

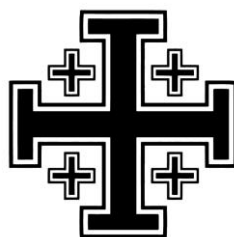


CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Eve of the Nativity of Our Lord

+ December 24, 2024 +

**SOLEMN SERVICE OF
LESSONS & CAROLS**
for the
EVE OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD



We welcome our members and guests to Christ Lutheran Church this night and pray God's richest blessings upon you as we keep vigil for the coming of the Christ in Word and in Song.

WELCOME:

"In this night of reconciliation let no man be angry or gloomy! In this night that stills all, none that threatens or disturbs! This night belongs to the sweet One; bitter or harsh be in it none! In this night that is the meek One's, high or haughty be in it none! In this day of pardoning let us not exact trespasses! In this day of gladnesses let us not spread sadnesses! In this day so sweet, let us not be harsh! In this day of peaceful rest, let us not be wrathful in it! In this day when God came to sinners, let not the righteous be in his mind uplifted over sinner! In this day in which there came the Lord of all unto the servants, let masters too condescend to their servants lovingly! In this day in which the Rich became poor for our sakes, let the rich man make the poor man share with him at his table. On this day to us came forth the Gift, although we asked it not! Let us therefore bestow alms on them that cry and beg of us. This is the day that opened for us a gate on high to our prayers. Let us open also gates to supplicants that have transgressed, and of us have asked forgiveness. Today the Lord of nature was against His nature changed; let it not to us be overcome with ire to make our wills evil. Fixed in nature is the body; great or less it cannot become: but the will has such dominion, it can grow to any measure. Today Godhead sealed itself upon Manhood, that so with the Godhead's stamp Manhood might be adorned."

—St. Ephraim the Syrian, *First Hymn on the Nativity*

*Guests are also invited to sign the guest register found in the Narthex.
We are so glad to have you worshipping with us this holy day!*

ORDER OF SERVICE

The congregation enters in silence for meditation and prayer

PRESERVICE MUSIC

Please stand as the bell is rung

CHRISTMAS PROCLAMATION

At the name of Jesus Christ, the sign of the cross may be made with a bowed head.

P The twenty-fifth day of December, when ages beyond number had run their course from the creation of the world, when God in the beginning created heaven and the earth, and formed man in his own likeness, when century upon century had passed since the Almighty set his bow in the clouds after the Great Flood, as a sign of covenant and peace; in the twenty-first century since Abraham, our father in faith, came out of the Ur of the Chaldees; in the thirteenth century since the People of Israel were led by Moses in the Exodus from Egypt; around the thousandth year since David was anointed King; in the sixty-fifth week of the prophecy of Daniel; in the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad, in the year seven hundred and fifty-two since the foundation of the City of Rome, in the forty-second year of the reign of Caesar Octavian Augustus, the whole world being at peace, ✠ JESUS CHRIST ✠, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father, desiring to consecrate the world by His most loving presence, was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and when nine months had passed since His conception, was born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem of Judah, and was made Man: The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh.

INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

COLLECT

P O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our Judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Please be seated

EXHORTATION

Please stand

THE BIDDING PRAYER

This ancient form of prayer, hailing from the earliest liturgies of the Church, was traditionally offered on high holy days of the church year. An assistant would exhort the congregation to pray for a specific need, they would offer their silent prayers, and the pastor would gather their prayers together in a collect. We follow that tripartite form this holy night.

A Brethren, let us pray for the whole Christian Church, that our Lord God would vouchsafe to defend it against all the assaults and temptations of the Adversary and to keep it perpetually upon the true foundation, Jesus Christ.

Silence for private prayer

P Almighty and everlasting God, who hast revealed Thy glory to all nations in Jesus Christ and the Word of His truth, keep, we beseech Thee, in safety the works of Thy mercy that so Thy Church, spread throughout all nations, may serve Thee in true faith and persevere in the confession of Thy name; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

A Let us pray for the Ministers of the Word, for all Estates of men in the Church, and for all the people of God.

