

*To you is born
this day a Savior*

LUKE 2:11





FAITH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

500 West Le Claire Road Eldridge, Iowa
Pastor Carrie Lewis La Plante Pastor Heather Geest

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

December 24, 2024

9:00 p.m.

Prelude

Welcome

GATHERING

Please stand as you are able.

Gathering Hymn

O, Come, All Ye Faithful

Oh, come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him born the king of angels:

Refrain

Oh, come, let us adore him, oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

The highest, most holy, light of light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God in the highest: *Refrain*

Christmas Eve Litany

P Jesus Christ is the Light of the world!

C He is the Light no darkness can overcome.

P At darkest night we gather to celebrate the great light of our salvation.

C With the heavenly host we sing, "Glory to God in the highest heaven."

P In Christ, God's Word is made flesh and lives among us.

C With the shepherds, we will tell of the wonders we have seen and heard.

Hymn

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

Refrain

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev'rywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. *Refrain*

Down in a lonely manger the humble Christ was born;
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

Greeting and Prayer of the Day

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

C And also with you.

P Let us pray. Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Please be seated.

WORD

First Reading

Isaiah 9:2-7

A reading from Isaiah.

²The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness —
on them light has shined.

³You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.

He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

L The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God

Hymn Response Hark! The Herald Angel Sings

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;
With angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
Born to raise each child of earth, born to give us second birth. *Refrain*

Second Reading

Titus 2:11-14

A reading from Titus.

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

L The Word of the Lord

C Thanks be to God

Hymn Response

Your Little Ones, Dear Lord

Your little ones, dear Lord, are we, and come your lowly bed to see;
Enlighten ev'ry soul and mind, that we the way to you may find.

With songs we hasten you to greet, and kiss the ground before your feet.
Oh, blessed hour, oh, sweetest night that gave you birth, our soul's delight.

Gospel Part 1

Luke 2:1-7

P The holy gospel according to Luke:

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

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Hymn Response:

Away in a Manger

Away in a manger, no crib for his 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.

The cattle are lowing; the poor baby wakes,
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.

Gospel Part 2

Luke 2:8-20

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."
¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

14"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

15When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." 16So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. 17When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; 18and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. 19But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. 20The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

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

Hymn Response Angels We Have Heard on High

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.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heav'nly song? *Refrain*

Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn king. *Refrain*

Christmas Eve Message

Hymn

On Christmas Night

On Christmas night all Christians sing
to hear the news the angels bring.
On Christmas night all Christians sing
to hear the news the angels bring:
news of great joy, news of great mirth,
news of our merciful king's birth.

Then why should we on earth be sad,
since our redeemer made us glad?
Then why should we on earth be sad,
since our redeemer made us glad,
when from our sin he set us free,
all for to gain our liberty?

When sin departs before his face,
then life and health come in its place.
When sin departs before his face,
then life and health come in its place.
Angels rejoice with us and sing,
all for to see the newborn king.

All out of darkness we have light,
which made the angels sing this night.
All out of darkness we have light,
which made the angels sing this night:
"Glory to God in highest heav'n;
peace on earth, and goodwill. Amen."

Please stand as you are able.

Prayers of the Church

The Peace

Please be seated.

Offering

Please stand as you are able.

Offering Prayer

P God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.

C Amen.

MEAL

Dialogue

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give God thanks and praise.

- P It is indeed right...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:
(sung to the tune for "Angels From the Realms of Glory")
- C Holy, holy, Lord most holy,
God of pow'r and God of might:
Heav'n and earth reveal your glory.
Hail, Hosanna, Lord of light!
Blessed be the coming Savior.
Hail, Hosanna, Lord of Light.

Words of Institution

The Lord's Prayer

- C 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.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated.

Distribution

Believing in the real presence of Christ, we invite all present to participate in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. All who are baptized and believe that Jesus Christ is truly present in the gifts of bread and wine are welcome at the Lord's table. Those who do not wish to receive communion and children who are not yet receiving communion may come forward for a blessing.

