

*Welcome to*  
**Luther Memorial Church**  
*of the Erie Lutheran Parish*



**25 DECEMBER 2024**  
**The Nativity of Our Lord, Christmas Day**  
**10:30 am**

## LUTHER MEMORIAL CHURCH

### LUTHER MEMORIAL ACADEMY

225 West Tenth Street • Erie, PA 16501 • 814-454-0106

REV. JAY C. MITCHELL, *Pastor*

BRYAN TIMM, F.A.I.O.

*Cantor*

RON KING

*Pastoral Asst. ~ Holy Trinity*

THE REV. KAREN LUNDWALL, THE REV. BRIAN MORAN

THE REV. KAREN PARSH, THE REV. GAIL ZACKRISON

*Pastors in Residence*

MICHELLE THOM

*Academy Administrator*

BETH KELLER

SARAH PRYLINSKI

*Youth and Family Ministry*

JAN MACINNES

*Care Ministry*

## WELCOME!

THIS IS THE DAY THE LORD HAS MADE!

TOGETHER WE WILL REJOICE AND BE GLAD IN IT!

+ Everything you need to follow along in worship is included in this bulletin. You are invited to stand and sit—as you are able—as indicated herein.

+ If you have a need to **children's** bulletins, coloring pages, crayons, or other supplies they are available on the Welcome Table. You can proceed out the door next to the pulpit and find the Welcome Table near the door.

- Children are always welcome in worship and together we make a joyful noise! However, if you have need, a staffed nursery is available down the stairs across from the Welcome Table.

+ An all-gender and accessible **restroom** is available out the door next to the pulpit, up the ramp, and to the right. Follow signs for “Handicap Bathroom.” Other restrooms are available down the hallway next to Faith Chapel across from the parlor.

+ You do not need to turn off or disconnect here! However, please be mindful of those worshipping around you and turn your phones and devices to silent. Feel free to take pictures of our beautiful sanctuary or post about the sermon. However, we ask that you ask permission before taking any people pictures.

+ We welcome all to worship and to the Table trusting that it is the Holy Spirit that draws us all together. If you would like information about joining the congregation or receiving the Sacraments of the Church, be sure to talk to Pastor Jay after worship (you can usually find him next to the pulpit after the service).

**25 DECEMBER 2024**

**THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD, CHRISTMAS DAY**

**Holy Communion • 10:30**

***GATHERING – “The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.”***

**PRELUDE – “Of the Father’s Love Begotten”**

W. Held

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

☞ Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting.

☞ Amen.

**P** Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

**P** God-with-us,

**C** we confess that we have turned away  
those seeking shelter,  
claiming there is no room when we have plenty.  
We have made power and wealth our idols,  
while you show us true glory: a baby in a manger.  
We have overlooked the shepherds,  
expecting good news in prettier packaging.  
Too often, we have valued violence  
instead of your peace.  
Turn us from our ways to your ways.  
Grant us the grace to begin again.  
Free us from all that keeps us bound,  
and forgive our sin,  
through Jesus Christ, who gives himself for us.  
Amen.

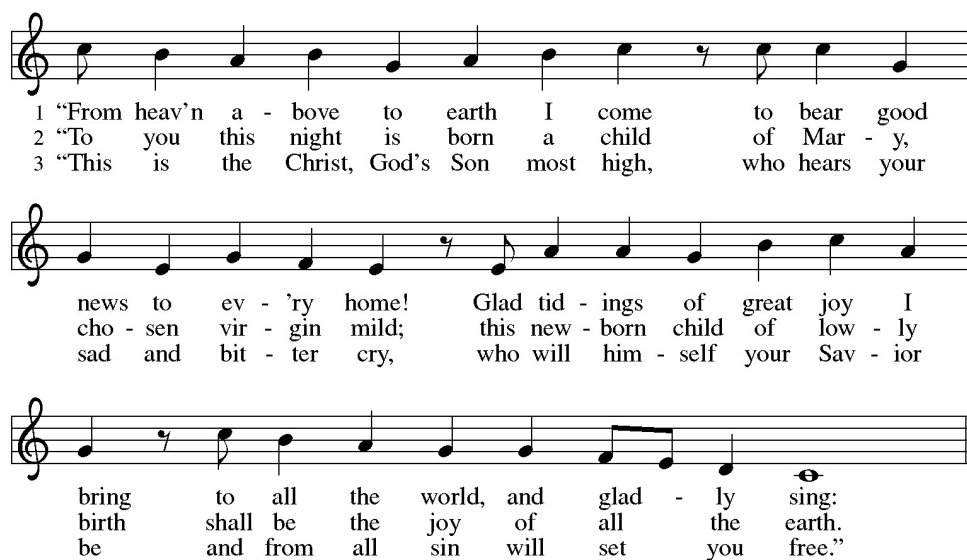
**P** Hear the good news and rejoice! You are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, ✠ forgiven in Christ, and freed to respond in joy.