Silence for private prayer

P Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified, receive the supplications and prayers which we offer before Thee for all Estates of men in Thy holy Church, that every member of the same, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve Thee; through Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

A Let us pray for our Catechumens, that our Lord God would open their hearts and the door of His mercy, that having received the remission of all their sins by the washing of regeneration, they may be mindful of their baptismal covenant and evermore be found in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Silence for private prayer

P Almighty and everlasting God, who dost always multiply Thy Church and with Thy light and grace dost strengthen the hearts of those whom Thou hast regenerated, confirming unto them Thy covenant and faithfulness, grant unto our Catechumens increase both of faith and knowledge that they may rejoice in their baptism and really and heartily renew their covenant with Thee.

C Amen.

A Let us pray for All in Authority, and especially for the Government of the United States, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

Silence for private prayer

P O merciful Father in heaven, who holdest in Thy hand all the might of man and who hast ordained the powers that be for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of them that do well, and of whom is all rule and authority in the kingdoms of the world, we humbly beseech Thee, graciously regard Thy servants, the President of the United States, the Governor of this State, our judges and magistrates, and all the rulers of the earth, that all who receive the sword as Thy ministers may bear it according to Thy commandment; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

A Let us pray our Lord God Almighty that He would deliver the world from all error, take away disease, ward off famine, set free all those who are in chains and bondage, grant a safe return to the wayfarers, health to the sick, and to our mariners a harbor of security.

Silence for private prayer

P Almighty and everlasting God, the Consolation of the sorrowful and the Strength of the weak, may the prayers of them that in any tribulation or distress cry unto Thee graciously come before Thee, so that in all their necessities they may make and receive Thy manifold help and comfort; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

A Let us pray for peace, that we may come to the knowledge of God's holy Word and walk before Him as becometh Christians.

Silence for private prayer

P Almighty and everlasting God, King of Glory, and Lord of heaven and earth, by whose Spirit all things are governed, by whose providence all things are ordered, who art the God of peace and the Author of all concord, grant us, we beseech Thee, Thy heavenly peace and concord that we may serve Thee in true fear, to the praise and glory of Thy name; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

A Let us pray for our enemies, that God would remember them in mercy and graciously vouchsafe unto them such things as are both needful for them and profitable unto their salvation.

Silence for private prayer

P O almighty, everlasting God, who through Thine only Son, our blessed Lord, hast commanded us to love our enemies, to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for them that persecute us, we earnestly beseech Thee that by Thy gracious visitation all our enemies may be led to true repentance and may have the same love and be of one accord and of one mind and heart with us and with Thy whole Christian Church; through Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

A Let us pray for the fruits of the earth, that God would send down His blessing upon them and graciously dispose our hearts to enjoy them in submission to His holy will.

Silence for private prayer

P O Lord, Father Almighty, who by Thy Word hast created, and dost bless and uphold, all things, we pray Thee so to reveal unto us Thy Word, our Lord Jesus Christ, that, He dwelling in our hearts, we may by Thy grace be made meet to receive Thy blessing on all the fruits of the earth and whatsoever pertains to our bodily need; through Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

A Finally, let us pray for all those things for which our Lord would have us ask, saying:

C **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.



LESSONS & CAROLS

OPENING HYMN

Once in Royal David's City
Cantor sings first stanza

#376

Please be seated

LESSON

Genesis 3:8-19

CAROL

Jesus Christ, the Apple Tree

Arr. Carl Schalk

*The tree of life my soul hath seen,
Laden with fruit and always green:
The trees of nature fruitless be
Compared to Christ the apple tree.*

*His beauty doth all things excel;
By faith I know, but ne'er can tell
The glory which I now can see
In Jesus Christ the apple tree.*

*For happiness I long have sought,
And pleasure dearly I have bought:
I missed of all; but now I see
'Tis found in Christ the apple tree.*

*I'm weary with my former toil,
Here I will sit and rest awhile:
Under the shadow I will be,
Of Jesus Christ the apple tree.*

*This fruit doth make my soul to thrive,
It keeps my dying faith alive;
Which makes my soul in haste to be
With Jesus Christ the apple tree.*

LESSON

Genesis 22:15-18

CAROL

Dona Nobis Pacem

Traditional

*Dona nobis pacem, pacem.
"Give us peace."*

(This phrase is taken from the *Agnus Dei* of the Divine Service, the canticle sung directly before receiving Holy Communion. Singing this, we recall that the Lord has fulfilled the promise of Genesis 22, for He has given *His Son*; through His sacrifice, Christ has possessed the gates of the enemy, and gives us His peace.)

