



## **Our Savior's Evangelical Lutheran Church**

Wausau, WI

*Christmas Eve ~ December 24, 2024 ~ 2:00 pm*

# Welcome

**Welcome** to God's house for worship on this most holy of nights! Jesus Christ, the Light of all, was born into this dark world at Christmas to bring eternal life and the light of God's love and forgiveness to all people – and that includes you! Whether you are a first-time guest, a curious observer with little religious background, or a member of Our Savior's Church family, we are delighted and honored to share our Christmas Eve worship with you.

## A Prayer Before Worship

Almighty God, you dealt wonderfully with your servant Mary, in choosing her to be the mother of your dearly beloved Son and thus graciously made known your regard for the poor and lowly and despised. Grant us grace in all humility and meekness to receive your Word with hearty faith and to rejoice in Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, in whose name we pray. Amen. *(This prayer was written by Martin Luther)*

## Serving in Worship

- Minister ~ Pastor Jeff Mahnke
- Organist ~ Marie Kurth
- Ushers ~ Rick & Karen Leopold

## Acknowledgments

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# The WORD Made FLESH

## Born in a Manger... for You

*A Service of Readings and Hymns for Christmas Eve*

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### Words of Welcome

#### Opening Christmas Hymn

#### 344 What Child Is This



1 What child is this who, laid to rest, on Mar - y's lap is  
2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox - en now are  
3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas - ant, king, to



sleep - ing, whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet while  
feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here the  
own him. The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let



shep - herds watch are keep - ing? This, this is  
si - lent Word is plead - ing. Nails, spear shall  
lov - ing hearts en - throne him. Raise, raise the



Christ the King, whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;  
pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;  
song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

On this holy night, we see all four candles and the center candle, the Christ candle, lit on the Advent wreath. God's promise to send a Savior has been fulfilled. The Light of the World has come. Christ the Lord is born!

**Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!**

The Son of God humbled himself to be born among us. The newborn Savior was wrapped in swaddling cloths and laid in a manger in Bethlehem. The infant King was worshiped by shepherds and praised by angels. Tonight, we join them in praising our Lord and King. To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given!

**Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!**

## **Confession and Absolution**

Let us confess our sins to God and ask his forgiveness for the sake of Christ our King.

**Almighty God, we have sinned against you in our thoughts, words and actions. We turn away from your Word and your will for us. We listen to the temptations of the world around us. We choose to follow our own sinful desires. Have mercy on us, and forgive our sins.**

God has had mercy on us. Jesus our Lord, whose birth we celebrate tonight, came to be our Brother and our Savior. He lived perfectly, suffered, died for our sins, and rose up in triumph over death to redeem us. I announce to you that your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father and the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen! To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given!**

## Christmas Response

## 329 vs. 5-6 All My Heart Again Rejoices



5 Soft - ly from his low - ly man - ger Je - sus calls  
6 Come, then, ban - ish all your sad - ness! One and all,  
one and all, "You are safe from dan - ger.  
great and small, come with songs of glad - ness;  
Chil - dren, from the sins that grieve you you are freed;  
we shall live with him for - ev - er there on high  
all you need I will sure - ly give you."  
in that joy which will van - ish nev - er.

## Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true light. Grant that as we have known on earth the wonder of that light, we may also behold him in all his glory in the life to come; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*Be Seated*

## First Reading

Isaiah 9:2-7

*For us a child is born. To us a son is given*

<sup>2</sup>The people walking in darkness have seen a great light. For those living in the land of the shadow of death, the light has dawned. <sup>3</sup>You have multiplied the nation. You have increased the joy. They rejoice before you like the joy at harvest time, like the celebration when people divide the plunder. <sup>4</sup>For you have shattered the yoke that burdened them. You have broken the bar on their shoulders and the rod of their oppressor, as you did in the day of Midian. <sup>5</sup>Every boot that marched in battle and the garments rolled in blood will be burned. They will be fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup>For to us a child is born. To us a son is given. The authority to rule will rest on his shoulders. He will be named: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup>There will be no limit to his authority and no end to the peace he brings. He will rule on David's throne and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from now on, into eternity. The zeal of the LORD of Armies will accomplish this.

