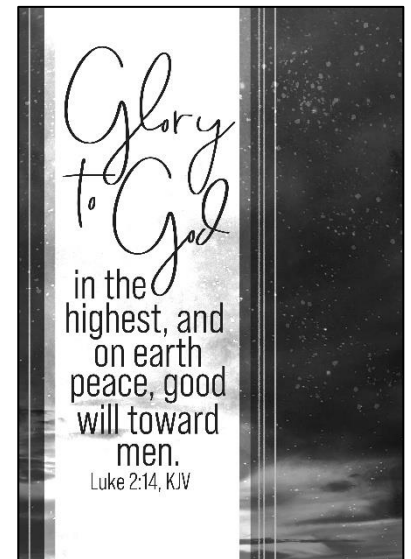
⁸And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. ¹⁰And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths 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,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

¹⁵When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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



HYMN

Joy To The World

LSB 387



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: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

Text: Public domain

NICENE CREED

(Please stand)

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

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

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

CHRISTMAS COLLECT

P Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, we give thanks to You for our creation, our life, and all Your gifts. But we especially give You thanks that, in many and various ways, You spoke Your Word of grace, comfort, and truth, first through Your holy prophets, but now in these last days by Your very own Son, whose coming into our flesh we celebrate this day. By His coming, He has brought us forgiveness and new, eternal life. Help us to live in Him even as He lives in us. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Cause the joyous message of Your angels—of Your glory and peace to all—to resound in our country and throughout the world. Bless, guard, and guide all in the authority of government in our land. Prosper the preaching of the Gospel by Your church, keeping all pastors and teachers steadfast in Your word of salvation. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Renew our hearts and those of all Your people in the joy and peace of Your salvation and help us to reflect Your love for all in all that we say and do. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P For all who are in any need in these days, for the lonely and abandoned, for the wayward and the hopeless, for those in trouble or despair, and for the sick and dying, bring Your saving Word of mercy, forgiveness, health, healing, and hope by faith in Your Son, the Savior of the world. Lord, in Your mercy,
C **hear our prayer.**

P Grant Your blessing to rest upon our families—husbands, wives, children, grandparents, and other relatives. Bind our hearts together by Your own gifts of love. Remembering those whom You have called into Your nearer presence, we give You thanks. Keep us in the same saving faith that we may be numbered among those You have redeemed for eternal life in the day of resurrection. Lord, in Your mercy,
C **hear our prayer.**

P Graciously receive our prayers, deliver and preserve us; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C **Amen.**

(Be seated)



OFFERING

(Please indicate your attendance and any requests on the Pew Card and hand them to the center aisle.

They will be picked up by the ushers after they deliver our gifts to the Altar. Thank you.)

OFFERTORY HYMN

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

LSB 359 sts. 1-2



1 Lo, how a rose e'er bloom - ing From ten - der stem hath
 2 I - sa - iah 'twas fore - told it, The rose I have in



sprung! Of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing As proph - ets long have
 mind; With Mar - y we be - hold it, The vir - gin moth - er



sung, It came, a flow - 'ret bright, A - mid the
 kind. To show God's love a - right, She bore to



cold of win - ter, When half - spent was the night.
 us a Sav - ior, When half - spent was the night.

*(Please stand)***T SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION T****PREFACE***(Tune: "Joy to the World, the Lord Is Come"- LSB 387)*

P Joy to the world, the Lord is come! He grants His peace to all!
 Let each of us in mind and heart Receive the gifts Christ now imparts.
 On earth He came to dwell, To conquer sin and hell,
 With voices in harmony, the anthem swell.

C **Gathered today, we celebrate! Rich treasure now is ours!**
His Body and His Blood bestowed For respite on life's weary road,
That we from guilt set free May His true followers be
With honors we laud our Lord, on bended knee.

P Christ is the Word made flesh for us! Through Him God shows His love.
 With shepherds, kings and angel choir, Our hearts burn bright with holy fire.
 Come, join the glad refrain; "All glory to His Name!"
 And by this most holy feast, His death proclaim.

SANCTUS*(Tune: same as above)*

C Most Holy God, Redeemer, Lord, You reign, our King, supreme!
“Hosanna,” is our cry today, To you whose birth prepares the way
Of rescue for our race, From trials that we face,
The Giver, most excellent, of truth and grace.

SPECIAL MUSIC*“The Lord’s Prayer”***WORDS OF INSTITUTION***(Tune: “I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day”)*

P Upon the night Christ was betrayed
He took some bread and when He’d prayed
He broke it and to all He said, “Now take and eat this blessed bread.
This is my Body giv’n for you,
And every time this act you do,
Remember that I died to free All men that they may come to Me.”
Soon afterward, when all had supped,
Our Lord gave thanks, then took the cup,
To His disciples turned and said, “This is my Blood; for you it’s shed.
Now drink each of you from this wine,
And trust the promised grace divine---
Your sins forgiv’n! So let it be Fore’er a feast rememb’ring Me.”

PAX DOMINI*(Tune: same as above)*

C The peace of God be granted now, As we before the altar bow,
Partaking in this Holy Meal, Forgiveness in His blood will seal.

AGNUS DEI*(Latin term means Lamb of God)**John 1:29*

C O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. A - men.

