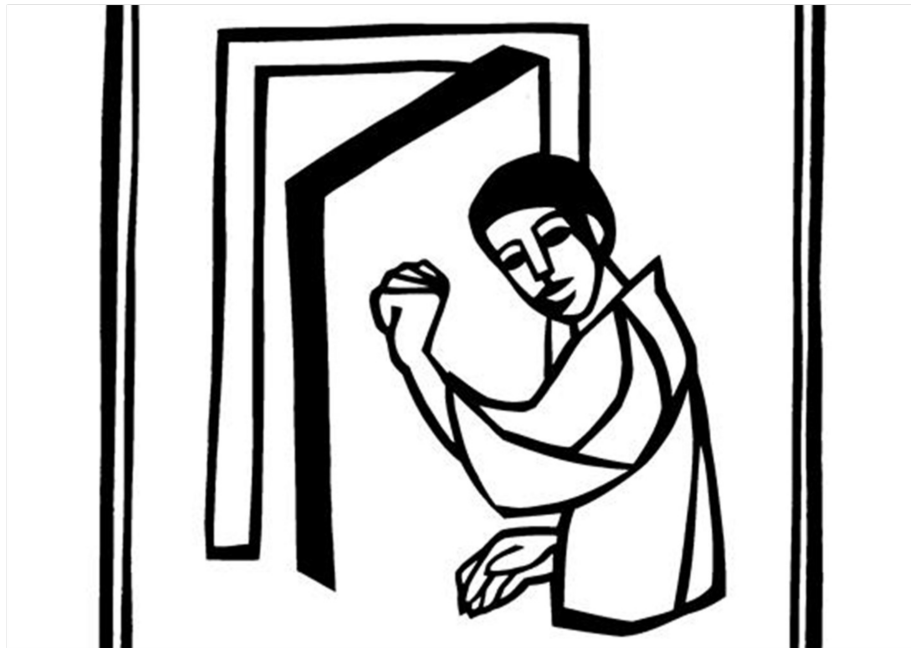


# Welcome to Worship at ALC

552 Purdy Street PO Box 286 Jesup, Iowa 50648  
Church Office: 827-6626  
Church's web page: [www.americanlutheranjesup.org](http://www.americanlutheranjesup.org)

Jesus Christ calls American Lutheran Church  
to nourish the world by faithfully sharing His gifts.

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CHRISTMAS EVE EVENING SERVICE  
Sunday, December 24th, 2023 4:30pm Worship & Communion



**Praise God that we can worship together! We pray you will be enlightened by the Holy Spirit and strengthened in the faith that trusts in our Lord Jesus Christ and praises him for the gift of our salvation. If you have not already done so, please fill out the communication card provided for you by the ushers. Place it in the offering plate as it is passed during worship. The ushers in the back of the church will gladly answer questions you may have. PEACE be with you.**

## **Introduction to the day**

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.

**PRELUDE** Shirley Bergman

## **WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**GATHERING SONG** *O Come All Ye Faithful, ELW #283*

## **LITANY FROM THE GOSPEL OF JOHN, CHAPTER 1**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

**He was in the beginning with God.**

All things came into being through him,

**And without him not one thing came into being.**

What has come into being in him was life,

**And the life was the light of all people.**

The light shines in the darkness,

**And the darkness did not overcome it.**

The Word became flesh and lived among us,

**And we beheld his glory, full of grace and truth.**

**SONG OF PRAISE** *Go Tell It On the Mountain, ELW #290*

## GREETING

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

## FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7

*This poem promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth of a royal child with a name full of promise. While Judah's king will practice justice and righteousness, the real basis for faith lies in God's passion for the people: The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this!*

A reading from Isaiah.

- <sup>2</sup>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.  
<sup>3</sup>You 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.  
<sup>4</sup>For 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.  
<sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in  
blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.  
<sup>6</sup>For 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.  
<sup>7</sup>His 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 jus-  
tice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore.  
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM: Psalm 96

- <sup>1</sup>Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.  
<sup>2</sup>**Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD; proclaim God's salvation from  
day to day.**  
<sup>3</sup>Declare God's glory among the nations and God's wonders among all  
peoples.  
<sup>4</sup>**For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised, more to be feared than all**

## gods. R

<sup>5</sup>As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; but you, O LORD, have  
made the heavens.

<sup>6</sup>**Majesty and magnificence are in your presence; power and splendor are in  
your sanctuary.**

<sup>7</sup>Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD honor  
and power.

<sup>8</sup>**Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name; bring offerings and enter  
the courts of the LORD. R**

<sup>9</sup>Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; tremble before the LORD, all the  
earth.

<sup>10</sup>**Tell 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 peoples with equity."**

<sup>11</sup>Let 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.

<sup>12</sup>**Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O LORD,  
for you come to judge the earth.**

<sup>13</sup>You will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples I with your  
truth.

## SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14

*The appearance of God's grace in Jesus Christ brings salvation for all humanity.  
Consequently, in the present we live wisely and justly while also anticipating the  
hope of our Savior's final appearance.*

A reading from Titus.

- <sup>11</sup>The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, <sup>12</sup>training us to re-  
nounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that  
are self-controlled, upright, and godly, <sup>13</sup>while we wait for the blessed hope  
and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.  
<sup>14</sup>He 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.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *Angels We Have Heard on High, ELW #289***  
**vs. 1**

1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,  
and the moun-tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.

*Refrain*

Glo - ri - a  
in ex - cel - sis De - o; glo - ri - a  
in ex - cel - sis De - o.

**GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-14**

*The gospel is announced.*

The holy gospel according to Luke. Chapter 2:vs. 1-20

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*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.*

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>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.

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>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: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup>“Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”[

<sup>15</sup>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.” <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**CHILDRENS SERMON**

**SERMON**

**HYMN OF THE DAY *The First Noel ELW 300***

**CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s 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 to the dead.\***

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

\*Or, “he descended into hell,” another translation of this text in widespread use.

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Trusting in God’s good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world God loves.

*A brief silence.*

Glory to you, God, for the song of the angels, proclaiming to the world Christ’s holy birth. Give your church a joyful song to sing, that we bring the good news of peace and salvation to all people. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Glory to you, God, for the stars that shine in the depth of the night. Provoke awe in our hearts at the expansive mystery of the cosmos. Open us to find beauty in the clear darkness of night and in the first glimmers of dawn. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Glory to you, God, for the child born to us who establishes a kingdom of justice and righteousness. Break bonds of oppression, bring reconciliation to warring lands, and establish peace from this time onward and forevermore. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Glory to you, God, for Mary’s loving care. Lead us to tend to one another in time of need. Share the comfort of your presence with all people tonight who are alone or separated from loved ones due to estrangement, incarceration, or illness (*especially* Stephanie). Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Glory to you, God, for the faithfulness of the shepherds in their vocation. Grant rest to any who feel exhausted from their work during this season: retail and restaurant workers, church musicians, administrative staff, and clergy, organizers of charitable-giving events, and service workers doing essential tasks. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Glory to you, God, for the multitude of the heavenly host. We rejoice in the zeal of all your saints who have witnessed the appearing of your grace, and who reveal to us your salvation for all. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace.

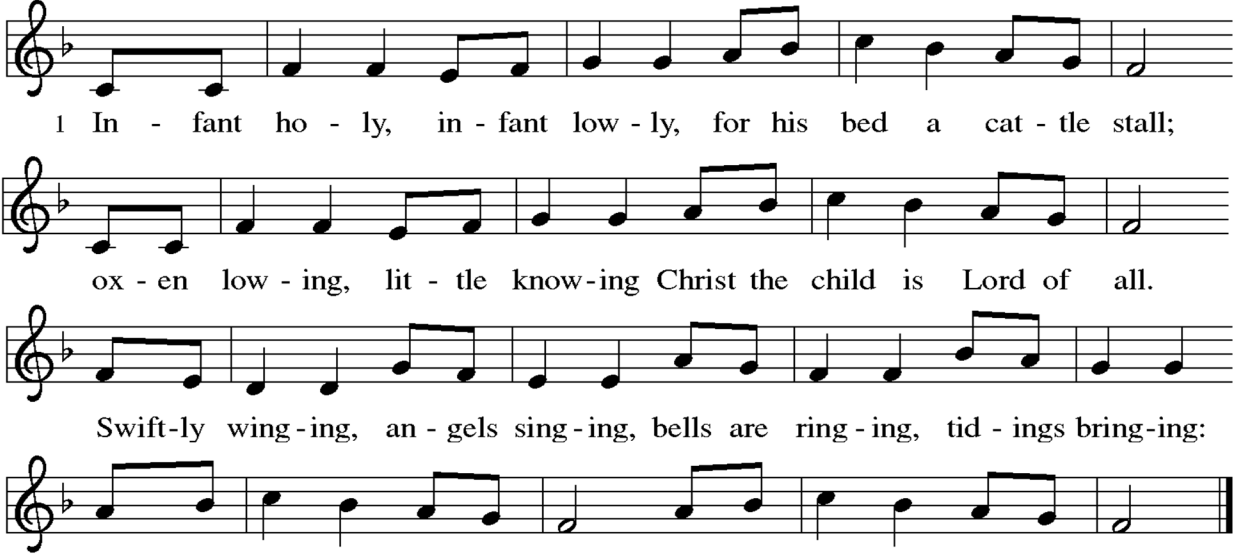
**Amen.**

**SHARING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.  
And also with you.

**OFFERING**

**OFFERTORY** *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly, ELW #276 verse 1*



1 In - fant ho - ly, in - fant low - ly, for his bed a cat - tle stall;  
ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know - ing Christ the child is Lord of all.  
Swift - ly wing - ing, an - gels sing - ing, bells are ring - ing, tid - ings bring - ing:  
Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!

**OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.

**Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, who shines in glory, clothes us in compassion, and bears gifts of mercy for all.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sins with confidence in God’s promise of forgiveness.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

God, wonderful counselor,  
**we confess that we have turned from your gifts and chosen our own way. We have not made room for you in our hearts or in our world. We have lived in fear; we have not welcomed the stranger; we desire gifts that will not endure. Forgive us our sins, known and unknown, and open us to receive the peace of Jesus dwelling in and among us. Amen.**  
God's lovingkindness has appeared to us in Christ our Savior.  
We are saved, not by anything we have done,  
but by God's mercy poured out on us richly.  
In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.  
Through the Spirit living in you, God give you faith to trust Jesus,  
who is Love born for you, now and always.  
**Amen.**

### **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God.  
You are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory.

You so loved the world that you gave your only Son,  
so that everyone who believes in him may not perish  
but have eternal life.

We give you thanks for his coming into the world  
to fulfill for us your holy will and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup,  
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

### **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Remembering, therefore, his salutary command, his life-giving passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension, and the promise of his coming again, we give thanks to you, O Lord God Almighty, not as we ought but as we are able; we ask you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving and with your Word and Holy Spirit to bless us, your servants, and these your own gifts of bread and wine, so that we and all who share in the body and blood of Christ may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace, and, receiving the forgiveness of sin, may be formed to live as your holy people and be given our inheritance with all your saints.

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.  
**Amen, Amen**

### **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**

*We believe that Jesus Christ is the host of this meal, and he invites all people to his table, so we practice open communion. That means that all the baptized are welcome to receive communion, regardless of your denomination of membership. We offer communion instruction to 5th graders; younger visitors who have already communed are welcome to receive communion here as well.*

### **COMMUNION SONGS O Little Town of Bethlehem, ELW #279**

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray.  
**Radiant God, with our eyes we have seen your salvation, and in this meal we have feasted on your grace. May your Word take flesh in us, that we may be your holy people, revealing your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

**SENDING**

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

**BLESSING**

Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

**CANDLE LIGHTING *Silent Night, ELW #281***

**DISMISSAL**

**POSTLUDE** by Shirley Bergman

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**FOR OUR LITTLE ONES:** Busy bags are available. Please feel free to borrow them each Sunday.

**Budget Hearing** will be held January 7, 2024 after worship.

**Annual Meeting** January 21st following Worship.

**Offerings for Christmas:** ELCA Good Gifts

***Portals of Prayers*** and ***Christ in Our Home*** for Jan.-March 2024 are available by the Fireside Room and on the table by the front door.

**2024 Council Nominations Open:** The nominating committee is seeking to fill two council seats (3 year term each) and the council secretary (2 year term) and 2-3 new members of the nominating committee, terms starting in January 2024. This is an important time in our congregation. Please prayerfully consider this call for yourself, or someone you'd like to nominate and send nominations to Sara Borland or Dorothy Thompson who will reach out to the nominee

**Scholarship Program:** ALC is once again participating in the Educational Partners in Covenant (EPIC) Scholarship Program for the 2023-2024 school year. Through this program ELCA colleges; Grand View, Luther, and Wartburg, match grants from churches, dollar for dollar. ALC has allocated funds for this

scholarship in their annual budget. Scholarship applications are available on the bulletin board by the secretary's office. They must be completed and returned by March 1st, 2024 to the secretary's office to the attention of Pat Winblade, Scholarship Chairperson. If you have any questions, please contact Pat Winblade, 319-290-9281 or 319-827-6788.

**Annual Reports:** Each committee of the church needs to submit a year-end report for the Annual Report/Meeting which will be held on January 21,2024. This report should be a brief recount of activities and participation throughout 2023. Please send your reports to Chris at [secretary@americanlutheranjesup.org](mailto:secretary@americanlutheranjesup.org) no later than Monday, *January 8th* so she has time to compile and print the reports for the meeting.

**The Call Committee:** The ELCA Synod approved our Ministry Site Profile in the spring. Following that, a collaborative meeting took place involving Pastor Liz Albertson Bell and Zion. Presently, we are anticipating a potential referral from the Synod to commence the interview process. Unfortunately, the timeline for receiving referrals cannot be ascertained at this moment.

**Please keep in your prayers:** *Emelia Dahl Jacobson - Send cards to Emelia at Hiawatha Care Center, Room 53, 405 North 15th Avenue, Hiawatha, IA 52233.*

*Stephanie Winkelpleck has returned home and is recovering. You can send cards to her at the following address: Cindy Gosse, 505 10th St., Jesup. Thank you all for your continued prayers and support.*

**Prayer Shawl:** Meet every third Wednesday of the month at 10 am, Fireside Room. Please contact Sharon McAtee at 319-827-6154 if you are in need of a shawl.

**Office Hours:** M,W,F 9am-noon, There may be some exceptions to this schedule please call the Church office to see if Chris is available before making a trip.