**C** Amen.

## GATHERING HYMN

### From Heaven Above

ELW 268



1 "From heav'n a - bove to earth I come to bear good  
2 "To you this night is born a child of Mar - y,  
3 "This is the Christ, God's Son most high, who hears your  
news to ev - 'ry home! Glad tid - ings of great joy I  
cho - sen vir - gin mild; this new - born child of low - ly  
sad and bit - ter cry, who will him - self your Sav - ior  
bring to all the world, and glad - ly sing:  
birth shall be the joy of all the earth.  
be and from all sin will set you free."

4 "The blessing that the Father planned  
the Son holds in his infant hand,  
that in his kingdom, bright and fair,  
you may with us his glory share."

5 "These are the signs that you will see  
to let you know that it is he:  
in manger-bed, in swaddling clothes  
the child who all the earth upholds."

## GREETING

**P** Glory to God in the highest!

**C** And peace to God's people on earth!

**P** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C** And also with you.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

**P** Let us pray.

Almighty God, you gave us your only Son to take on our human nature and to illumine the world with your light. By your grace adopt us as your children and enlighten us with your Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

*Please be seated.*

**WORD** – “God speaks to us in Scripture reading, preaching and song.”

**SPECIAL MUSIC** – “Who Would Send A Baby”

M. Beal

*Kate Marin, Solo*

## FIRST READING: Wisdom of Solomon 9:1-6, 9-11

<sup>1</sup>“O God of my ancestors and Author of mercy, who have made all things by your word, <sup>2</sup>and by your wisdom have formed humankind to govern the creatures you have made, <sup>3</sup>and oversee the world in holiness and righteousness, and render judgment as the soul of righteousness: <sup>4</sup>Give me the wisdom that sits by your throne, and do not reject me from among your children. <sup>5</sup>For I am your slave, the child of your slave girl, one who is weak and short-lived, with little understanding of judgment and laws; <sup>6</sup>for even one who is perfect among human beings will be regarded as nothing without the wisdom that comes from you. <sup>9</sup>With you is Wisdom, she who knows your works and was present when you made the world; she knows what is pleasing in your sight and what is right according to your commandments. <sup>10</sup>Send her forth from the holy heavens, and from your throne of glory send her, that she may labor with me, and that I may learn what is pleasing to you. <sup>11</sup>For she knows and understands all things, and she will guide me wisely in my actions and guard me with her glory.”

**L** The Word is made flesh.

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Please stand as you are able to greet the Gospel.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

### From Heaven Above

ELW 268

6 Now let us all with joy - ful cheer go with the  
7 Look, look, dear friends, look o - ver there! What lies with -

shep - herds and draw near to see this won - drous gift of  
in that man - ger bare? Who is that love - ly lit - tle

God, the bless - ed child to us be - stowed.  
one? The ba - by Je - sus, God's dear Son.



## GOSPEL: John 1:1-14

**P** The Holy Gospel according to John.

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

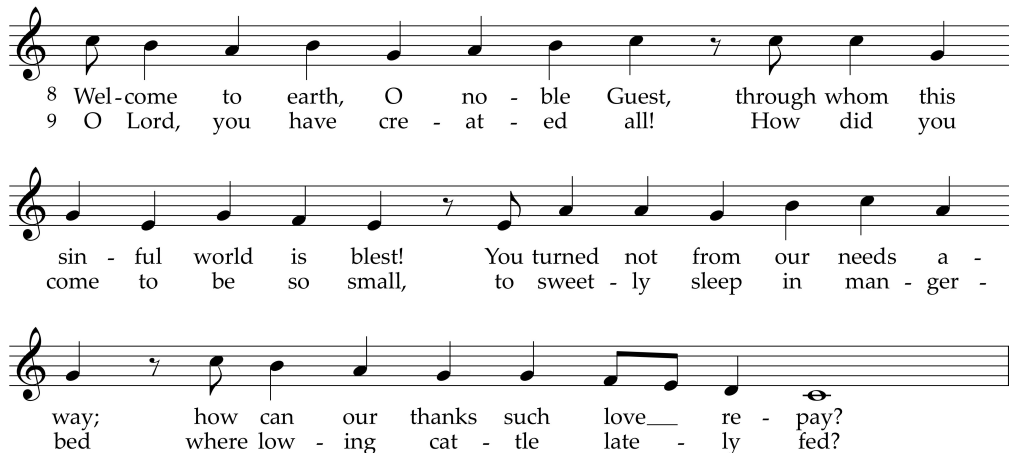
<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>The Word was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through the Word, without whom not one thing came into being. What has come into being in the Word was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the bleakness, and the bleakness did not overtake 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 to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>John himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup>The light was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of a man, but of God. <sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only child, full of grace and truth.

**P** The Gospel of the Lord. **G** Praise to you, O Christ.

## GRADUAL

ELW 268

### From Heaven Above



8 Wel-come to earth, O no - ble Guest, through whom this  
9 O Lord, you have cre - at - ed all! How did you  
sin - ful world is blest! You turned not from our needs a -  
come to be so small, to sweet - ly sleep in man - ger -  
way; how can our thanks such love re - pay?  
bed where low - ing cat - tle late - ly fed?

