



*And on
earth*
Peace.

Luke 2:14

Christmas Eve 11:00 pm

December 24, 2025

PRELUDE: **“Variations sur 'In dulci jubilo'”** **Organ**
~ *Denis Bédard*

AS WE GATHER:

*May these words help you prepare your hearts and minds
for worship of the Newborn King.*

“*A Christmas Carol*”
~ by G. K. Chesterton

*The Christ-child lay on Mary's lap,
His hair was like a light.
(O weary, weary was the world,
But here is all aright.)*

*The Christ-child lay on Mary's breast
His hair was like a star.
(O stern and cunning are the kings,
But here the true hearts are.)*

*The Christ-child lay on Mary's heart,
His hair was like a fire.
(O weary, weary is the world,
But here the world's desire.)*

*The Christ-child stood on Mary's knee,
His hair was like a crown,
(and all the flowers looked up at Him,
And all the stars looked down.)*

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Leader: Glorious Father, You have made this holy night radiant with the splendor of Jesus Christ our light, Your Word made flesh, come among us.

People: Now, by the power of Your Holy Spirit may the light of loving service flowing from faith, shine through our words and actions. Amen.

HYMN: "Savior of the Nations, Come"

LSB 332

1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come, Vir - gin's Son, make
 2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, By the Spir - it
 7 From the man - ger new - born light Shines in glo - ry
 △ 8 Glo - ry to the Fa - ther sing, Glo - ry to the

here Your home! Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth,
 of our God, Was the Word of God made flesh—
 through the night. Dark - ness there no more re - sides;
 Son, our king, Glo - ry to the Spir - it be

That the Lord chose such a birth.
 Wom - an's off - spring, pure and fresh.
 In this light faith now a - bides.
 Now and through e - ter - ni - ty.

OLD TESTAMENT READING: *Micah 5:2-5a*

You, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
 are too small to be included among Judah's cities.
 Yet, from you Israel's future ruler will come for me.
 His origins go back to the distant past, to days long ago.
 That is why the Lord will abandon Israel
 until the time a mother has a child.
 Then the rest of the Lord's people will return to the people of Israel.
 The child will become the shepherd of His flock.
 He will lead them with the strength of the Lord,
 with the majestic name of the Lord His God.
 They will live in safety because His greatness will reach the ends of the earth.
 This man will be their peace. – GW ®

MINISTRY OF MUSIC:

"Carol of the Lamb"
 ~David von Kampen

Bethany Choir

CONFSSION AND FORGIVENESS:

Leader: Jesus, You are our constant star in the deep night of sin.
You are the Light, in the dark shadows cast by our guilt and the grave.

People: **Light of the World,
we confess that little of Your radiance has shown through our
lives.**
**We have delighted in that which is lurid and murky.
Our hearts and our minds have been clouded
with self-pity and self-righteousness alike.**
**Our actions have eclipsed the grace You would show through us;
and so we have cast a pall over Your glory, because**
**-we have been slow to seek reconciliation,
-unwilling to help
-and more begrudging than forgiving.**
**For the sake of Jesus,
who was born under Bethlehem's star,
and whose life was extinguished on Calvary's cross,
forgive us our sin,
scatter our darkness
and bring life to light in us. Amen.**

Leader: With the birth of His Son, God's glory and light shines in the darkness.
As one called here to illumine His truth and reflect His love for you,
I forgive you all your sins, in the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

HYMN: “Angels We Have Heard on High”

LSB 368

1 An - gels we have heard on high, Sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;

And the moun - tains in re - ply, Ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad - some tid - ings be Which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.

Refrain

Glo - - - - - ri - a
in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - - -
- ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - - o.

CHRISTMAS PRAYER:

Leader: Almighty God and Father of light,
a child is born to us and a Son is given to us.
Your eternal Word leapt down from heaven
in the silent watches of the night,
and now Your Church is filled with wonder
at the nearness of her God.

People: Open our hearts to receive His light
and increase our vision with the rising of dawn—
that our lives may be filled with His glory,
and that we may reflect the brilliance of His peace,
who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

THE CHRISTMAS GOSPEL: *Luke 2:1-20*

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David;) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them. – KJV®

HYMN: “Away in a Manger”

LSB 364

1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed,
2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,
3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask Thee to stay

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down His sweet head.
But lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing He makes.
Close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.

The stars in the sky ____ looked down where He lay,
I love Thee, Lord Je - sus! Look down from the sky,
Bless all the dear chil - dren in Thy ten - der care,

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
And stay - by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.
And take us to heav - en to live with Thee there.

MESSAGE: “Great Things come in Small Packages” Luke 2

MINISTRY OF MUSIC: “E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come” Bethany Vocal Ensemble
~Paul Manz

HYMN: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

LSB 361



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!
2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, And, gath - ered all a - bove
3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly The won - drous gift is giv'n!
4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, De - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by;
While mor-tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won-dring love.
So God im - parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of His heav'n.
Cast out our sin, and en - ter in, Be born in us to - day.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing light.
O morn-ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
No ear may hear His com - ing; But in this world of sin,
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad tid - ings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.
And prais - es sing to God the king And peace to all the earth!
Where meek souls will re - ceive Him, still The dear Christ en - ters in.
O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Im - man - u - el!

