

Messiah Lutheran Church

GATHER, EMPOWER, SERVE



✝ Holy Communion ✝

Lessons and Carols

December 28, 2025

LESSON AND CAROLS

This service of Lessons and Carols is intended for use on the Sunday closest to Name of Jesus (January 1). It could also be adapted for other times during the Christmas season. The service takes its theme from the Gospel of Luke 2:10-11, focusing on the ways God comes to us in Jesus as Savior (first set of lessons), Christ (second set of lessons), and Lord (third set of lessons).

GATHERING**PRELUDE**

Stand

GATHERING HYMN *Once in Royal David's City*

1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,
 2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and Lord of all,
 3 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re - deem - ing love;
 4 Not in that poor low - ly sta - ble, with the ox - en stand - ing by,

where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a man - ger for his bed;
 and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall;
 for that child so dear and gen - tle is our Lord in heav'n a - bove;
 we shall see him; but in heav - en, set at God's right hand on high;

Mar - y was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.
 with the poor and meek and low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
 and he leads his chil - dren on to the place where he is gone.
 there his chil - dren gath - er round, bright like stars, with glo - ry crowned.

Text: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818–1895
 Music: IRBY, Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805–1876

DIALOGUE

P: Come! Look upon the baby Jesus,
cradled in the arms of his mother.

C: **Seeing this wondrous sight,
may our hearts be comforted
and our spirits filled with peace.**

P: Come! Listen to choirs of angels
announcing good news to all people.

C: **Hearing this marvelous song, may we too sing:
Glory to God in the highest!**

P: Come! Receive this ancient story in your heart,
not as history but as a gift.

C: **Opening our hearts to this great mystery,
may Christ be born in us today.**

APOSTOLIC GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the
communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray,

Shine into our hearts the light of your wisdom, O God, and open
our minds to the knowledge of your word, that in all things we
may think and act according to your good will and may live
continually in the light of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and
reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**



LESSONS AND CAROLS**FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7****HYMN*****It Came Upon a Midnight Clear***

1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo-rious song of old,
 2 Still through the clo-ven skies they come with peace-ful wings un-furled,
 3 And you, be-neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend-ing low,
 4 For lo! The days are has-t'ning on, by proph-ets seen of old,

from an-gels bend-ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
 and still their heav'n-ly mu-sic floats o'er all the wea-ry world.
 who toil a-long the climb-ing way with pain-ful steps and slow:
 when with the ev-er-cir-cling years shall come the time fore-told,

"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all-gra-cious king."
 A-bove its sad and low-ly plains they bend on hov-'ring wing,
 look now, for glad and gold-en hours come swift-ly on the wing;
 when peace shall o-ver all the earth its an-cient splen-dors fling,

The world in sol-emn still-ness lay to hear the an-gels sing.
 and ev-er o'er its ba-bel sounds the bless-ed an-gels sing.
 oh, rest be-side the wea-ry road and hear the an-gels sing!
 and all the world give back the song which now the an-gels sing.

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810-1876

Music: CAROL, Richard S. Willis, 1819-1900

SECOND READING: Micah 5:2-5a**HYMN** *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 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.
 oh, come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Im - man - u - el!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835–1893


Music: ST. LOUIS, Lewis H. Redner, 1831–1908

THIRD READING: Luke 1:26-35, 38


HYMN Infant Holy, Infant Lowly




1 In - fant ho - ly, in - fant low - ly, for his bed a cat - tle stall;
2 Flocks were sleep - ing, shep - herds keep - ing vig - il till the morn - ing new



ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know - ing Christ the child is Lord of all.
saw the glo - ry, heard the sto - ry, tid - ings of a gos - pel true.

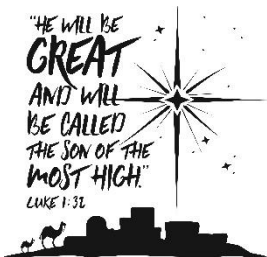


Swift - ly wing - ing, an - gels sing - ing, bells are ring - ing, tid - ings bring - ing:
Thus re - joic - ing, free from sor - row, prais - es voic - ing, greet the mor - row:



Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

Text: Polish carol; tr. Edith M. G. Reed, 1885–1933, alt.
Music: W ZŁOBIE LEŻY, Polish carol