Communion is distributed by continuous distribution. Today we will be using two stations. Please come forward by the center aisle to receive the wafer from the pastor, and then, receive a cup of wine (light colored drink in the outer rings of the tray) or grape juice (darker colored drink in the center of the trays) from the communion assistant. Gluten-free wafers are available in the small gold dish on the paten. You may place your empty cups in the baskets at the ends of the front pews as you return to your seats by the side aisles.

Communion Song

Lamb of God

(Sung to the tune for "I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve")

O Lamb of God, you bear the sin
Of all the world away;
You suffered death our lives to save;
Have mercy now, we pray.

O Lamb of God, you bear the sin
Of all the world away;
You set us free from guilt and grave;
Have mercy now, we pray.

O Lamb of God, you bear the sin
Of all the world away;
Eternal peace with God you made:
Give us your peace, we pray.

Hymns During Communion

What Child is This?

What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king, who shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!

What lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary!

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heav'nly music floats o'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hov'ring wing,
and ever o'er its babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

And you, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow:
look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing;
oh, rest beside the weary road and hear the angels sing!

For lo! The days are hast'ning on, by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and all the world give back the song which now the angels sing.

When all have received communion, please stand as you are able.

Post-Communion Blessing

P The body and blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you
in God's grace.

C Amen.

Prayer after Communion

P God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As
you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine
with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

CANDLE LIGHTING

(The lighted candle is never tilted, but is always held upright when giving light to another. Parents, please assist the children if they are holding a candle.)

Gospel of Light

John 1:1-14 *(will be read while the candles are being lit.)*

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was
God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and
without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life,
and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the
darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to
testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light,

but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Hymn of Light

Silent Night, Holy Night!

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright.
Round yon virgin mother and child. Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

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 your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

SENDING

Blessing

P May the Lord God, who has called you out of darkness to be servants of the light, grant you the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, and the peace of the Christ Child, in the name of Almighty God, the Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Please extinguish your candles and return them to the ushers as you exit the sanctuary.

Hymn:

Joy to the World

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her 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.

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.

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.

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.

Dismissal

P Glory to God in the highest!

C Peace to God's people on earth!

P Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.

C Thanks be to God.

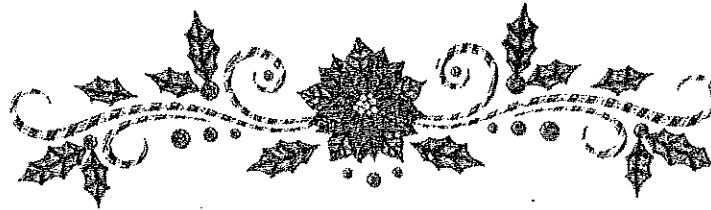
Postlude



~Thank you to those who share in our worship this evening~

	9:00 pm Worship Service
Ushers	Jennie Garner & Mike Garner
Reader	Mary Moore
Communion Assistants	Mike Garner, Jared & Kelly Penning
Counters	Chelsey Dingbaum & Kristy Looney

Choir Director	Susan Becker
Organist	Susan Becker & Teri Wittkowski
Online Streaming Crew	Lucas Golinghorst, Scott LaPlante, & Kevin Zidarich



Christmas Flowers

Thank you to everyone who provided the beautiful poinsettias for this Christmas season.