*Please be seated.*

## HOMILY

Pastor Jay

*Please stand as you are able to proclaim the Word of God in song.*

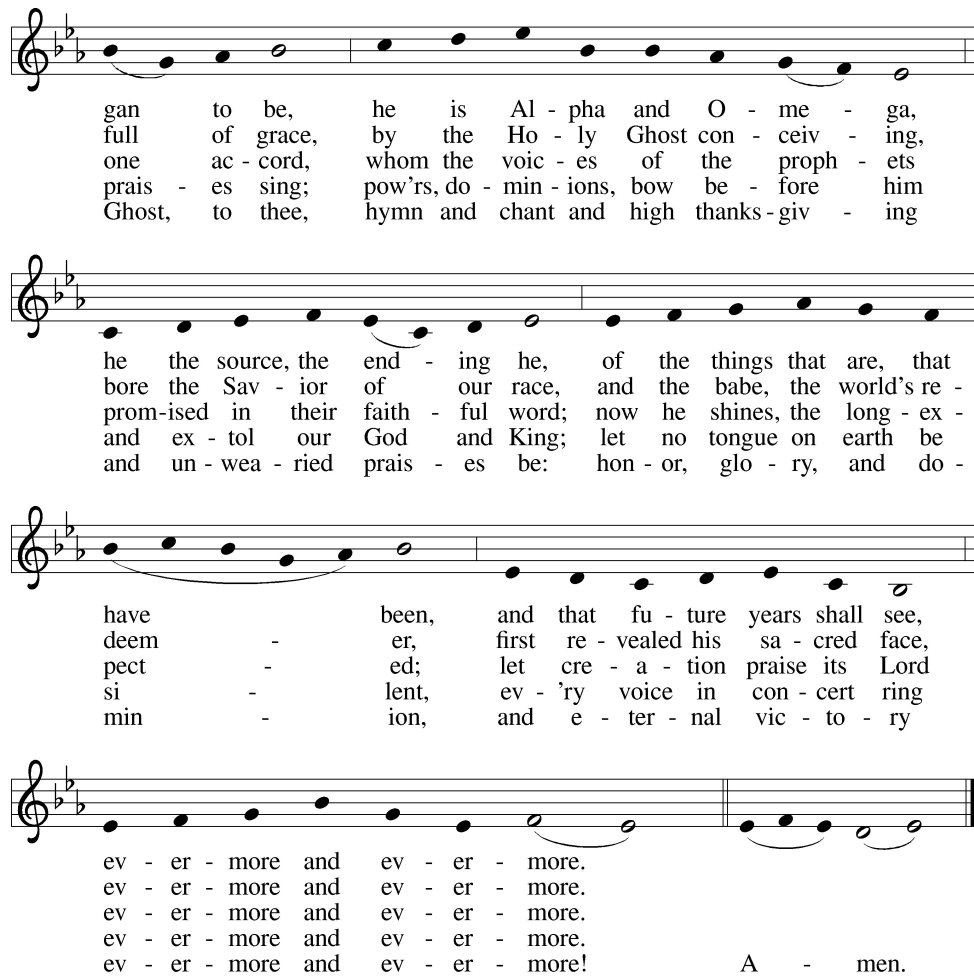
## HYMN OF THE DAY

ELW 295

### Of the Father's Love Begotten



1 Of the Fa - ther's love be - got - ten ere the worlds be -  
2 Oh, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed, when the vir - gin,  
3 This is he whom seers in old time chant - ed of with  
4 Let the heights of heav'n a - dore him; an - gel hosts, his  
5 Christ, to thee, with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho - ly



gan to be, he is Al - pha and O - me - ga,  
full of grace, by the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing,  
one ac - cord, whom the voic - es of the proph - ets  
prais - es sing; pow'rs, do - min - ions, bow be - fore him  
Ghost, to thee, hymn and chant and high thanks - giv - ing

he the source, the end - ing he, of the things that are, that  
bore the Sav - ior of our race, and the babe, the world's re -  
prom - ised in their faith - ful word; now he shines, the long - ex -  
and ex - tol our God and King; let no tongue on earth be  
and un - wea - ried prais - es be: hon - or, glo - ry, and do -

have been, and that fu - ture years shall see,  
deem - er, first re - vealed his sa - cred face,  
pect - ed; let cre - a - tion praise its Lord  
si - lent, ev - 'ry voice in con - cert ring  
min - ion, and e - ter - nal vic - to - ry

ev - er - more and ev - er - more.  
ev - er - more and ev - er - more.  
ev - er - more and ev - er - more.  
ev - er - more and ev - er - more.  
ev - er - more and ev - er - more! A - men.

Text: Marcus Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, 348–413; tr. composite  
Music: DIVINUM MYSTERIUM, plainsong mode V, 13th cent.