## Christmas Hymn

381 vs. 1 – 3

### The People Who in Darkness Walked



1 The peo - ple who in dark - ness walked have seen a glo - rious  
2 To us a child of hope is born, to us a son is  
3 His name shall be the Prince of Peace, the Ev - er - last - ing



light; the heav'n - ly dawn broke forth on those who  
giv'n, and on his shoul - ders ev - er rests all  
Lord, the Won - der - ful, the Coun - sel - or, the



dwelt in death and night, who dwelt in death and night.  
pow'r in earth and heav'n, all pow'r in earth and heav'n.  
God by all a - dored, the God by all a - dored.

## Second Reading

1<sup>st</sup> John 4:9-14

*This is love: God sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins*

<sup>9</sup>This is how God's love for us was revealed: God has sent his only-begotten Son into the world so that we may live through him. <sup>10</sup>This is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. <sup>11</sup>Dear friends, if God loved us so much, we also should love one another. <sup>12</sup>No one has ever seen God. If we love one another, God remains in us and his love has been brought to its goal in us. <sup>13</sup>This is how we know that we remain in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup>We have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.

## Christmas Hymn

352 Joy Has Dawned



1 Joy has dawned up - on the world, prom - ised from cre - a - tion—  
2 Sounds of won - der fill the sky with the songs of an - gels  
3 Shep - herds bow be - fore the Lamb, gaz - ing at the glo - ry.  
4 Son of Ad - am, Son of heav'n, giv - en as a ran - som;



God's sal - va - tion now un - furled, hope for ev - 'ry na - tion.  
as the might - y Prince of life shel - ters in a sta - ble.  
Gifts of men from dis - tant lands proph - e - sy the sto - ry:  
rec - on - cil - ing God and man, Christ, our might - y cham - pion!



Not with fan-fares from a - bove, not with scenes of glo - ry,  
Hands that set each star in place, shaped the earth in dark-ness,  
gold— a king is born to - day; in - cense—God is with us;  
What a Sav - ior! What a friend! What a glo - rious mys - t'ry!



but a hum - ble gift of love— Je - sus born of Mar - y.  
cling now to a moth - er's breast, \_ vul - n'ra - ble and help - less.  
myrrh— his death will make a way, and by his blood he'll win us.  
Once a babe in Beth - le - hem, \_ now the Lord of his - t'ry.

Tex & Tune: Stuart Townend, b. 1963; Keith Getty, b. 1974

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## Gospel Reading

**Luke 2:1-7**

*Mary gave birth to her firstborn, a son*

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governing Syria. <sup>3</sup>And everyone went to register, each to his own town. <sup>4</sup>And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the town of Nazareth, into Judea, to the town of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was from the house and family line of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, his wife, who was pledged to him in marriage and was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>And so it was that while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son, wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.



## Christmas Hymn      346 sts. 1, 2 - Angels We Have Heard on High

- 1    **Angels we have heard on high,  
      sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
      and the mountains in reply,  
      echoing their joyous strains.  
      Gloria in excelsis Deo;  
      gloria in excelsis Deo.**
  
- 2    **Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
      Why your joyous strains prolong?  
      What the gladsome tidings be  
      which inspire your heav'nly song?  
      Gloria in excelsis Deo;  
      gloria in excelsis Deo.**

Text: tr. The Crown of Jesus, Part 2, 1862, alt.; French  
Text: Public domain

*Stand*



## Gospel Reading

Luke 2:8-14

*The angel appeared to the shepherds with the good news of Jesus' birth*

<sup>8</sup>There were in the same country shepherds staying out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock 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. For behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which will be for all people: "Today in the town of David, a Savior was born for you. He is Christ<sup>i</sup> the Lord. <sup>12</sup>And this will be a sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>Suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude from the heavenly army, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward mankind."

## Christmas Hymn

341 Away in a Manger



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 you 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 bright sky looked down where he lay,  
I love you, Lord Je - sus; look down from the sky,  
Bless all the dear chil - dren in your ten - der care,

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.  
and stay by my side un - til morn - ing is nigh.  
and take us to heav - en to live with you there.