From:

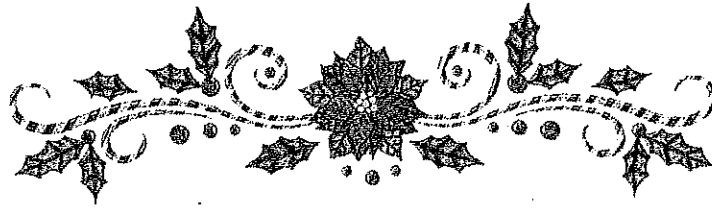
David & Shirley Rose
Joan & Denny Hennigan
Ed & Kathy Stoltz
David & Diane Cole
Kelly Wyatt
Zidarich Family
Carol Roe
Kent & Michelle Wiebel
Paul & Lynn Atkins
Jacob Bekel
Bob & Carol Kuehl
Bryan & Marla Zabel
Scott, Carrie, Abby & Madelyn La Plante

Tonya, Maisie & Melena Knutsen
Jim & Ida Weibel
Meier family
Bryan, Brianne Brooklyn & Kelsey Tallyn
Nancy Germain
Myra Kreiter & Family

Jared & Kelly Penning
Rhonda Webber
Brian & Nina Looney
Sue Sissel
Doug * & Michele Olsen
Myron & Cindy Zabel
Roger & Sherri Beyer
Ron & Mary Arp

In Honor or Memory Of:

Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Stacey Dircks
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Our Fathers
Our Moms & Dads
Great Grandparents
Our Parents
Loved Ones
Dan La Plante, Joanne Tamblingson, and our
grandparents
Leroy & Marilyn Knutsen, and Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Carolyn Moon & Harlan Meier
Loved Ones
Nicholas Germain and My Parents
Jack, Henry & Roma Kreiter &
Victor & Agnes Randolph
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Our anniversary and Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
William Fritsch
Family members and friends gone too soon



Christmas Flowers

From:

John Hintze
Tom & Pam Carlson
Justin & Ashley Huffman
Justin & Ashley Huffman
Myron Scheibe
John & Keri Suiter
Mike & Rita Smith
Linda Johnson
Bob & Theresa White
Darin & Beth Ann Anderson & Family
Mary Moore
Stephanie McNamara
Colton & Becky Johnson
Jeanne Willems
Jeanne Willems
Gary & Joni King
Kristy & Giles Looney
Looney
Beverly Schmidt
Cathy Diaz
Carol Marten
Kourtney & Winston Johnson

In Honor or Memory Of:

Loved Ones
Our Families
Sheila Baustian
Grandparents
Carolyn Scheibe
Bud & Janet Nagle
Loved Ones
Dennis Johnson
Loved Ones
Loved Ones
Dale Moore
Jana Donaubauer
Cathy Potter
Leroy Willems & Loved Ones
Betty Spies
Our Parents
Bob & Marlene Lage and Pat & Irene

Dennis Schmidt
Husband, Enrique
Jerry
Lucas Johnson

Detail Disoriented

Read Luke 2 closely, and you will notice that many of the details we assume about the Christmas story are noticeably absent. Luke does not tell us about a journey on a donkey, an innkeeper, a stable, or any animals, hay, or straw. The text even leaves unclear the reason the infant Jesus is laid in a manger, which is an unusual second option after finding no room at the inn.

It is very easy to get lost in the details (real or imagined), or at least to get distracted by them. They often become the center of our Christmas pageant preparations and the focus of our nativity scenes. But when we worry too much about sheep, hay, and stables, we can lose sight of the heart of the story: Jesus, the promised one, is born. Jesus is born, and through him, God will scatter the proud, lift up the lowly, fill the hungry with good things, and show mercy from generation to generation (Luke 2:51-55).

For many of us, preparations for Advent and Christmas include many details: Advent calendars, decorations, special foods, gatherings, concerts, additional worship services, gifts, guests. These details of the season can bring us delight and fulfillment. They can also feel like disorienting burdens.

When the details feel like they are too much, let us return to the heart of the story: Jesus is born, not at an ideal time, but at precisely the right time. Jesus is born, even in the middle of our own messy lives and preparations. Jesus is born, even into our imperfect world. When all else is cleared away, all the details swept aside, this is still our good news: Jesus, our wonderful counselor and bringer of peace (Isaiah 9:6), is born.