

**Advent Prayer:** *read by Taylee Strusz*

Dear God, as our advent pilgrimage draws to completion, grant us the courage to share your love. Love for the unexpected challenge, love for the vulnerable one. Love for the presence of God. **Amen.**

**Lighting of the Advent Candles:** *“Light one candle”*

*sung by choir, solo by Kelly Rehder, narrated by Joe O’Reilly - written by Natalie Sleeth*

**Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7**

<sup>2</sup>The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. <sup>3</sup>You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder. <sup>4</sup>For as in the day of Midian’s defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. <sup>5</sup>Every warrior’s boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. <sup>6</sup>For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup>Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

**Hymn: “Jesus, Name Above All Names”**

**Vs. 1: Jesus, name above all names, beautiful Savior, glorious Lord.  
Emmanuel, God is with us, blessed Redeemer, Living Word.**

**Vs. 2: Jesus, loving Shepherd, Vine of the branches, Son of God.  
Prince of Peace, Wonderful Counselor, Lord of the universe, Light of the world.**

**Vs. 3: Jesus, way of salvation King of Kings, Lord of Lords.  
The Way, the truth, and the life Mighty Creator, My Savior and Friend.**

**Reading: Titus 2:11-14**

<sup>11</sup>For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. <sup>12</sup>It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, <sup>13</sup>while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, <sup>14</sup>who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

**Hymn: “O Little Town Of Bethlehem”**

**Vs 1: 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.**

**Vs 2: For Christ is born of Mary And gathered all above While mortals sleep, the angels keep  
Their watch of wond’ring love O morning stars together Proclaim the holy birth  
And praises sing to God the King And Peace to men on earth!**

**Vs 3: How silently, how silently The wondrous gift is giv’n! 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.**

**Vs 4: 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  
Oh, come to us, abide with us Our Lord Immanuel**

**Reading: Luke 2:1-7**

<sup>1</sup>In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. <sup>2</sup>(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>And everyone went to their own town to register. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, <sup>7</sup>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.

**Hymn of the Day & Offering: “Breath of Heaven”** *sung by Michelle Matthees - written by Amy Grant*

*Offerings will be collected during the hymn of the day. Thank you also to those who give online. If you’d like to sign up for online giving please visit <http://www.stlukegoodhue.org/online-giving.html>. Children’s coin offering will go toward ELCA Good Gifts serving communities in need around the world.*

**Offertory Response: “Away In A Manger”** *(Ushers bring offering forward)*

**Verse 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.**

**Verse 2: The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes, But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.  
I love you, Lord Jesus; Look down from the sky and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.**

**Verse 3: Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay. Close by me forever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in your tender care, and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.**

**Offering Prayer:** P: Let us pray.

**C: Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Reading: Luke 2:8-20**

<sup>8</sup>And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. <sup>9</sup>An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. <sup>11</sup>Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup>Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” <sup>15</sup>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.” <sup>16</sup>So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

*“Angels We Have Heard On High”*

**Vs. 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.**

**Vs. 2: Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be; Which inspire your heavenly song? (Refrain)**

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

**Children’s Sermon:** *Pastor Eric Hanson*

**Hymn: “Live In Me”** *sung by choir, solo by Sara Strusz - written by Debbi St. John*

**Sermon:** *Pastor Eric Hanson*

**Gospel of the Incarnation: John 1:1-14**

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup>Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. <sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. <sup>11</sup>He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. <sup>12</sup>Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— <sup>13</sup>children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God. <sup>14</sup>The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

*The Pastor lights a large candle from an altar candle, which symbolizes Christ, the light of the world of whom John’s gospel speaks. The ushers light their candles from the Pastor’s candle, then light the candle of each worshiper nearest the aisle. The lighted candle is never tilted, but is always held upright when giving light to another.*



**The Prayers:** *(call and response) read by Susie Matthees*

L: Glory to God in the highest,

**C: and peace to God's people on earth.**

L: Blessed are you, Prince of Peace. You rule the earth with truth and justice.