## Gospel Reading

Luke 2:15-20

*The shepherds spread the good news of Jesus' birth*

<sup>15</sup>When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Now let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." <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 told others the message they had been told about this child. <sup>18</sup>And all who heard it were amazed by what the shepherds said to them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

*Be seated*

## Christmas Hymn

### 333 O Little Town of Bethlehem



- 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-d'ring 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 ti - dings 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!

# Christmas Eve Meditation

## Christmas Hymn Response

334 vs. 1 & 4

### I Stand Beside Your Manger Here

The musical score is written on five staves in G major (one sharp). The melody is simple, using quarter and half notes. The lyrics are written below the staves, with some lines having a 1/4 and 4 below them. The score ends with a double bar line.

1 I stand be - side your man - ger here, O Je - sus,  
4 One thing I hope; my Sav - ior, hear; be - stow on  
life from heav - en. The gifts I bring as I draw near  
me this bless - ing, that I may ev - er hold you near,  
are what to me you've giv - en: my spir - it,  
you as my own pos - sess - ing. So let my  
cour - age, mind, and heart— take all I am, take  
heart your man - ger be; come, ho - ly Child, lie  
ev - 'ry part; in mer - cy let it please you.  
down in me with all your joy - ful trea - sures.

## The Christmas Creed

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, who sent his Son to be my Savior.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, my Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, announced by the angels, worshipped by the shepherds, adored by the wise men; who lived to suffer, die and rise again to free me from all sin, from death, and the power of Satan.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, who has brought me to faith in my Savior, and by whose continuous work in my heart I rejoice in my salvation, show forth his praises, and will one day live and reign with him through all eternity. Amen.**

## Thank Offering & Friendship Register

*Members of Our Savior's give generous and free will gifts to honor the Lord and support our ministry of the gospel. Guests are welcome to give but should not feel obligated to do so.*

***As the offering is gathered, please sign the Friendship Register as it is passed down the pew.***

*Stand*

## Prayer of the Church for Christmas Eve

Lord Jesus, you humbled yourself to take on our human flesh, to be born among us. You were wrapped in swaddling cloths and laid to sleep in a manger as angels announced your birth to shepherds and glorified God. We, too, glorify God on this holy night as we rejoice in your birth. Jesus, Holy Child of Bethlehem,

**You were born among us to save us.**

Lord Jesus, you came to this world to redeem us through your suffering, death and resurrection. By God's grace through faith in your name, our sins are forgiven, and we are children of God and heirs of eternal life. Jesus, Holy Child of Bethlehem,

**You were born among us to save us.**

Lord Jesus, on this holy night, there are so many who remember your birth while they must suffer through illness, fear or loss. Comfort them with your presence and the peace that you alone can bring. Lead us to bring them help and hope through the promises of your Word. Jesus, Holy Child of Bethlehem.

**You were born among us to save us.**

Lord Jesus, teach us to follow your example of humble service. Help us to walk in love as you walked and to bring your compassion and your peace to everyone we meet. As you gave your life for us, transform us in love so that we give ourselves in service to others. Jesus, Holy Child of Bethlehem,

**You were born among us to save us.**

Lord Jesus, as we remember your holy birth, we rejoice with saints and angels, now and forever. Sent by the angels to find you in the manger in Bethlehem, the shepherds told everyone they met about your wondrous birth. Lead us to follow the example of the shepherds and tell others about your love. Jesus, Holy Child of Bethlehem,

**You were born among us to save us. Amen.**

## **The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

## **Christmas Blessing**

May Jesus who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill us with such joy that comes with the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life.

The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son †, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always.

**Amen.**

## Closing Christmas Hymn

## 337 Silent Night, Holy Night



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 - dian beams 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.

Text: tr. John F. Young, 1820–1885; Franz Joseph Mohr, 1792–1848

Tune: Franz Xaver Gruber, 1787–1863

Text and tune: Public domain



**Christmas Day Festival Worship**  
**Wednesday, December 25 ~ 9:00 AM**

*On behalf of the entire staff at Our Savior's Lutheran Church,  
we thank you for worshiping with us this Christmas season.  
Our wish is that the Lord brings you that special peace and joy  
of the Christ-Child born to be our Savior and King.  
A very Merry Christmas to you all!*



*Growing in Jesus, Sharing His Love*

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