



Christmas EVE

In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

**Our Saviour Lutheran Church
Candlelight Service of Holy Communion
December 24, 2021, 7:00 P.M.**

All are welcome here
All people of faith, All people of doubt
All people of any origin, race, ability, sexual orientation or gender expression
All people who seek a compassionate community

All are welcome here
Welcome to worship, Welcome to pray
Welcome to learn, Welcome to give thanks
Welcome to serve God and neighbors

All are welcome here
All are redeemed by a gracious God

Our Saviour Lutheran Church, Pastor Randy Schroeder
300 West Fowler Ave., West Lafayette, 743-2931 www.osluth.org

Purdue Lutheran Ministry, Intern Candice Hinkle
330 West Fowler Ave., West Lafayette, 743-2398 www.plm.org

The Gathering

Prelude Music

Of the Father's Love Begotten

Setting, J. Bert Carlson Organ Solo: Beth Dana

Angels We Have Heard on High

Vocal Trio: Bob Nielsen, Rachel Hoorwitz, Chuck Hoorwitz

I Wonder as I Wander

Vocal Solo: Conner Schroeder

Still, Still, Still

Austrian Carol, Arr. Matt Astle Vocal Duet: Abigail Black, Conner Schroeder

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Arr. Mark Sedio; Arr. Timothy Shaw Clavinova Solo: Julie Huetteman

Once in Royal David's City

Setting, Philip M. Young Organ Solo: Beth Dana
Vocal Quartet: Abigail Black, Kathy Heise, Mark Hermodson, Bob Nielsen

Candlelight Service for Christmas Eve *Scripture, Carols, and Communion*

This service is a variation on a service of light -- an opposite of a tenebrae service.

Each candle symbolizes a character in the narrative: Mary, Joseph, Baby Jesus, the Angels, the Shepherds, the Kings. Candles will be lighted as the story is told. In the liturgy, the congregation reads the C parts.

Welcome

P Rejoice, for God is with us -- Emmanuel.

C **In the darkness of our world shines God's holy light.**

P Now there is reason to hope, to love, to laugh, to live.

C **God is truly with us. We are not alone. Glory to God in the Highest!**
And God's peace to all people on Earth! Thanks be to God!

Opening Prayer

P Gracious God,

C **With joy and thanksgiving we gather as your people.**

We have come to hear again the timeless story of Christ's birth.

**In the excitement of this night, quiet our hearts
that we may know the peace and fullness of this holy time.**

Shine, O Light, in the darkness of our world.

Sing, O angels, in the stillness of our hearts,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those God favors."

This we pray in the name of the Child of Bethlehem. Amen.

P Life is much richer when shared with others. So it is with worship. We have met together to share the many blessings of the season. When we worship and meet the God of Christmas, we experience what the season is meant to be.

The Word

Reading - The Prophecy of the Messiah

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7, John 1:1-2, 4-5

MT Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

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.

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.

MT John 1:1-2, 4-5

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. 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.

C **Everlasting Savior, Prince of Peace, Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God,
Emmanuel, Emmanuel, God with us, Emmanuel.**

Reading - The Coming of Jesus Is Announced to Mary and Joseph

Luke 1:26-38, Matthew 1:18-25

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."³⁴ Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"³⁵ The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God."³⁸ Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³ "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us."²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Congregational Carol: *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*

**Hark the herald angels sing
"Glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild
God and sinners reconciled"
Joyful, all ye nations rise
Join the triumph of the skies
With the angelic host proclaim:
"Christ is born in Bethlehem"
Hark! The herald angels sing
"Glory to the newborn King!"**

**Christ by highest heav'n adored
Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold Him come
Offspring of a Virgin's womb
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see
Hail the incarnate Deity
Pleased as man with man to dwell
Jesus, our Emmanuel
Hark! The herald angels sing
"Glory to the newborn King!"**

**Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings
Ris'n with healing in His wings
Mild He lays His glory by
Born that man no more may die
Born to raise the sons of earth
Born to give them second birth
Hark! The herald angels sing
"Glory to the newborn King!"**

Reading - The Preparations for the Birth of Jesus
Luke 2:1-5

RH Luke 2:1-5

^{2:1} In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ Joseph 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. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

Congregational Carol: *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

**O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie,
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep, the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark street shineth the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**

**For Christ is born of Mary, and, gathered all above
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the king, and peace to all the earth!**

Reading - Jesus is Born
Luke 2:6-7

RH ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ And 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.

