

A nativity scene featuring a wooden manger filled with straw and a white baby figure, set against a dark blue background with a bright, glowing blue starburst. The scene is framed by a white border.

‘Do not be
afraid. I bring
you good news
that will cause
great joy for all
the people.’

LUKE 2:10



Welcome to worship at Spirit of Christ!

We are a member congregation of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. We gather here as the living body of Jesus Christ to be nourished and empowered by the Holy Spirit in what we call the “Means of Grace” — God’s gifts of Word and Sacrament. Through these Means of Grace, we receive the promise of the Gospel: that in the Spirit of Christ God forgives us, remakes us, and reigns in us. May the Lord bless your worship today!

Christmas Eve Worship

December 24th, 2024

Welcome

Call to Worship and Invocation

- P** Beloved in Christ, with delight we prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the angels. Our hearts and minds travel to Bethlehem to see Mary and Joseph with Jesus in a manger. We listen to the story of God’s saving acts and celebrate the birth of this Holy Child. Let us glorify God for glad tidings of great joy for all people.
We praise you, God the Father.
- C** **You love the world by sending your only-begotten Son to live with us, and to become human flesh and blood.**
- P** We praise you, God the Son.
- C** **You came into this world to give your life for us, that we might have the gift of eternal life.**
- P** We praise you, God the Holy Spirit.
- C** **Your presence among us and your dwelling in us give us the life and light of Christ.**
- P** We worship in the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** **Amen.**

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Let All Together Praise Our God

LSB 389

- 1 Let all together praise our God
Before his glorious throne;
Today he opens heav'n again
To give us his own Son,
To give us his own Son.
 - 2 He leaves his heav'nly Father's throne,
Is born an infant small,
And in a manger, poor and lone,
Lies in a humble stall,
Lies in a humble stall.
 - 3 Within an earthborn form he hides
His all-creating light;
To serve us all he humbly cloaks
The splendor of his might,
The splendor of his might.
 - 4 He undertakes a great exchange,
Puts on our human frame,
And in return gives us his realm,
His glory, and his name,
His glory, and his name.
- △7 Your grace in lowliness revealed,
Lord Jesus, we adore
And praise to God the Father yield
And Spirit evermore;
We praise you evermore.

Confession and Absolution

Isaiah 9:2

P Mighty God, Everlasting Father,

C We confess to you that we are sinful by nature, and that we sin by choice. We break the peace of your good creation and we defy the boundaries you set for your creatures. We can are only rescued by the life, death, and resurrection of your Son, the Word made flesh, Jesus. For his sake, we ask for your mercy and forgiveness. Fill us with your Holy Spirit that we may follow Jesus all our

days.

- P** In the baby Jesus, the almighty Creator God became human to bring humanity into a relationship of love with himself. Through Jesus, God makes eternal peace with you. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen

Prayer of the Day

- P** Let us pray. Father of all, on this silent, holy night you have given to all people the gift of infinite worth: your only-begotten Son, Jesus. Grant that he who was heralded by angels and welcomed by shepherds may be born in our hearts by faith, and that we may grow in your grace as we follow him with all humility; through the same Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Sit

First Reading

Genesis 2:7

⁷Then the LORD God formed a human from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the human became a living creature.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

The first candle of the advent wreath is lit.

What Child Is This

LSB 370

- 1 **What child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud,
The babe, the son of Mary!**

2 **Why lies he in such mean estate
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through,
The cross be borne for me, for you;
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
The babe, the son of Mary!**

Holy Gospel

Luke 2:1-7

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

G **Glory to you, O Lord.**

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

P This is the Gospel of our Lord.

G **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The second candle of the advent wreath is lit.

Angels We Have Heard on High

LSB 368

1 **Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply,
Echoing their joyous strains.**

Refrain

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Holy Gospel

Luke 2:8-14

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

P This is the Gospel of our Lord.

G Praise to you, O Christ.

The third candle of the advent wreath is lit.

Angels from the Realms of Glory

LSB 367

1 Angels from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o’er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation’s story,
Now proclaim Messiah’s birth.

