

ORDER OF WORSHIP

AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH – December 5th, 2021
CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE
4:30PM AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH, 7:00PM JUBILEE

PRELUDE BY SHIRLEY BERGMAN

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN: *Angels We Have Heard on High, ELW 289*

1 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.

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

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

OPENING LITANY FROM ISAIAH CHAPTERS 9 & 40

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid.

(The first Advent candle is lit.)

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;

those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined.

(The second Advent candle is lit.)

You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy;

They rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest.

(The third Advent candle is lit.)

Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings;

lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,

lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!"

(The fourth Advent candle is lit.)

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

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;

(The Christ candle is lit.)

authority rests upon his shoulders;

and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

HYMN: I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve, ELW 271, vs. 1 & 2

1 I am so glad each Christmas Eve,
the night of Jesus' birth!
Then like the sun the star shone forth,
and angels sang on earth.

2 The little child in Bethlehem,
he was a king indeed!
For he came down from heav'n above
to help a world in need.

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

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. Amen.**

CHILDREN'S SERMON

HYMN: Away in a Manger, ELW 277 v. 1

1 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.

RESPONSIVE SCRIPTURE READINGS FROM ISAIAH CHAPTERS 43 & 11

Thus says the LORD, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters,

Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old.

I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?

I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

HYMN: *What Child is This, ELW 296, vs. 1*

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!

RESPONSIVE SCRIPTURE READINGS FROM ISAIAH CHAPTERS 60 & 52

Arise, shine; for your light has come,

and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples;

but the Lord will arise upon you, and the glory of the Lord will appear over you.

Nations shall come to your light,

and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Awake, awake, put on your strength, O Zion!

Put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city;

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,

who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy;

for in plain sight they see the return of the LORD to Zion.

Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem;

for the LORD has comforted his people, the LORD has redeemed Jerusalem.

The LORD has bared God's holy arm before the eyes of all the nations;

and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

**Please stand as you are able for the Gospel.*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Alleluia! Lord and savior: open now your saving word.
Let it burn like fire within us; speak until our hearts are stirred.
Alleluia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.**

Gospel: Luke 2:1-20

God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.

The Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

1In 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.

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.

The Gospel of our Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

**Please be seated.*

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming, ELW 272*

**Please stand as you are able.*

- 1 Lo, how a rose e'er blooming
from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming
as seers of old have sung,
it came, a flow'r so bright,
amid the cold of winter,
when half-spent was the night.

- 2 Isaiah had foretold it,
the rose I have in mind;
with Mary we behold it,
the virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright,
she bore to us a Savior,
when half-spent was the night.

- 3 This flow'r, whose fragrance tender
with sweetness fills the air,
dispels with glorious splendor
the darkness everywhere.
True man, yet very God,
from sin and death he saves us
and lightens ev'ry load.

- 4 O Savior, child of Mary,
who felt our human woe;
O Savior, king of glory,
who dost our weakness know:
bring us at length, we pray,
to the bright courts of heaven
and into endless day.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Joining our voices with the heavenly host and Christians throughout time and space, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Love proclaims that a Savior has been born to us! Inspire your church throughout the world to proclaim the good news of Jesus' birth to all who seek salvation,

hope, and new life. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Love whispers to a weary world that the time for rest and restoration has come. Maintain healthy cycles of wake and sleep for all creatures. Where light pollution disrupts natural rhythms, encourage new practices. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Love cries to a warring world that the time for peace is at hand. Direct those in power who make decisions on behalf of others, that they nurture and sustain all that is healthy, good, and holy. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Love sings through the wails of a newborn baby. Respond to all who cry out in pain, despair, or need this night (*especially*). *Bring comfort to those for whom separation, grief, or loss makes the Christmas season especially difficult.* Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Love murmurs words of comfort to a newborn child and exhausted parents. Bless new and expectant parents or caregivers, especially those who are alone or afraid this night. Pour out your love upon families of every kind. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

God's ever-present love is proclaimed through the faithful who came before us. We give you thanks for Mary, John the baptizer, Elizabeth his mother, Joseph the dreamer, and all who point toward your love. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Rejoicing in your Word made flesh among us, we commend these prayers to you, confident of your grace and love made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who sends the word with angels,
who is made flesh among all peoples,
and who breathes peace on all the earth.

Amen.

In Christ, we are bold to name our sin and cry out for peace.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy God,

we confess our sin before you.

We replace compassion with competition.

We seek what is mighty while ignoring the meek.

We are quick to anger but slow to forgive.

We have not put on love in harmony with you.

Wrap us in the grace of your powerful Word.

Swaddle our hearts with your peace,

**that all we do, in word or deed,
may reflect your love born among us.**

Amen.