**C: Send your gift of peace to all nations of the world.**

L: Blessed are you, wonderful Counselor. You enlightened the heart with steadfast love.

**C: Enliven your church that it might bear good tidings of great joy to all people.**

L: Blessed are you, Emmanuel, You promise to be with us even to the end of the age.

**C: Open our eyes to see your presence in all who are hungry, lonely, or homeless.**

L: Blessed are you, Son of Mary, You share our humanity. Have mercy on the sick, the dying, and all who suffer this day. We especially pray for Keith Brown, Dolly Mensink, Judy Carpenter, Jan Benidt, Dave (Pud) Gnotke, Geri Lindholm, Bill Quiggle, Marc Bode, and April Colby.

**C: Have mercy on us and bring your light to darkened places.**

L: Blessed are you, Son of God, You dwell among us as the Word made flesh.

**C: Reveal yourself to us in word and sacrament that we may bear your light to all the world.**

**Congregation & Choir Hymn:** *"Silent Night, Holy Night" and "Peace, Peace" flute played by Kayla Ryan*

**Choir:** Peace, peace, peace on earth, and good will to all, This is a time for joy, this is a time for love, Now let us all sing together of peace, peace, peace on earth.

**Congregation & Choir:** Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright. Round yon virgin mother & child. Holy Infant, so tender & mild, Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

**Congregation "Silent Night" and Choir sings "Peace, Peace" (together):**

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.

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.

**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.

**Blessing:** *The Pastor blesses the congregation.*

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ Child. Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever. Amen.

*The candles are extinguished.*

**Departure Hymn:** *"Joy to the World" trumpet played by Garrett Rehder*

**Vs. 1:** Joy to the world the Lord has come! Let earth receive its King; Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n, and heav'n, and nature sing.

**Vs. 2:** Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ, While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

**Vs. 3:** No more let sin and sorrow grow nor thorns infest the ground; He comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.

**Vs. 4:** He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove. The glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.

**Sending:** P: Go in peace, shine your light! C: Thanks be to God!

*Join us tomorrow for Christmas worship at 9:30am!*



**St. Luke Lutheran Church • Pastor Eric Hanson**  
**4:30PM • December 24, 2023 • Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**

**Prelude Solos:**

*"Little Baby Jesus" sung by Issie Mitchell - written by Debbi St. John*

*"Only A Baby Came" sung by choir - written by Natalie Sleeth*

*"In A Far Off Place" sung by choir - written by Mary Bringle*

*"A Tiny Babe" sung by Kris Pearson - written by Debbi St. John*

*"O Holy Night" sung by Ron Horsman, Michelle Matthees, Katie Schafer - written by Adolphe Adam*

*"O Come All Ye Faithful" sung by Joe O'Reilly*

**Welcome & Announcements**

**Solo:** *"One Small Child" sung by Aleaha Hanson - written by David Meece*

**Opening Hymn:** *"O Come, O Come Emmanuel" #257*

**Refrain:** Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

**Vs 7:** O come, O King of nations, come, O Cornerstone that binds in one: refresh the hearts that long for you; restore the broken, make us new. [Refrain]

**Vs 8:** O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. [Refrain]

**Christmas Dialog & Greeting:**

P: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

**C: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

P: Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness, on them light has shined.

**C: We have beheld Christ's glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.**

P: For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

**C: In Him was life, and the life was the light of all people.**

P: May the grace and truth of Christ be with you.

**C: And also with you. Amen.**

**Advent Reflection:** *read by Taylee Strusz*

We have lit three candles—for hope, for peace, and for joy. Today we light the fourth candle—the candle of love. With this flame we signify the love of God that surrounds and fills us at all times, but that we recognize in a special way in the Christmas story. There is no greater power than love. It is stronger than rulers and empires, stronger than grief or despair, stronger even than death. We love because God loves us.