## NICENE CREED

☐ Siblings in Christ, as we ponder the infinite God entering our finite world,  
let us confess the faith of the Church:

☑ **We believe in one God,**  
**the Father, the Almighty,**  
**maker of heaven and earth,**  
**of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,**  
**the only Son of God,**  
**eternally begotten of the Father,**  
**God from God, Light from Light,**  
**true God from true God,**  
**begotten, not made,**  
**of one Being with the Father;**  
**through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation**  
**he came down from heaven,**  
**was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary**  
**and became truly human.**  
**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;**  
**he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## **THE PRAYERS**

*You may kneel, sit, or stand as is your custom.*

- P** With shepherds and angels, we lift our voices to God for the Church, those in need, and all of God's good creation:  
*A brief silence.*
- P** Word Incarnate, your song has been sung from everlasting. Inspire your Church to continue the song so that we may sing your praise, tell of your glory, and ponder your dwelling among us. Make us faithful witnesses of your presence among us: O Word of God Made Flesh:  
**C make your dwelling here.**
- P** Word of Justice, we pray for all who rule, govern or lead: give them hearts full of compassion, justice, and peace. Grant lasting peace to those places where bombs sound a lullaby; particularly Palestine and Israel, Ukraine and Russia. Make us your peacemakers in our time: O Word of God Made Flesh:  
**C make your dwelling here.**
- P** Word of Creation, we pray for your earth. Accompany us in darker nights and colder days, comfort all who seek shelter from the weather, and empower those who work for clean water and abundant food for all. Make us grateful and generous stewards of your whole earth: O Word of God Made Flesh:  
**C make your dwelling here.**
- P** Word of Healing, we pray for the sick and suffering. Grant your wholeness to those we name now: \_\_\_\_\_. Uphold those who care for others, grant wisdom and understanding to those who share your gifts of science and medicine, and bless those who will die this day. Make us signs of your wholeness and grace: O Word of God Made Flesh:  
**C make your dwelling here.**
- P** Word of Hope, we pray for the lonely, the forgotten, and those who have no one to pray for them. Shine your holy light into the lives of those who do not find joy in this season and those who cannot look with hope to your coming. Encourage those who wonder, watch, and wait. Make us signs of your love: O Word of God Made Flesh:  
**C make your dwelling here.**
- P** Holy Word of Promise, we give you thanks for all who have gone before us in lives of faith and holy living. Sustain us with your promises until we come with Mary, Joseph, Shepherds, and Angels to worship the Prince of Peace. Make us one in the promises of baptism: O Word of God Made Flesh:  
**C make your dwelling here.**
- P** Into your wounded hands of love, Eternal God, we place all our prayers trusting in the mercy and grace of your Word made Flesh this day, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
- C Amen.**

## THE PEACE

- ☐ The peace of the Christ Child be with you always.  
☑ And also with you.

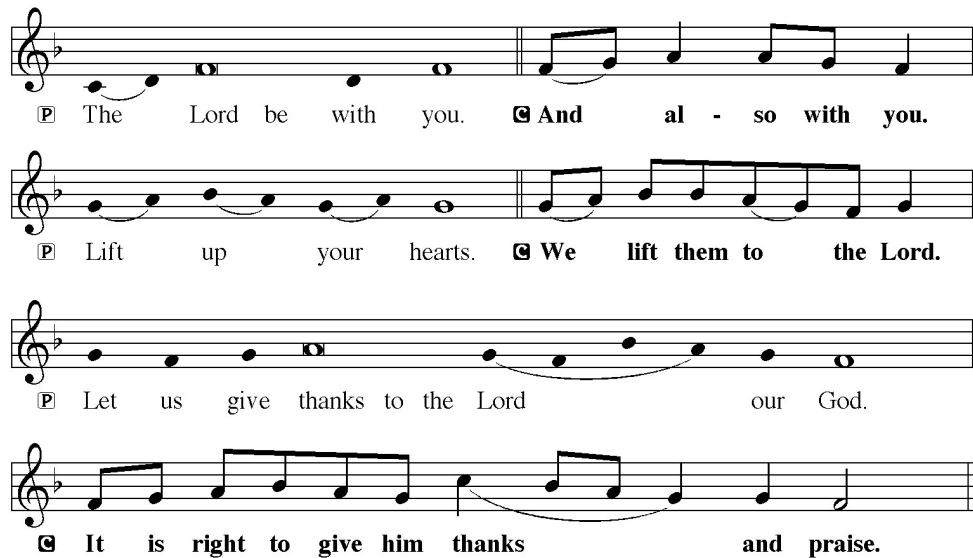
*As you share the peace with one another, you are invited to gather around the altar.  
Bring your bulletin with you.*

**MEAL – “God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.”**

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

- ☐ God of heaven and earth, from the beginning, you have called forth life, in which you take delight. The trees, the fields, and the seas sing for joy. Bless now these gifts, received from your bounty, that we may join the chorus of creation to tell of your salvation from day to day.  
☑ Amen.

## GREAT THANKSGIVING DIALOG



☐ The Lord be with you. ☑ And al - so with you.

☐ Lift up your hearts. ☑ We lift them to the Lord.