CONFSSION OF CHRISTMAS FAITH:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth,
who in loving kindness sent a Savior for me.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's one and only Son.

He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
announced by angels, worshiped by shepherds and adored by wise men.

He came to suffer, die, rise again and give me life.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life.

By whose power the Christ child was born anew within my heart.

He binds me together in faith with you, my brothers and sisters in Christ,
with whom I kneel before the manger until, with all people,

I bow before Christ and confess Him as Lord to the glory of God the
Father. Amen.

OFFERING: *The Offering Box is located in the center aisle. If you so desire, Text Giving is now available by texting GIVE to 562-210-0463. For On-line Giving information, contact Pauline at: psvolos@bethanylutheran.org or call 562-421-4711, ext. 21. Thank you!*

CHRISTMAS PRAYER: *(Text: Martin Luther AD 1483-1546)*

Leader: Oh, dearest Jesus, holy child,
People: **prepare a bed soft undefiled,**
a holy shrine within my heart,
that You and I need never part. Amen.

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.**

MINISTRY OF MUSIC: **“Ubi Caritas”** Bethany Vocal Ensemble
~Ola Gjello

*Where charity and love are, God is there.
The love of Christ has gathered us together.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Let us revere and love the living God.
And from a sincere heart let us love one another. Amen*

SHARING THE LIGHT:

Leader: God of love, Father of all, the darkness that covered the earth
has given way to the bright dawn of Your Word made flesh.
People: **Make us a people of this light.**
Make us faithful to Your Word
that we may bring Your life to the waiting world.

Leader: Grant this through Christ our Lord.
People: **Amen.**

THE BLESSING:

Leader: Now the sweet Child of Bethlehem, put into Your hearts and the hearts of all men and women, His peace; the peace for which we sometimes seek so desperately, yet which He alone can give. May He help you to know one another better, to live as brothers and sisters, children of the same Heavenly Father. May He awaken your hearts to the dawning of His day, enlighten you with love and gratitude for His goodness and reveal the brilliance of faith in all you do and say.

HYMN: “Silent Night, Holy Night”

LSB 363



1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,
 all is bright Round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
 at the sight; Glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
 love's pure light Ra - diantbeams from Thy ho - ly face
 Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, Sleep in heav - en - ly
 Heav'n - ly hosts sing, Al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
 With the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy
 peace, Sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth.



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“A Christmas Carol Poem”

G.K. Chesterton

Public Domain

“Savior of the Nations, Come” LSB 332

Text: attr. Ambrose of Milan, 340-397; German version, Martin Luther, 1483-1546; tr. William M. Reynolds, sts. 1-2; tr. *Lutheran Service Book*, 2006, sts. 3, 6; tr. F. Samuel Janzow, 1913-2001, sts. 3-4, 8; tr. Gifford A. Grobien, b. 1973, sts. 3, 6;

Tune: *Geystiliche gesangk Buchleyn*, Wittenberg, 1524, ed. Johann Walter; setting: *Lutheran Service Book*, 2006.

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“Carol of the Lamb”

David von Kampen

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“Angels We Have Heard on High” LSB 368

Text: French; tr. *The Crown of Jesus, Part 2*, London, 1862, alt.

Tune: French; setting: Edward S. Barnes, 1887-1958

Text and Music: Public domain

“Mary Sat A-Rockin”

Greg Gilpin

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“Away in a Manger” LSB 364

Text: *Little Children’s Book*, Philadelphia, 1885, sts. 1-2; *Vineyard Songs*, Louisville, 1892, st. 3, alt.

Tune: James R. Murray, 1841-1905; setting: Joseph Herl, b. 1959. Text and tune: Public domain.

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“E’en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come”

Paul Manz

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“O Little Town of Bethlehem” LSB 361

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“Ubi Caritas”

Ola Gjeilo

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“O Holy Night”

Jay Rouse

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“Silent Night” LSB 363

Text: Joseph Joseph Mohr, tr. John F. Young. Tune: Franz Xaver Gruber. Text and music: Public domain.

SERVING GOD'S HOUSE TODAY:

Preacher...Pastor Kevin Kritzer

Accompanist...Kevin Bowers

Bethany Vocal Ensemble...Lily Alwood, Trinity Alwood, Noah Freeman, Dan Wessler, Molly Wessler, Soren Widmann

Director of Music & Worship Arts...Noah Freeman

Organist...Robert Bottoms

Cello: Dan Wessler



If You're a Visitor, WELCOME! We are so glad you have joined us for worship today. If you would like more information about Bethany and its ministries, please scan the QR code to the right. You will be directed to Bethany's fillable information form.



Join us Christmas Day for Festival Worship with Holy Communion

Wednesday, December 25th

At 9:30 a.m.



PLEASE NOTE:

The Church office will be closed on December 24, 25, and 26
We will also be closed on January 1st and 2nd.