

DECEMBER 24, 2023 | 7PM WORSHIP | THE VIGIL OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD



MERRY CHRISTMAS

Every single present meticulously wrapped, every tree adorned with twinkling lights, every heartfelt card carefully sent, and every festive decoration hung, has been accomplished with anticipation of this momentous occasion. This night is a sacred celebration, a joyous commemoration of the birth of our Savior. As Charles Spurgeon eloquently expressed in his work, *God Incarnate: The End of Fear*. “He that is God this day was once an infant: so that if my cares are little and even trivial and comparatively infantile, I may go to him, for he was once a child.” Tonight, we extend a heartfelt invitation to all to come to Him—the babe in a humble manger. Approach Him with the weight of your cares and concerns, the burdens of your fears and failures, and the mixed emotions of grief and gladness. Embrace Emmanuel—God with Us—the One who ensures that we are never alone again.

CHILDREN IN WORSHIP

If you brought little ones with you today – we are overjoyed to have them here. While your worship might feel more like a wrestling match, a battle of wills, or a circus... your time, efforts, and distracted worship are worth it. Even the messiest and most frustrating days are not wasted. If your little one just needs a place to stretch their legs for a second, we have a **Family Room** in the back of the sanctuary.

HOLY COMMUNION + WHAT WE BELIEVE

Communion is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and confidence that our Lord gives us not only bread and wine but His very body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with him and with one another. Our Lord invites to His table the baptized who trust in the words “my body... my blood... for you”, repent of all sin, and seek to live by the Lord’s ways. If this is not your belief, are a child who has not taken the First Communion Class or are unfamiliar with the belief of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, we invite you to come forward with your arms crossed so that we can give you a blessing by making the sign of the cross over you. We also encourage you to talk to one of our pastors after the service if you have questions.

CONNECTION CARD

Please let us know you’re worshipping with us today. You can give us as little, or as much, info as you’d like. There is also a place on the connection card to submit a prayer request, make a comment, ask a question, or express interest in next steps. If you’d like to give an offering, you can do that, too! Scan the QR code or visit christlamesa.org/hello.



+ ORDER OF WORSHIP +

WELCOME AND INVOCATION

Please stand, if you are able, as we prepare our hearts to worship God and receive His good gifts.

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen!**

Leader: Jesus came as a baby in a manger.

All: **O Come, let us adore Him.**

Leader: Angels sang praises.

All: **O Come, let us adore Him.**

Leader: Shepherds came to worship.

All: **O Come, let us adore Him.**

Leader: Magi brought their gifts.

All: **O Come, let us adore Him.**

Leader: What then, shall we do?

All: **O Come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.**

OPENING HYMN | LSB 387 | JOY TO THE WORLD

All: 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.

No more let sins and sorrows 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.

Choir: 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.

All: 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.

CONFESSION OF SIN | PSALM 32:5; PSALM 51:10; 1 JOHN 1:9; JAMES 5:16

Leader: Let us come into the light of Christ, confessing our need for God's mercy.

We take a moment for self-reflection as we confess to God our imperfections.

Leader: God of peace,

All: **We confess that we are not at peace – with others or with ourselves. We bring to you all that tears us apart: discord in our families, violence in our world, and our own conflicted hearts. In your mercy, mend us. Reconnect us to one another and to you by the forgiveness offered through the Prince of Peace, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

RECEIVING OF GRACE

Leader: In the Word who has come to dwell with us, God has given us grace upon grace: forgiveness that is stronger than our sins, love that can heal every broken heart. Hear this word of God's pardon and peace: your sins and forgiven in the name of the Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen.**

Please be seated as we enter the “Liturgy of the Word.” Since the early days of the church, portions of the Bible have been read during worship so that all may be formed by the Word of God.

FIRST READING | ISAIAH 9:2-3, 6-7

²The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. ³You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder.

⁶For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

CAROL | BETHLEHEM | SOLOIST: TENLEY SITZE

SECOND READING | LUKE 2:1-7

¹ In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ²(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

CAROL | LSB 364 | AWAY IN A MANGER

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

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.

THIRD READING | LUKE 2:8-14

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to 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. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

CAROL | LSB 380 | 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!"

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 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!"