FOURTH READING: Luke 2:8-16

PSALM: 96

Refrain: *Joy to the World, the Lord is Come*

**Sing to the LORD | a new song;
sing to the LORD, | all the earth.**

**²Sing to the LORD, bless the name | of the LORD;
proclaim God's salvation from | day to day.**

**³Declare God's glory a- | mong the nations
and God's wonders a- | mong all peoples.**

**⁴For great is the LORD and greatly | to be praised,
more to be feared | than all gods. R**

**⁵As for all the gods of the nations, they | are but idols;
but you, O LORD, have | made the heavens.**

**⁶Majesty and magnificence are | in your presence;
power and splendor are in your | sanctuary.**

**⁷Ascribe to the LORD, you families | of the peoples,
ascribe to the LORD hon- | or and power.**

**⁸Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the | holy name;
bring offerings and enter the courts | of the LORD. R**

**⁹Worship the LORD in the beau- | ty of holiness;
tremble before the LORD, | all the earth.**

**¹⁰Tell it out among the nations: "The | LORD is king!
The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved
will judge the peo- | ples with equity."**

**¹¹Let the heavens rejoice, and let the | earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it;
let the field be joyful and all that | is therein.**

**¹²Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy
at your com- | ing, O LORD,
for you come to | judge the earth.**

**¹³You will judge the | world with righteousness
and the peoples | with your truth. R**

FIFTH READING: Luke 2:21-36**HYMN*****That Boy-Child of Mary***

That boy-child of Mar - y was born in a sta - ble,



a man - ger his cra - dle in Beth - le - hem.

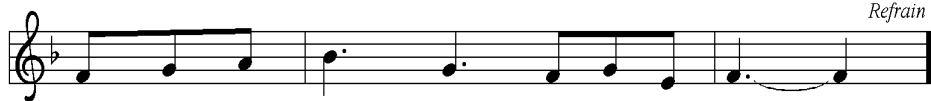


1 What shall we call him, child of the man - ger?

2 His name is Je - sus, God ev - er with us,

3 How can he save us, how can he help us,

4 Gift of the Fa - ther, to hu - man moth - er.



What name is giv - en in Beth - le - hem?

God giv - en for us in Beth - le - hem.

born here a - mong us in Beth - le - hem?

makes him our broth - er in Beth - le - hem.

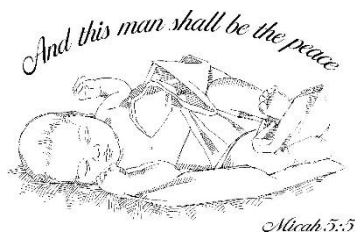
5 One with the Father,
he is our Savior,
heaven-sent helper
in Bethlehem.

6 Gladly we praise him,
love and adore him,
give ourselves to him
in Bethlehem.

Text: Tom Colvin, 1925-2000

Music: BLANTYRE, Malawi traditional; adapt. Tom Colvin

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SIXTH READING: Matthew 2:1-11**HYMN***As with Gladness Men of Old*

1 As with glad - ness men of old did the guid - ing star be - hold;
 2 As with joy - ful steps they sped, Sav - ior, to thy low - ly bed,
 3 As they of - fered gifts most rare at thy cra - dle, rude and bare,
 4 Ho - ly Je - sus, ev - 'ry day keep us in the nar - row way;
 5 In the heav'n - ly coun - try bright need they no cre - a - ted light;



as with joy they hailed its light, lead - ing on - ward, beam - ing bright;
 there to bend the knee be - fore thee, whom heav'n and earth a - dore;
 so may we with ho - ly joy, pure and free from sin's al - loy,
 and when earth - ly things are past, bring our ran - somed souls at last
 thou its light, its joy, its crown, thou its sun which goes not down;



so, most gra - cious Lord, may we ev - er - more be led by thee.
 so may we with will - ing feet ev - er seek thy mer - cy seat.
 all our cost - liest trea - sures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav'n - ly king.
 where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glo - ry hide.
 there for - ev - er may we sing al - le - lu - ias to our king.



SEVENTH READING: JOHN 1:1-14**HYMN***Of the Father's Love Begotten*

1 Of the Fa-ther's love be-got-ten ere the worlds be-

2 Oh, that birth for-ev-er bless-ed, when the vir-gin,

3 This is he whom seers in old time chant-ed of with

4 Let the heights of heav'n a-dore him; an-gel hosts, his

5 Christ, to thee, with God the Fa-ther, and, O Ho-ly

gan to be, he is Al-pha and O-me-ga,

full of grace, by the Ho-ly Ghost con-ceiv-ing,

one ac-cord, whom the voic-es of the proph-ets

prais-es sing; pow'rs, do-min-ions, bow be-fore him

Ghost, to thee, hymn and chant and high thanks-giv-ing

he the source, the end-ing he, of the things that are, that

bore the Sav-ior of our race, and the babe, the world's re-

prom-ised in their faith-ful word; now he shines, the long-ex-

and ex-tol our God and King; let no tongue on earth be

and un-wea-ried prais-es be: hon-or, glo-ry, and do-

have deem-er, and that fu-ture years shall see,

pect-ed; let cre-a-tion praise its Lord

si-lent, ev-'ry voice in con-cert ring

min-ion, and e-ter-nal vic-to-ry

ev-er-more and ev-er-more.

ev-er-more and ev-er-more.

ev-er-more and ev-er-more.

ev-er-more and ev-er-more.

ev-er-more and ev-er-more!