☐ Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

☑ It is right to give him thanks and praise.

## PROPER PREFACE

- ☐ It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## SANCTUS



Sing ho-ly, ho-ly, ho - ly Lord God of pow'r and might,—

Heav'n and earth your glo - ry show, Ho-san-na in the high - est,

Bless-ed is the one who comes in the name\_ of the Lord. Ho -



## EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

**P** We sing a new song to you, O God of our salvation, for you have done marvelous things. Since the beginning of time, you have spoken your Word, and your light shines in our darkness. Glory to you, O God:

**C** **Glory in the highest!**

**P** The seas are thundering with praise, the rivers are clapping their hands. The hills ring out with gladness, and the trees are shouting their joy. Glory to you, O God:

**C** **Glory in the highest!**

**P** Your Son rules in truth and justice, victorious and merciful is he! We praise your majesty lying in a manger, Jesus Christ, born of Mary and lauded by angels. Glory to you, O God:

**C** **Glory in the highest!**

*On the night before he died, 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.*

**P** Send your Spirit on us and on this meal of wonder. In this bread, give us the body of Christ. With this cup, reveal the grace of your risen Son. Make known to the whole earth your steadfast love. Glory to you, O God:

**C** **Glory in the highest!**

**P** In these dark days, bring the dawn of your righteousness to birth. Hold the living and the dead in your hands. In your good time, awaken the sleeping animals, and revive the dormant plants with your life-giving Spirit. Glory to you, O God:

**C** **Glory in the highest!**

**P** With trumpets and horns and harps, with the faithful on earth and the hosts of heaven, we sing to your splendor, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God Most High, Light of the earth, and Judge of the world, today and forever.

**C** **Amen.**



## LORD'S PRAYER

☐ Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

☑ **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

☐ Here is Jesus, the Prince of Peace. Come, taste and see!

☑ **Amen.**

☐ Those communing at home: take and eat, the body and blood of Christ given and shed for you.

*The congregation is seated.*

## THE COMMUNION

*This is Christ's Table and all Christians are welcome to the feast!*

*We believe that this is the Body and Blood of Christ for you.*

*Please come forward from both sides by the center aisle.*

*Take a small empty cup from the trays at the head of the center aisle.*

*White grape juice is in pre-filled cups for those who cannot have alcoholized wine.*

*Gluten-free wafers are available for those who need them; please let the pastor know.*

*Receive the bread in your open palm, then hold your cup steady for the assisting minister to fill.*

*As you return by the side aisles, please place your empty cup in the silver bowl.*

*All are invited to the meal. If you would like to participate but not to receive the bread and wine,  
please cross your arms in front of you for a blessing from the pastor.*

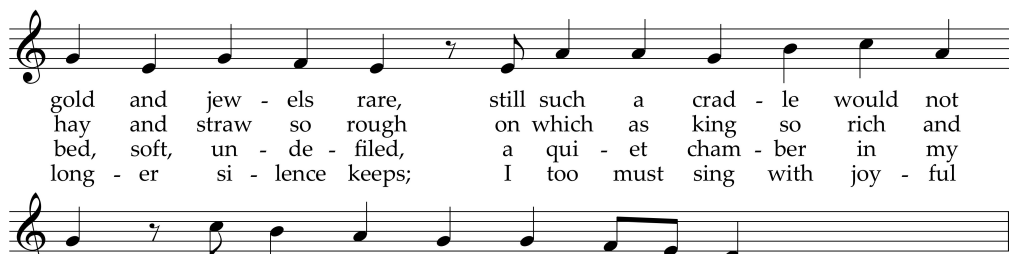
## HYMNS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION

ELW 268

### From Heaven Above



10 Were earth a thou - sand times as fair and set with  
11 For vel - vets soft and silk - en stuff you have but  
12 Ah, dear - est Je - sus, ho - ly child, pre - pare a  
13 My heart for ve - ry joy now leaps; my voice no