FOURTH READING | LUKE 2:15-20

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

CAROL | GLORY TO THE NEWBORN KING | CHOIR

APOSTLES' CREED

The Apostles' Creed serves as a timeless and foundational expression of the Christian faith, offering a sense of shared identity. We utilize the creed as a statement of belief about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Leader: Having heard God's Word proclaiming this great news, let us profess our common faith using the words of the Apostles' Creed.

All: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Adults may be seated. Children are invited to come forward for an age-appropriate message.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

MESSAGE HYMN | LSB 368 | 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.
Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;

Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.

HOMILY | THE GRINCH'S CHANGE OF HEART

OFFERING | CHRISTLAMESA.ORG/GIVE

Members of Christ Lutheran support the mission through their giving of time, talents, and treasures. If you are a guest joining us, please know there is no expectation for you to contribute.

HYMN OF RESPONSE | WHAT A GLORIOUS NIGHT

The shepherds came to see the baby, stood by His mother's side
Here laid the Savior inside a manger,
Oh what a glorious night, Oh what a glorious night

I hear the angels singing hallelujah, let the earth receive her King
I know that love has come, sing it out, Jesus Christ is born, Jesus Christ is born

The shepherds wondered, they couldn't hide it, told everyone in sight
All were amazed when they heard how God came down on this glorious night
God came down on this glorious night

I hear the angels singing hallelujah, let the earth receive her King
I know that love has come, sing it out, Jesus Christ is born, Jesus Christ is born

Glorious, glorious, what a glorious night
Glorious, glorious, what a glorious night

I hear the angels singing hallelujah, let the earth receive her King

I know that love has come, sing it out, Jesus Christ is born, Jesus Christ is born

All is calm now, all is quiet, a star shining in the sky
Below in Bethlehem the King is sleeping
Oh what a glorious night, Oh what a glorious night

Please stand, if you are able, as we lift up our prayers to God.

PRAYERS AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Each petition ends with:

Leader: Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

At the end of the prayers, we continue with the Lord's Prayer:

All: 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.

HOLY COMMUNION | ISAIAH 6:1-8; 2 TIMOTHY 4:22; COLOSSIANS 3:1; MATTHEW 26:26-28

The Sursum Corda (Latin: "Lift up your hearts") is an ancient Christian communion prayer. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we have been raised with Christ and now reign with him in heaven. We end this preface with the Sanctus (Latin: "Holy"). The Sanctus is one of the songs being sung in heaven before God's throne. We join our voices with the angels and those who have gone before us in the faith to give glory to God. After the Sanctus, we embrace the ultimate Mystery of Faith, as bread and wine become, for us, the Body and Blood of Jesus.

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Pastor: It is truly ... evermore praising You and singing:

All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of power and might: Heaven and earth are full of Your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Pastor: Our Lord, Jesus Christ, on the night in which He was betrayed...

SHARING OF THE PEACE | MATTHEW 5:9; 2 CORINTHIANS 5:20

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All: And also with you.

Please be seated, and join in singing the hymns, as you reflect on God's love and prepare to receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. You can find what we believe about Communion on the bottom of page 2.

COMMUNION HYMN | LSB 384 | OF THE FATHER'S LOVE BEGOTTEN

Of the Father's love begotten, ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending He,
Of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see, evermore and evermore.

Oh, that birth forever blessèd, when the virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving, bore the Savior of our race,
And the babe, the world's Redeemer, first revealed His sacred face, evermore and evermore.

O ye heights of heav'n, adore Him; Angel hosts, His praises sing.
Pow'rs, dominions, bow before Him and extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent, ev'ry voice in concert ring, evermore and evermore.

COMMUNION HYMN | LSB 366 | 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, goodwill 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 blessèd angels sing.

All you, beneath your heavy load, by care and guilt bent low,
Who toil along a dreary way with painful steps and slow:
Look up, for golden is the hour, come swiftly on the wing,
The Prince was born to bring you peace; of Him the angels sing.

For lo, the days have come to pass by prophets seen of old,
When down into the circling years came Christ as was foretold.
His word of peace shall to the earth God's ancient promise bring,
And all who take this gift will hear the song the angels sing.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

BENEDICTION

Leader: May the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the perseverance of the wise men, the obedience of Joseph and Mary, and the peace of the Christ-child be yours this Christmas; and may the blessing of Almighty God, the Father, + Son and Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

All: Amen.