A - men.

INSTALLATION OF CONGREGATION COUNCIL

- P:** At this time, the members of the congregation council are asked to present themselves before the altar.
- P:** In Holy Baptism our Lord Jesus Christ liberated you from sin and death and made you members of his Church. Through Word and Sacrament, you have been nurtured in faith. I ask you, together with all who are here gathered, to confess the faith of the Church, the faith in which we are baptized.

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God,

**the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living
and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.**

With the Father and the Son, he is worshiped and glorified.

He has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen**

P: *St. Paul writes: There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them. There are different ways of serving, but the same Lord is served. There are different abilities to perform service, but the same God gives to everyone ability for particular service. The Spirit's presence is shown in some way in each person, for the good of all.*

You have been elected to positions of leadership and trust in this congregation.

You are to see that the words and deeds of this household of faith reflect him in whose name we gather.

You are to work together with other members to see that the worship and work of Christ are done in this congregation, and that God's will is done in this community and in the whole world.

You are to be diligent in your specific area of serving, that the one Lord who empowers you is glorified.

You are to be examples of faith active in love, to help maintain the life and harmony of this congregation.

On behalf of your sisters and brothers in Christ, I ask you: Are you ready to accept and faithfully to carry out the duties of the office to which you have been elected?

R: Yes, by the help of God.

P: People of God, I ask you: Will you support these, your elected leaders, and will you share in the mutual ministry that Christ has given to all who are baptized?

C: **Yes, by the help of God.**

P: I now declare you installed as members of the congregation council. God bless you with his Holy Spirit, that you may prove faithful servants of Christ.

C: **Amen**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A brief silence is held after the introduction.

P: Filled with good news of great joy, let us offer our prayers for the church, the earth, and all people.

After each petition

P: God of Grace,

C: receive our prayer

The prayers conclude:

P: We commend these prayers to you, O God, trusting your grace made known to all, through the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen

PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

The pastor and congregation greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Peace be with you. **R:** Peace be with you.

Sit

MEAL

OFFERING

The Offering is received as the Lord's table is prepared.

Stand

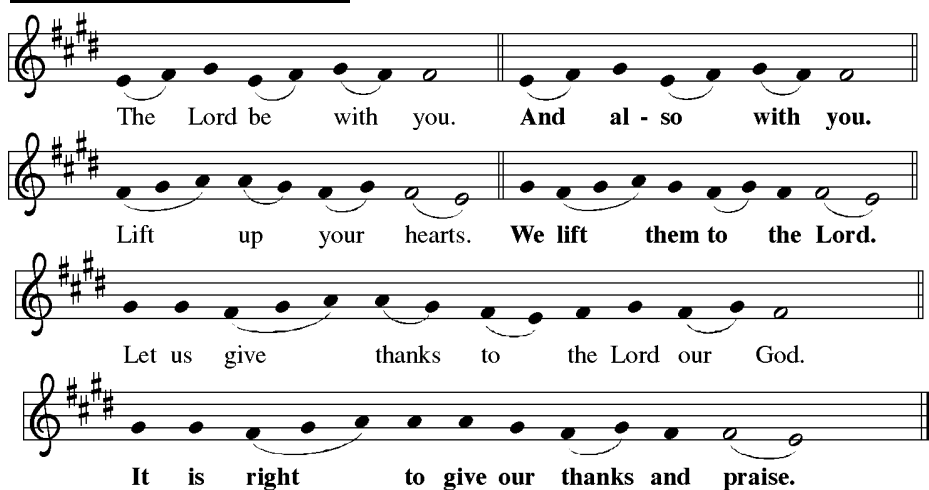
OFFERING HYMN

As the gifts are presented, the Offertory is sung

1. 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,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud,
the babe, the son of Mary!
2. 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!