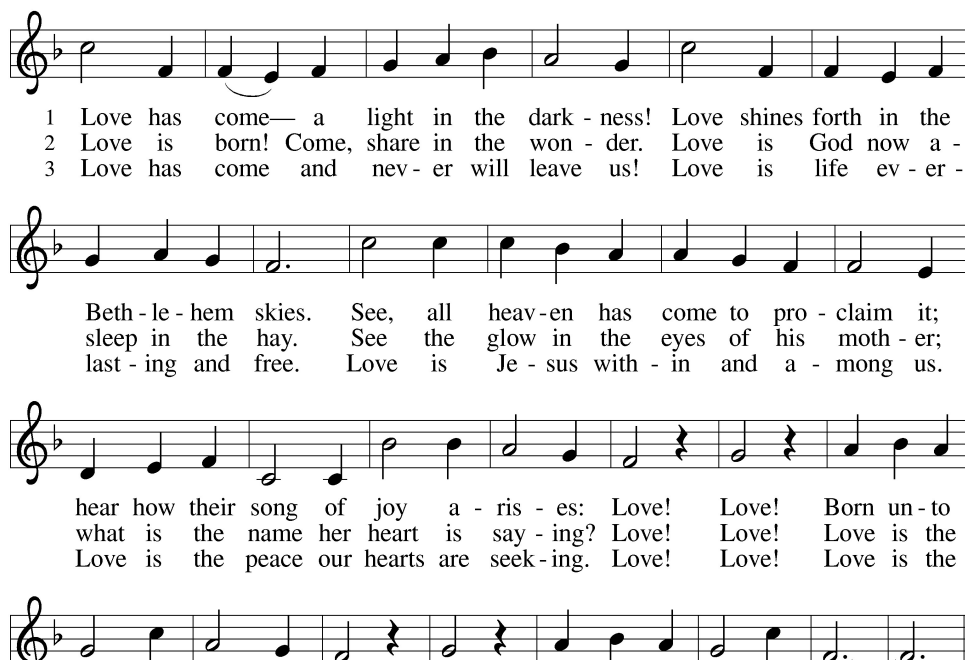


gold and jew - els rare, still such a crad - le would not  
 hay and straw so rough on which as king so rich and  
 bed, soft, un - de - filed, a qui - et cham - ber in my  
 long - er si - lence keeps; I too must sing with joy - ful

do to rock a prince so great as you.  
 great to be en - throned in hum - ble state.  
 heart, that you and I may nev - er part.  
 tongue the sweet - est an - cient cra - dle - song;

ELW 292

## Love Has Come



1 Love has come— a light in the dark - ness! Love shines forth in the  
 2 Love is born! Come, share in the won - der. Love is God now a -  
 3 Love has come and nev - er will leave us! Love is life ev - er -

Beth - le - hem skies. See, all heav - en has come to pro - claim it;  
 sleep in the hay. See the glow in the eyes of his moth - er;  
 last - ing and free. Love is Je - sus with - in and a - mong us.

hear how their song of joy a - ris - es: Love! Love! Born un - to  
 what is the name her heart is say - ing? Love! Love! Love is the  
 Love is the peace our hearts are seek - ing. Love! Love! Love is the

you, a Sav - ior! Love! Love! Glo - ry to God on high.  
 name she whis - pers; Love! Love! Je - sus, Im - man - u - el.  
 gift of Christ - mas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Text: Ken Bible, b. 1950  
 Music: UN FLAMBEAU, F. Seguin, *Recueil de Noël's composés en langue provençale*, 1856  
 Text © 1996 Integrity's Hosanna! Music (ASCAP), c/o Integrity Media, Inc., 1000 Cody Road, Mobile, AL 36695.

*Please stand as you are able.*

## TABLE BLESSING

- ☐ The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.  
 ☑ Amen.

## From Heaven Above

14 "Glo - ry to God in high - est heav'n, who un - to  
us the Son has giv'n." With an - gels sing in pi - ous  
mirth a glad new year to all the earth.

## POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

**P** Merciful God, we thank you for Jesus, who is our heavenly food. Strengthened by this goodness, send us forth to announce your peace, comfort the afflicted, and share the good news of great joy.

**C** Amen.

*SENDING – “God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.”*

## BLESSING

**P** ...and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit be upon you now and always.

**C** Amen.

## SENDING HYMN

## Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

1 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;  
2 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;  
3 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;

give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;  
now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!  
now ye need not fear the grave; Je - sus Christ was born to save!

ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man-ger now.  
 He has o - pened heav-en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.  
 Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.

Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!  
 Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!  
 Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Text: Medieval Latin carol; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866  
 Music: IN DULCI JUBILO, German carol, 14th cent.; arr. Robert L. Pearsall, 1795–1856

## DISMISSAL INTO THE WORLD FOR SERVICE

- P** Glory to God in the highest!
- C** And peace to God's people on earth!
- P** Go in peace. Tell the Good News!
- C** Thanks be to God.

## POSTLUDE – “Une flambeau, Jeanette, Isabella!”

C. Uehlein

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## Today's Events

**Altar flowers** are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of our fathers, The Rev. Roy P. Washill (Beloved Boopa) and Denny Martin; and our uncle, Donald A. Mitchell, by Kate & Dennis Martin and Jeffrey Logan.

**Front altar flowers** are given to the Glory of God and in memory of loved ones by Carol Schaal.

**A fellowship time of Prosecco and Panettone** will be offered in the parlor following this morning's service. Thank you to the Mitchell family for this Christmas gathering.

**Offering envelopes** for 2025 are located on the table by the ramp door. To save on postage we ask that you please pick up your envelopes. They are arranged alphabetically. Thank you.

**Desk calendars** for 2025, compliments of the Burton Quinn-Scott Funeral Home, are located at the welcome tables. Please pick up as many as you need for the coming year.

## Christmas Office Hours

**The Church Office** will be on limited hours this week as our staff celebrates with their families. Please be patient with all correspondence and we will get back to you as soon as we can. The office is open on Thursday, January 2 with normal hours.