I bring you good news of great joy for all people:

God has come among us

in the child born of Mary, Christ the Lord.

✠ In Christ your sins are forgiven

and you are clothed in peace.

Amen.

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you.

And also 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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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

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

DISTRIBUTION

**Please be seated.*

In Christ's manger, at Christ's table,
come, see what God makes known for you.

HYMN DURING DISTRIBUTION: *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear, ELW 282*

- 1 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.

- 2 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.

- 3 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!

4 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.

**Please stand as you are able.*

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

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

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**We thank you, wondrous God, for Jesus,
God with us, in these gifts of bread and wine.
As we have shared this feast of love,
strengthen us to share your love with all the world.
In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.**

HYMN: Go Tell It On The Mountain, ELW 290

Refrain

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

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

2 The shepherds feared and trembled
when, lo, above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth. *Refrain*

3 Down in a lonely manger
the humble Christ was born;
and God sent us salvation

that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

CLOSING LITANY FROM ISAIAH 35

Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God! Your God will come and save you."

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing.

All shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees.

Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God! Your God will come and save you."

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;

**then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.**

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;

**the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;**

Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God! Your God will come and save you."

A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way;

it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;

they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there.

And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing;

everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;

they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God! Your God will come and save you."

Blessing

The God of hope

fill us with all joy and peace in believing,

so that we may abound in hope

by the power of the Holy Spirit,

through Christ Jesus, the Word made flesh.

Amen.

HYMN WITH CANDLE LIGHTING: *Silent Night, ELW 281*

1 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.

- 2 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!
- 3 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

ASSISTING THIS SUNDAY:

Pastor: Pastor Kristen Rod

Music: Shirley Bergman

Usher: Randy and Iva Ruehs

Reader: Maureen Even

THIS WEEK AT ALC

Friday, Dec 24th:

4:30pm Christmas Eve service at ALC

Friday, Dec 24th:

7:00pm Christmas Eve service at Jubilee

Saturday, Dec 25th:

9:00am Christmas Day service at Jubilee

Sunday, Dec 26th:

8:30am worship-- Lessons and Carols (Pastor on vacation)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday Worship time is 8:30 AM December 5-February 27.

Christmas Eve worship service: The Christmas Eve service at ALC will be at 4:30pm on Friday Dec 24. You are also welcome to go to the Christmas Eve service at Jubilee at 7:00pm on Friday, Dec 24 and the Christmas Day service at Jubilee at 9:00am on Saturday, Dec 25.

ALC Christmas offering designation: All ALC Christmas offering envelopes and offerings will be split 50/50 between **Lutheran Chaplaincy Outreach** (which funds an ELCA Lutheran Chaplain at the University of Iowa Hospital) and ALC member **Stephanie Winkelpleck** (to help with her medical expenses for Acute Myeloid Leukemia). **Caring Bridge** link:

<https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/stephaniewittwinkelpleck>.

Advent resources from ELCA World Hunger: Advent calendars and study guides from ELCA World Hunger are available in the narthex.

Financial gifts & designations: December is a great time to reflect on your regular giving, and to consider increasing the amount that you regularly give to God through the church, as well as how much you designate to various ministries. Anything designated "Mission Support (Benevolence)" goes to support the ministries of the Northeastern Iowa Synod. Anything designated "Improvement" goes to support property upkeep and improvements to the church building and parsonage. Anything designated "Current," as well as anything undesignated, goes to support the general operating expenses of the congregation. Thank you for your continued generosity in all of these areas!

ALC Committees: Council will be looking to fill committee openings for 2022. Please consider sharing your time and talents as we try to establish a three-year rotation. We currently have openings on **Property, Technology, Hospitality, Worship and Music**.

Prayer Shawl meets Tuesdays, 10 AM - noon. Enjoy fellowship while knitting and crocheting. New members welcome. The shawls and blankets are shared with those who are ill, grieving, and in need of comfort.

Quilting for Lutheran World Relief: We will take a break during December. Please talk to Sharon McAtee, Kaye Jones, or Mary Adams if you are interested in this ministry. Our next work day is January 10, 2022 at 1:00 PM. We gather every second and fourth Monday to cut, pin, sew, iron, and tie quilts. Come join us!

Sheets for Quilting needed: Sheets for quilt backs can be put in the back pew. Thanks for your help.

Mobile Giving App If you give your regular contributions using Give Plus App, we have been notified that they will stop supporting the Give Plus app as of January 31, 2022. You should download the new app called Vanco Mobile to continue using. Note: your username and password will remain the same, and any recurring payments you have scheduled will continue in the new app. **If you do not currently have anything setup, now is a great time to download the Vanco Mobile app and start your recurring giving today.**