THE DISTRIBUTION*(Be seated)*

The pastor and those who assist him receive the body and blood of Christ first and then distribute them to those who come to receive, saying:

Take, eat; this is the true body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, given into death for your sins. **Amen.**

Take, drink; this is the true blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, shed for the forgiveness of your sins. **Amen.**

In dismissing the communicants, the following is said:

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you steadfast in the one true faith unto life everlasting. Depart T in peace.

C **Amen.**

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

The First Noel

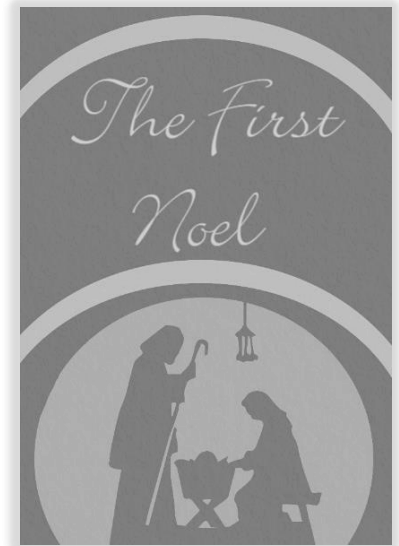
1. The first Noel the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep
On a cold winter's night that was so deep

Chorus

Noel Noel Noel Noel

Born is the King of Israel

2. They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the east beyond them far
And to the earth it gave great light
And so it continued both day and night



Chorus

3. And by the light of that same star
Three wise men came from country far
To seek for a king was their intent
And to follow the star wherever it went

Chorus

4. This star drew nigh to the northwest
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest
And there it did both stop and stay
Right over the place where Jesus lay

Chorus

5. Then entered in those wise men three
Full rev'rently upon the knee
And offered there in His presence
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense

Chorus

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1. Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

Refrain

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 the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel!

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 man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth.

Refrain

REFRAIN Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

Text: Public domain

HYMN:

Let Our Gladness Have No End

LSB 381



1 Let our glad - ness have no end, al - le - lu - ia!
 2 Proph - e - sies in days of old, al - le - lu - ia!
 3 See, the love - liest bloom - ing rose, al - le - lu - ia!
 4 In - to flesh is made the Word, al - le - lu - ia!



For to earth did Christ de - scend, al - le - lu - ia!
 God has sent Him as fore - told, al - le - lu - ia!
 From the branch of Jes - se grows, al - le - lu - ia!
 He, our ref - uge and our Lord, al - le - lu - ia!

Refrain

On this day God gave us Christ, His Son, to save



us; Christ, His Son, to save us.

Text (sts. 1, ref, 3–4): tr. unknown, alt.; (st. 2): tr. Vincent Pisek, 1859–1930

Text and tune: Bohemian, 15th cent.

Text and tune: Public domain

(Please stand)

DISMISSAL *(Tune: “Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising” - LSB 375)*

P May this holy food here taken, Deeds of love in your life waken,
 Keep you in the faith unshaken, Till in heaven we all are one.

NUNC DIMITTIS *(Tune: same as above)*

**C Lord, now let your humble servant
 Leave in peace with blessings fervent.
 Be with us forever present; This the promise from your Word!
 We have seen Your great salvation Which is giv’n to every nation;
 Not the least this congregation, Light for all mankind to see.
 Glory be to God, the Father, And to Christ, His Son, our Savior;
 Holy Spirit, leave us never. Glory to our God we sing.**

BENEDICTION

(Tune: same as above)

P God, the Lord, will leave you never; Nothing we from Him can sever.
We are His, He ours, forever -- Go in peace and serve the Lord.

PARTING HYMN

Go Tell It on the Mountain

LSB 388

Refrain




Go tell it on the moun - tain, O-ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;



Go tell it on the moun - tain That Je - sus Christ is born!



1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing O'er si - lent flocks by night,
2 The shep-herds feared and trem - bled When lo, a - bove the earth
3 Down in a lone - ly man - ger The hum-ble Christ was born;



Refrain

Be - hold, through-out the heav-ens There shone a ho - ly light.
Rang out the an-gel cho - rus That hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
And God sent us sal - va - tion That bless - ed Christ-mas morn.

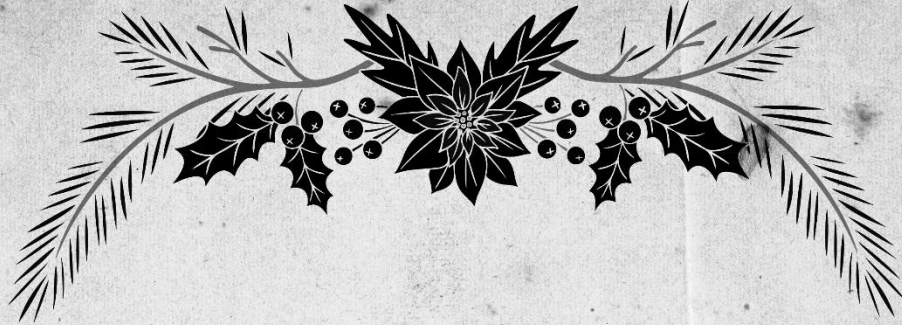
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SILENT PRAYER

POSTLUDE

Acknowledgments

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And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

LUKE 2:10-11, ESV