## Worship

**The Eucharistic Prayer** is another composition of Dr. Gail Ramshaw, liturgical scholar. This Eucharistic Prayer echoes Luke 2, John 1, and the psalms appointed for Christmas: 96, 97, and 98. Given the proximity of Christmas to the Northern Hemisphere's winter solstice, it also prays for the coming of spring.

**About the cover icon:** "Tent City Nativity" "Jesus was born in a makeshift shelter, too—a place not really meant for human dwelling—and yet it was there that he met us, in the lowliest refuge. Two thousand years later, it's good to remember that Christ is still being born, here and now, most especially in places we'd rather not go, places from which we'd rather look away. God of illumination and incarnation, open not only our eyes, but our hearts, that we may open, too, our hands and make generous offerings of love, as your holy light reflects from nylon tent flaps, your holy song rises from a crackling campfire, lit against the cold, against the night. Amen." *Prayer Written by Cameron Bellm*

*From Kelly Latimore the Iconographer:* Christ was born in a makeshift shelter in a stable, and in today's reading in the Gospels, the holy family is forced to flee their homeland for fear of persecution. This is the classic modern-day definition of a refugee. The Holy Family is still among us here and now, in the faces of the refugee, the immigrant, the poor and the oppressed. Many people are living in makeshift communities throughout the country, often called "Tent Cities". With this recent cold spell, and through these winter months, unhoused individuals are often in need of more clothing, blankets, food and better shelter. In the following weeks with our print sales of this icon we hope to raise funds and purchase supplies for local organizations here in St. Louis swerving the unhoused like Tent Mission STL, St. Patrick's Center, and Winter Outreach, and others. Look for your own local organizations in need of volunteers, supplies and funding to help the unhoused in your community.

## Keeping Christmas!

**Come Caroling! We'll be singing all your favorites!** Join in keeping the festivities going on December 27. Luther Memorial will be hosting *Caroling at the BrewErie* featuring The Great Traveling Organ. We will gather in the rotunda of the BrewErie from 5:00-8:00pm to sing and share in the season. Food and drink are on you. Caroling is on us! Bring family and friends for this fun night out! Come when you can. Leave when you must.

## Epiphany Service

**All are welcome** to attend the **Erie Conference Epiphany Service with Burning of the Greens** which will be held Monday, January 6, 2025, at 7:00pm at Faith Lutheran Church, 5414 East Lake Road. Celebrate the Epiphany of our Lord together with a candlelight Eucharist, with Pastor Kristen Papson preaching, followed by an outdoor burning of the Christmas greens. The Scandinavian custom of an Epiphany burning of the greens was introduced to Faith Lutheran by Pastor David Laakso; it has become a beloved local tradition. Refreshments and fellowship will follow in the social hall. Dress warm for the bonfire; you may also watch from the comfort of the social hall if you prefer. A simple house blessing liturgy will be available to take and use at home this Epiphany season. If you would like to bring Christmas trees or greens from home to add to the bonfire, please contact Faith Lutheran Church to let them know.

## Items to Note

**In case of a pastoral emergency**, please contact Pastor Jay either at the church (814-454-0106 x. 227) or, if not, on his personal phone (267-549-9858). If you are unable to reach him and need a response quickly, please contact our church office at 454-0106, ext. 221 during weekday business hours of 8:00am – 4:00pm to speak with Norma. Thank you.





**— PRAYER LIST —**

**PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:**

**Our Members:**

Abbie & Ben Dixon  
Matt, Jessica Kinzig & family  
Marilyn Bohn & family

Dave Parsh  
Virginia Long  
Rosanne Braine

Rose-Marie Rose  
Pat Gilbert  
Ed Hokaj

Ron King  
Lois Fobes  
Ann Flick

**Friends and Family:**

Cheryl Runstedler  
Jessica Bulos Grubb  
Leigh Ann Fassnacht  
Branden Jones  
Bernadette Mulder  
Andy Zimmerman  
Betsy & Rudy, Sydney Kohn  
Grant, Alina, Charlie Jane McGrail  
Mary & Urban LaRiccica  
Cara & Bradley Kendra

Jenn  
Phil F.  
Janine Frank  
Teddy & Rebecca  
Kevin D.  
Jim Roberts  
Racheal Thompson  
Phil  
Carol Steffey

Norma Lynch  
Karen  
Casey Smith  
Jean Coburn  
Tom Kraut  
Bev  
Joey & family  
Jane  
Andrew Wachter

Jenn Eddy  
Curtis Krick  
Tom Dean  
Cheryl Atkinson  
Steve Sensor  
Dale Dannhaus  
Michele Seifert  
Amy S.  
Chris Beckman

**Grief:**

Tina Clark DiNicola family  
Emma Houseman family

JoAnn Guilianelli family

Fred Kern family

**Our Military Service Men & Women:**

Lt. Col. Matt Anderson  
Ben Dixon

Michael Stickner  
Lt. Col. Mark Collins

Andrew Watson  
Christopher Rose  
Alli Brown

**C A L E N D A R**

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25**

*Merry Christmas*

LMA Closed

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26**

LMA Closed

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27**

5:00-8:00pm

Caroling at BrewErie  
LMA Closed

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2023**

**THE FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS**

**Worship** with us at 8:15am in Faith Chapel or 10:30am in the main church.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2024**