Congregational Carol: *Away in a Manger*

**Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, The little Lord Jesus lay 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 baby awakes, But little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky and stay by my cradle til morning is nigh.**

**Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay close by me forever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and take us to heaven, to live with Thee there.**

Vocal Solo: Abigail Black: *O Holy Night*

Reading - Jesus' Birth is Announced to the Shepherds

Luke 2:9-14

RH ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³ And 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!”

Congregational Carol: *It Came Upon the 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 men, from heaven's all gracious King.
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.**

Reading - The Shepherds Find the Baby Jesus

Luke 2:15-18

IC ¹⁵ When 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.” ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.

Congregational Carol: *The First Noel*

**The first noel the angels did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay.
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Noel, noel, noel, noel.
Born is the King of Israel**

Reading - The Wise Men Bring Their Gifts to Jesus

Matthew 2:1-11

IC ^{2:1} In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ² asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” ³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴ and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶ ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸ Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” ⁹ When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ On

entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Congregational Carol: *The First Noel*

**And by the light of that same star,
three wise men came from county far.
To seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went.
Noel, noel, noel, noel.
Born is the King of Israel.**

**Then entered in the wise men three,
full reverently upon the knee.
And offered there in His presence
their gold and myrrh and frankincense.
Noel, noel, noel, noel.
Born is the King of Israel.**

P And so it came to pass that the word of the birth of the Christ Child Spread throughout the region. People rejoiced that the promise had been kept, and they believed. There were some who could not understand the power of deliverance through love, and they wondered how this tiny child could indeed be the promised miracle, Savior and king, the Prince of Peace.

Confession and Forgiveness

IC Let us pray. Merciful God,
C **we confess that often we find darkness more comfortable than light.
We confess that we find your good news frightening and unsettling,
especially when we consider its demands as well as its promises.
We confess that Christmas has become more to us than the birthday of the Christ,
partly because we do not want a Christ-Child in our lives or in our world.
Forgive us, break us, bend us, remake us.
Give us the courage to lay ourselves open to the wonder and healing of your coming.
Be born again into our world, be born again into our hearts and lives.
Hear now our silent and personal confessions as we prepare ourselves for your nativity.**

IC The true light that enlightens all has come into the world.
That light shines on in the darkness, and the darkness has never been able to put it out.
This is the good news: God has heard our confession. God has forgiven our sin.

C **Thanks be to God!**

Holy Communion

Words of Institution

P May it be well with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Life is a gift and we are to celebrate it.

C **May we rejoice in the beauty of this special time.**

P We celebrate tonight God-with-us beyond our words, beyond our images, for we know God is beyond those things. But tonight we find joy in the image of God coming to us in the form of the Christ child.

P We sense God's presence in creation and in the immensity of our universe, in the incredible display of life on this planet, and in our consciousness of something far greater than ourselves.

As Christians we rejoice in the birth of Jesus. In him we see the fullness of possibility to make God visible in our lives.

Like all of us he grew in wisdom as he aged. He questioned. He searched for meaning. He shaped his convictions.

He experienced love and came to know love's connectedness with God.

He stood firmly in his own religious tradition and preached good news to all people dreaming of a better humanity.

We rejoice that he taught us not to imagine a manipulative, intervening God, but one who is as close as breath and as soft as a whisper, yet as powerful in the focus of our lives, as were the mighty warriors the Old Testament but drawing us toward the good.

We rejoice that Jesus led people to discover the sacred in the ordinary, in the lowly, in everyday life, in human yearnings to be better people, and in being neighbor to one another.

Bread and wine, the fruit of vine and earth.
He gave us these to keep us connected to the story:

We remember the night before he died, according to our tradition, when he shared a meal with his friends.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord 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.