OFFERING PRAYER**A**: Let us pray:

C: God of heaven and earth,
 from the beginning, you have called forth life,
 in which you take delight.
 The trees, the fields, and the seas sing for joy.
 Bless now these gifts, received from your bounty,
 that we may join the chorus of creation
 to tell of your salvation from day to day.
 Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING


The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

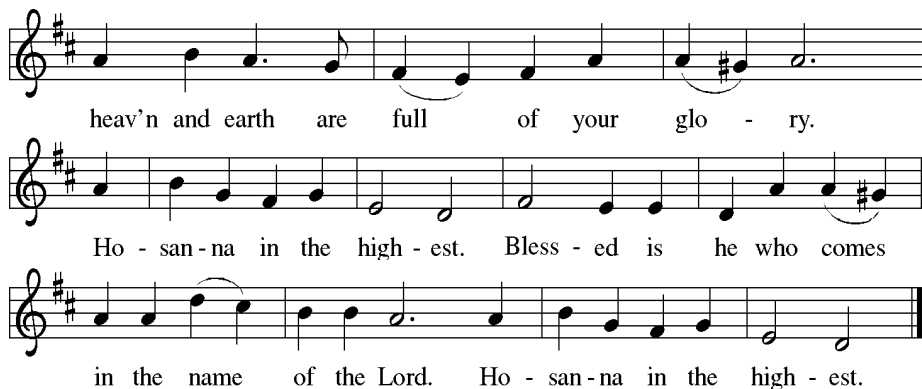
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,



EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

P: Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth.

In mercy for our fallen world you gave your only Son,
that all those who believe in him should not perish,
but have eternal life.

We give thanks to you

for the salvation you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ.

Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts,

that we may receive our Lord with a living faith

as he comes to us in his holy supper.

C: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

P: 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.

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.

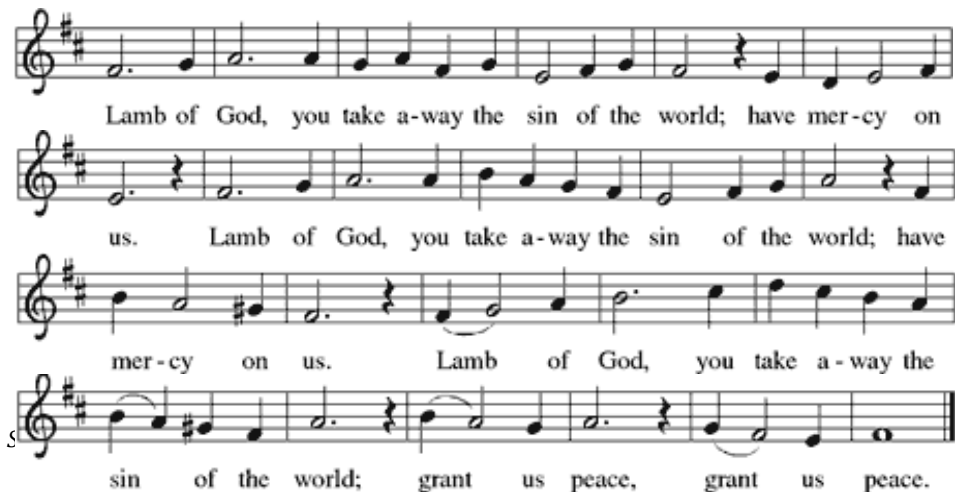
Give us this day our daily bread;
 and forgive us our trespasses,
 as we forgive those
 who trespass against us;
 and lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,
 and the power, and the glory,
 forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: A child has been born for us, a Son given to us.
 Come, receive the gift of Jesus.

C: Thanks be to God.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
 us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
 mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the
 sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

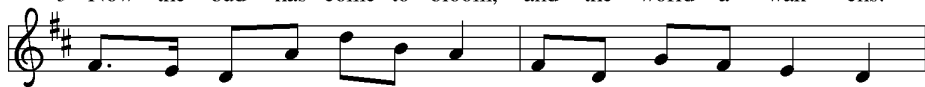
COMMUNION

All baptized believers are invited to this holy meal. Those not communing are invited for a blessing. Please follow the instructions of the ushers to gather at the altar table. As the ministers give the bread and wine, they say these words to each communicant:

The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you.
The communicant may say: Amen

COMMUNION HYMN***Cold December Flies Away***

1 Cold De - cem - ber flies a - way at the rose - red splen - dor.
 2 In the hope - less time of sin shad - ows deep had fall - en.
 3 Now the bud has come to bloom, and the world a - wak - ens.