Refrain

*Come and worship, come and worship;
Worship Christ, the newborn King.*

2 Shepherds in the field abiding,
Watching o’er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing,
Yonder shines the Infant Light. *Refrain*

4 Saints before the altar bending,
Watching long in hope and fear,
Suddenly the Lord, descending,
In his temple shall appear. *Refrain*

Epistle Reading

1 Corinthians 15:45-49

⁴⁵ So it is written: “The first man Adam became a living

creature”; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶ The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man was of the dust of the earth; the second man is of heaven. ⁴⁸ As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven. ⁴⁹ And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

The fourth candle of the advent wreath is lit.

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

LSB 393

- 1 Infant holy, Infant lowly,
For his bed a cattle stall; Oxen lowing,
Little knowing
Christ the child is Lord of all.
Swiftly winging, Angels singing,
Bells are ringing, Tidings bringing:
Christ the child is Lord of all!
Christ the child is Lord of all!**
- 2 Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping
Vigil till the morning new Saw the glory,
Heard the story, Tidings of a Gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, Free from sorrow,
Praises voicing, Greet the morrow:
Christ the child was born for you!
Christ the child was born for you!**

Stand

Holy Gospel

Luke 2:15-20

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds

said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

P This is the Gospel of our Lord.

G Praise to you, O Christ.

The Christ candle is lit.

Angels We Have Heard on High

LSB 368

- 2 **Shepherds, why this jubilee?
 Why your joyous strains prolong?
 What the gladsome tidings be
 Which inspire your heav'nly song?**

Refrain

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

- 3 **Come to Bethlehem and see
 Him whose birth the angels sing;
 Come, adore on bended knee
 Christ the Lord, the newborn King. *Refrain***

Sit

Homily

Presentation of the Offering

Offertory Prayer

P Let us pray. Lord of Christmas:

C We are mindful of the supreme gift that you gave us in the manger at Bethlehem. Humbly we offer our gifts of service and possessions in joyful thanksgiving for the love you have shown us. Accept these gifts for the sake of your gift born to us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Creedal Statement

- P** We confess together the first creedal statement of the Christian church:
- C** **Jesus is Lord!**

Prayer of the Church

- P** To us a child is born, to us a son is given; let us pray for the people he came to save.
Wonderful Counselor, you order all things with your wisdom: help the Church to reveal the mystery of your love and fill her with the Spirit of truth:
- C** **Word made flesh, be born in us again.**
- P** Mighty God, the government is on your shoulders: guide the leaders of the nations and bring in your kingdom of justice and righteousness:
- C** **Word made flesh, be born in us again.**
- P** Everlasting Father, you call us to live together in unity: protect by your mercy all your children, bless our families and renew our communities:
- C** **Word made flesh, be born in us again.**
- P** Prince of Peace, you bring reconciliation through the cross: by your healing power give to all who suffer your gift of wholeness and peace:
- C** **Word made flesh, be born in us again.**
- P** Let us commend the world which Christ entered to the mercy and protection of God.
- C** **Amen.**

Stand

Eucharistic Liturgy

- P** Lord God, Heavenly King, we give you thanks and praise on this holy eve when, in your goodness, you showed your supreme love for us by sending forth your only begotten Son, our Savior, to be born of a virgin, to save us all from sin. Before you formed the heavens and the earth, he was your Word. In him you made all things. In him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.
Yet he did not count equality with God as a thing to be

clutched but emptied himself to take the form of a servant, being born in our own likeness, even as a baby, lying in a manger.

For all these things, we give you thanks and herald his coming with the song of the angels:

C **Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace and goodwill to all people.**

P Eternal God, your Son, Jesus Christ, came to us in your name and showed your steadfast love for us. All that he did was by your will and in your name. When we saw him, we saw the Father, for he was the image of the invisible God.

C **Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

P For love of you, O Lord, and for love of us, he offered himself up to death on a cross, that we might be saved from sin and death. Yet you did not let the powers of darkness prevail over him but raised him from the dead to sit at your right hand in glory. And now you have given to us who believe in him the promise of resurrection and eternal life.

C **Hosanna in the highest!**

P On the night before he died, 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 in remembrance of me." After supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: "This is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this in remembrance of me."