We break bread as Jesus did remembering the call to love generously and faithfully, whatever the cost.

We pour out wine remembering our responsibility to be bearers of forgiveness, tolerance, and understanding.

May these ordinary things be blessed. For they represent both the ordinary and the extraordinary as Jesus calls us to follow him.

C The mystery hidden for the ages is revealed for us in this meal.

P Come, behold and receive your God.

Distribution

All are welcome and all are invited to join at the Lord's table. Pastor Randy will commune the assistants first, then all who choose to commune in their seats and those communing online, and lastly all who want to come to the altar. ALL Are Welcome!

Congregational Carol: *O Come All Ye Faithful*

**O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels,
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.**

**True God of true God, Light from Light eternal.
Lo, He shuns not the virgin's womb.
Son of the Father, begotten, not created.
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.**

**Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation.
Sing all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.**

**Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to Thee be all glory given.
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing,
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.**

Prayer after Communion

P Let us pray,
C We are filled with joy for we have heard good news of great joy.
We are filled with love for we have tasted the sign of God's great love.
We are filled with hope for the angels still sing in our world
and there is a Light for us to follow.
We give you thanks, O God, that in this bread and cup of Christ's very life,
you give us food for our journey.
As you led the magi by a star, as you brought the holy family home again,
guide us on the way unfolding before us.
Wherever we go, may our lives proclaim
good news of great joy in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Candle Lighting

P A reading from John 1.

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.
⁶ There was a group sent from God, who was known as the church. ⁷ They came as witnesses to testify to the light, so that all might believe through them. ⁸ They themselves were not the light, but they came to testify to the light. ⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

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

¹⁴ And 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.

The Lord's Prayer

P Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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.**

Congregational Carol: *Silent Night* – Intro instrumental verse, then all sing.

**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 Thy Holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus Lord at Thy birth, Jesus Lord at Thy birth.**

Please extinguish your candle when the Pastor extinguishes his.

P As we go from this place, we take the joy of the promise of God's salvation with us; we sing the praise of the angel's song, "Glory to God in the highest, and peace to all." Go tell the story from ages past, the promised Holy Child has come at last. For unto us is born a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Closing Prayer and Benediction

IC Let us pray. Almighty God and Creator of light, a child is born for us and a son is given to us. Your eternal Word leaped down from heaven in the silent watches of the night, and now your Church is filled with wonder and light at the nearness of our God. Open our hearts to receive his life and increase our vision with the rising of the dawn, that our lives may be filled with his glory and his peace; who lives and reigns forever and ever.

C **Amen.**

P God the Creator who delights in you,
Jesus the Savior who is born for you,
and the lifegiving Spirit who shines on you,
+ bless you and keep you in hope and peace.

C Amen.

Congregational Carol: *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.**

P Go in peace. Christ is with you.

C Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Acknowledgements: New Revised Standard Version Bible, © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.; *O Little Town of Bethlehem* Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893; *Away in a Manger*, Text: North American, 19th cent.; *It Came upon the Midnight Clear* Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810-1876; *The First Noel*, Text: English traditional; *O Come, All Ye Faithful* Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711-1786; tr. Frederick Oakley, 1802-1880, sts. 1, 3-4; *Silent Night, Holy Night* Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792-1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820-1885; *Joy to the World*, Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

Worship Assistants: Beth Dana, Julie Huetteman, Dale Buettner (Musicians), Michaela Thompson, Dee Hershberger, Robert Hershberger, Intern Candice (Readers), Robert Hershberger, Intern Candice (Communion Assistants), Vicki Mills (Altar Guild and Usher), John Mills (Usher), Mike Dana (Lighting Technician), Michael Williams (A/V & Livestream Specialist), Carlee Schroeder (Assistant to Mr. Williams)

A special thank you to all who contributed beautiful music and provided poinsettias. You may take your plant(s) with you after this service.

December 26 and January 2: One Service at 9 A.M.

January 10: Reports deadline for the OSLC Annual Report

January 23, 1 P.M.: OSLC Annual Meeting