As we prepare to sing "Silent Night," we light our candles, remembering that the light of the world has pierced the darkness. The clergy will come and light the candles down the center aisle. After your candle is lit, you're invited to help light the candles of those around you.

CLOSING HYMN | LSB 363 | SILENT 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 Thy holy face with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

COLORING PAGE FOR KIDDOS



THOSE SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Celebrant and Preacher: Pastor Travis Ferguson; **Liturgist:** Deacon Jacob Sitze; **Children’s Message:** Cheri Selander; **Acolyte:** Jonathan Clark; **Reader:** Tenley Sitze; **Music Leaders:** Kathy Barkett, Tenley Sitze, Sanctuary Choir, and trumpeters; Oscar Cardoso and Joshua Covarrubias; **Worship Partner:** Dale Mastny; **Communion Assistants:** Dave Blackford, Phil Lamonica, Bill Roan, and Dave Wutke; **Livestream, Sound, and Media:** Joseph Arzillo, Craig Barkett, and Alex Miller; **Welcome Team:** Dallas Johnson, Erik Selander, Bill McNally, Xavria Schwarz, Keith Yost, Leah Yost, and Jonah Yost

IN OUR PRAYERS

Celebrating a birthday this week: Olivia Payne, Ralph Suelzle, Matt Rochester, Cruz Kingdon, Tate Kelley, Kris Brouker; **Sick:** Rev. Art Puls, Lucinda Mello, Katha Kuspa; **Others:** Those who do not yet know the comfort Emmanuel brings; those who are spending Christmas alone.

OUR STAFF



Travis Ferguson
Pastor



Jacob Sitze
Deacon



Patti Maass
Director of Operations



Cheri Selander
Director of Youth Ministries



Brandon Heath
Minister to Youth



Kathy Barkett
Director of Worship and Music



Sarah Kusel
Assistant Director of Music and Worship



Xavria Schwarz
Principal



Melissa Payne
Preschool Director



Stuart Gardner
Director of Community and Communications



Craig Barkett
Director of Facilities



Kathy Garces
Administrative Accountant



Emily Lieber
Human Resources Specialist



Kathy Johnson
Worship and Music Assistant



Kim Voss
Administrative Assistant

To contact a staff member, please visit christlamesa.org/about

ANNOUNCEMENTS



CHRISTMAS OFFERING – Our entire Christmas Eve and Day Offerings will be split between three different organizations. **La Red** facilitates transformative development opportunities for people living in social vulnerability who reside in the coastal communities in El Salvador. Donations will go towards their summer camp program for impoverished children. **Support the Enlisted Project:** builds financial self-sufficiency among junior active duty enlisted members and recently discharged enlisted Veterans and their families facing financial crises through counseling, education, and grants. **Lutheran Church Charities Comfort Dog Ministry** commissions working animals, trained to interact with people of all ages and circumstances who are suffering and in need. LCC K-9 Comfort Dogs are deployed after traumatic events and visited Christ Lutheran School after a death in our school community in 2019.



PICKLEBALL AT CHRIST LUTHERAN – Join us in the Gym on Mondays from 7-9 pm for an amazing night of Pickleball! Equipment is provided, but you can also bring your own. Church and school family, friends, neighbors and community members are welcome. Questions? Contact Matt Rochester at mattrochie7@gmail.com.



MISSION TRIPS TO SOUTH AMERICA – Su Refugio mission trip planning is underway for 2024. Consider going to **Paraguay** June 28-July 6, **Peru** August 1-10, or **Argentina** October 3-12. Grants for \$1,000 are available to members of Christ Lutheran who want to help bring the Good News to those in South America. For more information, visit surefugio.org or contact Sandy Cole at colesj@hotmail.com.



2024 WOMEN'S RETREAT – You are invited to join the women of Christ Lutheran Church, School, and Preschool for Never Alone, an overnight retreat. The retreat will take place at Pine Valley Bible Conference Center (approx. 45 minutes from La Mesa) from Friday, March 15, 2024, to Saturday, March 16, 2024. Come connect and restore with us! Reserve your spot online at christlamesa.org/retreat.

To see more upcoming events, visit christlamesa.org/calendar.