**ASSISTING IN WORSHIP**

Assisting Minister	8:15am	Rob Benacci
	10:30am	Pat Bellingham
Altar Guild	8:15am	Nancy Benacci
	10:30am	Sharon Burke
Greeters	8:15am	Vicky Blasco
	10:30am	Stan Rose
Counters	10:30am	Emma Chaffee, Mike Hedlund
Video Streaming	10:30am	Gina Snider
Ushers	10:30am	Diana Alvaro, Diane & Bob Banks
		Cathy Beck

## READINGS AND COMMEMORATIONS FOR THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

**December 25 – The Nativity of Our Lord, Christmas Day** – Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98; Hebrews 1:1-12; John 1:1-14 -- *As on the first day of creation, on this Christmas Day the Word illumines the world, shining forth to bring all things into being. Today we celebrate the incarnate Word, God becoming flesh to live among us in the person of Jesus Christ then and now. Emboldened by the good news of Christ's birth, along with the shepherds, Mary and Joseph, and all witnesses to the light of Christ, we declare to the world that we have indeed seen and been transformed by the arrival of "the salvation of our God." O come, let us adore!*

**A Note from Pastor Jay:** The three days that follow our celebrations of Jesus' birth are the feasts of the three "Christmas martyrs." As we celebrate Jesus present on earth and what it means to be called to be disciples and witnesses (martyrion in Greek) of what he means in our lives, we contemplate the three kinds of martyrdom:

**Stephen** was a martyr of will and deed: He witnessed to Jesus and knew it could get him killed. He witnessed anyway. And he was killed for his witness.

**John the Divine** was a martyr of will but not of deed: He is believed to be the only one of the original 12 disciples to die of natural causes (though there are stories of his being spared of martyrdom on several accounts). This fulfills the Gospel of John when Jesus says, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?". He witnessed to Jesus knowing he could be killed. He witnessed anyway. He died of natural causes, though by tradition in exile on the isle of Patmos.

**The Holy Innocents** were martyrs of deed but not of will: Killed by order of King Herod who feared the birth of the "King of the Judeans" in Bethlehem, they did not witness to Jesus but were killed for his sake nevertheless.

**December 26 – Stephen, Deacon and Protomartyr** – II Chronicles 24:17-22; Psalm 17:1-9, 15; Acts 6:8-7:2a, 51-60; Matthew 23:34-39 -- *Stephen was a deacon and the first martyr (protomartyr) of the church. He was one of those seven upon whom the apostles laid hands after they had been chosen to serve widows and others in need. Later, Stephen's preaching angered the temple authorities, and they ordered him to be put to death by stoning.*

**December 27 – St John the Divine, Evangelist** – Genesis 1:1-5, 26-31; Psalm 116:12-19; I John 1:1-2:2; John 21:20-25 - *The son of Zebedee and brother of James, John was one of the twelve disciples and witness to the transfiguration. Tradition has named him also the writer of the Gospel of John, the three New Testament letters bearing his name, as well as Revelation.*

**December 28 – The Holy Innocents of Bethlehem, martyrs** – Jeremiah 31:15-17; Psalm 124; I Peter 4:12-19; Matthew 2:13-18 -- *This day commemorates the young children killed by Herod in Bethlehem in his jealous attempt to murder the baby Jesus, a sobering reminder of the evil that led Christ to be born for our salvation.*

**December 29** – Psalm 148; Isaiah 49:5-15; Matthew 12:46-50

**December 30** – Psalm 148; Proverbs 9:1-12; II Peter 3:8-13

**December 31** – Psalm 148; I Kings 3:5-14; John 8:12-19

**January 1 – The Holy Name of Jesus** – Number 6:22-27; Psalm 8; Galatians 4:4-7; Philippians 2:5-11; Luke 2:15-21 -- *By Jewish law, every baby boy was circumcised and named on the eighth day of life, so on the eighth day of Christmas the church celebrates this event in Jesus' life. The keeping of the covenant as well as Jesus' name are signs of God's salvation given to us through him.*

**January 2** – Psalm 110; Proverbs 1:1-7; James 3:13-18

**January 3** – Psalm 110; Proverbs 1:20-33; James 4:1-10

**January 4** – Psalm 110; Proverbs 3:1-12; James 4:11-17

**January 5** – Psalm 110; Proverbs 22:1-9; Luke 6:27-31

**January 6 – The Epiphany of Jesus** – Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12 -- *The feast of Epiphany ("manifestation") concludes the Christmas season with a celebration of God's glory revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. In Isaiah and Ephesians, that glory is proclaimed for all nations and people. Like the light of the star that guided the magi to Jesus, the light of Christ reveals who we are: children of God who are claimed and washed in the waters of baptism. We are sent out to be beacons of the light of Christ, sharing the good news of God's love to all people.*