C **On this holy evening, O Lord, we remember your humble birth in a manger. We proclaim your death and resurrection. We await your coming in glory.**

P Send now your Holy Spirit upon us and bless these gifts of bread and wine. As Christ is Emmanuel, God with us, so fill our communion with his eternal presence, that we might know the joy and peace of his coming, have our faith renewed, and be strengthened in our hope for his return.

C **O Word made flesh, be born in us again.**

P Accept our prayers and praises, O Father, through your Son, our Savior, who was born this night, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, we give all honor and glory from generation

to generation.

C Amen.

P As our Savior has taught us, we are bold to say:

Lord's Prayer

Distribution

We believe that as we partake of the bread and wine in Holy Communion, Jesus the Messiah is feeding us with his own true body and blood. In eating his body and drinking his blood we receive the promise that our sins are forgiven, and that we will therefore live eternally with God. We also believe that this eating and drinking is a confession of our faith. If you share our faith, and particularly if you share our understanding of Christ's Real Presence in this meal, you are welcome to receive Christ's body and blood for your benefit. If you do not confess the understanding of the Christian Faith as expressed by the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, you may still come to the altar to receive a blessing. Please fold your hands to indicate that you will not be receiving the sacrament.

Gentle Mary Laid Her Child

LSB 374

- 1 Gentle Mary laid her child
Lowly in a manger;
There he lay, the Undeiled,
To the world a stranger.
Such a babe in such a place,
Can he be the Savior?
Ask the saved of all the race
Who have found his favor.**

- 2 Angels sang about his birth,
Wise Men sought and found him;
Heaven's star shone brightly forth
Glory all around him.
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight,
Heard the angels singing;
All the plains were lit that night,
All the hills were ringing.**

3 Gentle Mary laid her child
Lowly in a manger;
He is still the undefiled
But no more a stranger.
Son of God of humble birth,
Beautiful the story;
Praise his name in all the earth;
Hail the King of glory!

Now Sing, We, Now Rejoice

LSB 386

1 Now sing we, now rejoice,
Now raise to heav'n our voice;
He from whom joy streameth
Poor in a manger lies;
Not so brightly beameth
The sun in yonder skies.
Thou my Savior art!
Thou my Savior art!

2 Come from on high to me;
I cannot rise to thee.
Cheer my wearied spirit,
O pure and holy Child;
Through thy grace and merit,
Blest Jesus, Lord most mild,
Draw me unto thee!
Draw me unto thee!

3 Now through his Son doth shine
The Father's grace divine.
Death was reigning o'er us
Through sin and vanity
Till he opened for us
A bright eternity.
May we praise him there!
May we praise him there!

4 Oh, where shall joy be found?
Where but on heav'nly ground?

Where the angels singing
With all his saints unite,
Sweetest praises bringing
In heav'nly joy and light.
Oh, that we were there!
Oh, that we were there!

On Christmas Night All Christians Sing

LSB 377

- 1 On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring,
On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring,
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth.
- 2 Then why should men on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad,
Then why should men on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad,
When from our sin he set us free,
All for to gain our liberty?
- 3 When sin departs before his grace,
Then life and health come in its place,
When sin departs before his grace,
Then life and health come in its place;
Angels and men with joy may sing,
All for to see the newborn King.
- 4 All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night,
All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night:
"Glory to God and peace to men
Now and forevermore. Amen."

Away in a Manger

LSB 365

- 1 Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,

The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

- 2 The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.**

Sharing of the Light

At this time, we light our candles to symbolize the sharing of God's light through Christ. Ushers will light the candles of those seated on the center aisle. Please pass the flame by tipping the unlit candle toward the lit candle.

Stand

Silent Night, Holy Night

LSB 363

- 1 Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.**
- 2 Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!**
- 3 Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.**

Benediction

- P** Lord, let your servants depart in peace, as you have promised. Our eyes have seen the salvation you have prepared for all people. Your Christ is a light to the world

and gives glory to your people Israel.
The light of the world lives in you.
The light of the world shines on you.
The light of the world announces God's favor to you and
gives you eternal peace.

C Amen. Glory to God in the highest, and to his Christ.

Sending

P Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God!

We extinguish our candles



SPIRIT of CHRIST
Lutheran Church

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Our Mission: To live in love for God and one another, reaching out to all people,
proclaiming and sharing the love of Christ.

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