A - pril's crown-ing glo - ry breaks while the whole world won - ders
 All the world lay un - der death. Eyes were closed in sleep - ing.
 In the lil - y's pur - est flow'r dwells a won - drous fra - grance.



at the ho - ly un - seen pow'r of the tree which bears the
 But, when all seemed lost in night, came the sun whose gold - en
 And it spreads to all the earth from the mo - ment of its



flow'r. On the bless - ed tree blooms the red - dest flow'r. On the tree blooms the
 light brings un - end - ing joy, brings the end - less joy of our hope, high - est
 birth; and its beau - ty lives. In the flow'r it lives, in the flow'r, and it



rose here in love's own gar - den, full and strong in glo - ry.
 hope, of our hope's bright dawn - ing, Son be - lov'd of heav - en.
 spreads in its heav'n - ly bright - ness sweet per - fume de - light - ful.

Text: Catalanian carol; tr. Howard Hawhee, b. 1953
 Music: EL DESEMBRE CONGELAT, Catalanian carol
 Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Stand

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

A: Merciful God,

we thank you for Jesus, who is our heavenly food.
 Strengthened by this goodness,
 send us forth to announce your peace,
 comfort the afflicted,
 and share the good news of great joy.

C: Amen

SENDING

BLESSING

P: Let us bless the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

P: The God of love,
Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit,
lavish you with grace,
illumine your path,
and increase your joy,
today and always.

C: **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

The First Noel

1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to
2 They look - ed up and saw . . . a star shin - ing
3 And by the light of that . . . same star three . .
4 This star drew near to the . . . north - west, o'er . .
5 Then en - tered in those wise . . . men three, full . .

cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where
in . . . the east . . be - yond . . them far; and to the
wise . . men came . . from coun - try far; to seek for a
Beth - le - hem . . it took . . its rest; and there it
rev - 'rent - ly . . . up - on . . . their knee, and of - fered

they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's
earth it gave . . . great light, and . . so it con -
king was their . . . in - tent, and to fol - low the
did both stop . . . and stay right . . o - ver the
there in his . . . pres - ence their . . gold, . . . and

Refrain

night that was so deep.
tin-ued both day and night.
star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -
place where Je - sus lay.
myrrh, and frank - in - cense.

el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. The Word of God dwells in you richly.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

SERVICE ASSISTANTS

Ushers: Charles Luppert, Larry & Donna Britton, Rhonda Koch, Sylvia McCarty, Larry Solomon; **Lay Assistant:** Carola Storrs

Comm. Asst.: Mary Schultz; **Altar Guild:** Sue Shoemaker, Yvonne Kaiser

Greeters/Comm. Presenters: Yvonne Kaiser, Rhonda Koch

Flower Delivery: Marilyn Winter; **Readers:** Karrah Bair, Anita Bair, Susan Bryan, Dave Bausinger, Carola Storrs, Georgie Ulrich

IN BLESSED MEMORY

The Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God and in memory of loved ones who have died this year.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to Messiah Church! It is our joy to have you worship with us. If you are visiting, please make yourself known and leave your name & information to a congregation member. *We hope to see you again.*

This morning we welcome Janet Stroble, an Authorized Lay Worship Leader (ALWL) of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. Janet has received extensive training so as to provide worship leadership and preaching, and has been authorized by the bishop of the synod to preside at the Eucharist

Next Sunday, January 4, we will be un-decorating the church. If you are able please stay after worship and lend a hand. *Thank you.*

Pledge cards and Time & Talent forms will be accepted through today.

If you have not already picked up your Poinsettias, please be sure to take them after worship today.

MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

JARED GIST, ORGANIST

324 South Howard Street | South Williamsport, PA 17702
(570) 326-9171 | www.messiahsouth.org

What Really Matters

“All the world should be registered” (Luke 2:1). This announcement from the emperor was an order for all people to stand up and be counted, to prove their worth by stating their name, their lineage, and the details of their existence, like the stats on the back of a trading card.

But an angel made a different sort of announcement: “This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger” (Luke 2:12). The shepherds would need to look for a baby just lying there, doing nothing but existing in all his God-given glory.

This baby is such good news in a world that tells us every day, in every possible way, that we need to prove our worth, that we need to convince the world and everyone around us that we matter. In what ways do you repeatedly try to prove your worth to the world? To your friends and family and colleagues? To yourself? To God?

What would it feel like—in your body, in your heart, in your gut—to just exist in all your God-given glory? To remember that the Savior of the world came to us as a baby who couldn’t do a single thing besides lie in the straw? And what would it be like for you—for all of us—to live each day in response to this wild grace?

Each of us matters to God, who sent Jesus into the world for us and all creation. God loves us, claims us in baptism, and continues to sustain us in holy communion. This indeed is good news of great joy for all people. Glory to God!

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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