LESSON		<i>Isaiah 9:2, 6-7</i>
CAROL	O Little Town of Bethlehem <i>The congregation is invited to sing in parts, a capella, on stanza 3</i>	#361
LESSON		<i>Isaiah 11:1-4, 6-9</i>
CAROL	Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming <i>Choir sings stanza 2</i> <i>The congregation is invited to sing in parts, a capella, on stanza 3</i>	#359
LESSON		<i>Luke 1:26-35, 38</i>
CAROL	The Angel Gabriel	#356
LESSON		<i>Luke 2:1-7</i>
CAROL	Away in a Manger	#364
LESSON		<i>Luke 2:8-16</i>
CAROL	Angels We Have Heard on High	#368
LESSON		<i>Matthew 2:1-12</i>
CAROL	What Child Is This	#370
LESSON		<i>John 1:1-14</i>

Please stand for the last stanza

**1 Of the Father's love begotten
Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega,
He the source, the ending He,
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see
Evermore and evermore.**

Men:

**2 At His Word the worlds were framéd;
He commanded; it was done:
Heaven and earth and depths of ocean
In their threefold order one;
All that grows beneath the shining
Of the moon and burning sun,
Evermore and evermore!**

Women:

**3 He is found in human fashion,
Death and sorrow here to know,
That the race of Adam's children
Doomed by law to endless woe,
May not henceforth die and perish
In the dreadful gulf below,
Evermore and evermore.**

Choir:

**4 Oh, that birth forever blessed,
When the virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving,
Bare the Savior of our race;
And the babe, the world's Redeemer,
First revealed His sacred face
Evermore and evermore.**

**5 O ye heights of heav'n, adore Him;
Angel hosts, His praises sing.
Pow'rs, dominions, bow before Him
And extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent,
Ev'ry voice in concert ring
Evermore and evermore.**

**6 This is He whom seers in old time
Chanted of with one accord,
Whom the voices of the prophets
Promised in their faithful word.
Now He shines, the long-expected;
Let creation praise its Lord
Evermore and evermore.**

**Δ7 Christ, to Thee, with God the Father,
And, O Holy Ghost, to Thee
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving
And unending praises be,
Honor, glory, and dominion,
And eternal victory
Evermore and evermore. Amen.**

COLLECT

P O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that as we have known the mysteries of that Light on earth we may also come to the fullness of His joys in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



BENEDICAMUS



L Let us bless the Lord.



C Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION



P The grace of our Lord † Je - sus Christ and the love of God



and the communion of the Holy Spir - it be with you all.



C A - men.



LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

The lighting of candles signifies the vigil of the Church at the birth of our Lord, who is the Light of the world.

As you receive the light, please tilt your candle. As you give the light, please hold your candle upright, to avoid spilling wax.

HYMN

Silent Night

#363

Solo:

*Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!
Alles schläft, einsam wacht
Nur das traute, hochheilige Paar.
Holder Knabe im lickenen Haar,
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh,
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh.*

1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright Round yon
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep-herds quake at the sight; Glo - ries
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light Ra - dant

vir - gin moth-er and child. Ho - ly In-fant, so ten-der and mild,
stream from heav-en a - far, Heav'n-ly hosts sing, Al - le - lu - ia!
beams from Thy ho - ly face With the dawn of re-deem - ing grace,

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

Serving Tonight:

Officiant: Rev. George Fields
Acolyte: Miles Agent
Interpreter: Denee Smith
Cantors: Nathan Hansford
Eric Held

Lector: Keith Martin
Organ: Sr. Sara Fields
Guitar: Rush Agent
Flute: Christa Kettler

Acknowledgments

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