

Bethlehem & St. John Lutheran Churches

~ The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod ~

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THE NATIVITY

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.... (Luke 2: 16)

The Nativity of Our Lord
December 25, 2025

Reverend Michael Mathey, Pastor

The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod's Statement on Close Communion:

The Lord's Supper is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that, as He says, Our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but His very body and blood to eat and drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with Him and with one another. Our Lord invites to His table those who trust in His words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as He forgives and loves us, that they may show forth His death until He comes.

Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the Sacrament, are asked to first speak with the Pastor.

(CTCR, *Admission to the Lord's Supper*, Nov 1999)

Life Quotes: "This time of the year always fills us with cheer. But the reason we celebrate is not always clear. The cookies, the lights, the presents, the trees, the carols, the decorations, the family parties but all of the delight and all of the fun. Does not mean a thing if we don't know God's Son. The tiny baby that was born to die. Can sometimes cause us to stop and ask why? Do we really deserve the sacrifice He made? Are we worth the offering and the price that was paid? In His eyes, we are, because He made us His own and on the cross, the ultimate love was shown. So, take joy in the season and spread His true love. But always remember the gift from above!" Jerrod Nelson – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org

Life Thoughts: The Nativity of our Lord – "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14), and in Him is life (John 1:4)! By His holy incarnation, being conceived in the Virgin Mary, growing in her womb, and being born as an ordinary man in Bethlehem (Luke 2:4-6), our Lord Christ has sanctified our human nature, along with every stage of human life and development from the womb to forever.

Church Cancellation Procedure

PLEASE NOTE: If there is a need to cancel Church Services or Meetings due to bad weather, you can find out by checking waow.com (Channel 9) or wsaw.com (Channel 7). Every effort will also be made to change the message on St. John's answering machine as soon as possible, and please, if you are not comfortable with the weather conditions, be safe and stay home!

Divine Service I

Hymn: “O Come, All Ye Faithful”

LSB 379

Confession and Absolution

Invocation and Exhortation (p.151)

Corporate Confession (p.151)

Service of the Word

Psalm 2

Kyrie (p.152)

Gloria in Excelsis (p.154)

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray.

Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of sin; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

First Reading: *Isaiah 52:7–10*

⁷How beautiful upon the mountains

are the feet of him who brings good news,
who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness,
who publishes salvation,
who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.”

⁸The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice;
together they sing for joy;

for eye to eye they see
the return of the LORD to Zion.

⁹Break forth together into singing,
you waste places of Jerusalem,
for the LORD has comforted his people;
he has redeemed Jerusalem.

¹⁰The LORD has bared his holy arm

before the eyes of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Gradual:

To us a child is born, to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder.
And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty
God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Sing to the Lord a new song,
for he has done marvelous things!

Epistle: Hebrews 1:1–12

¹Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

⁵For to which of the angels did God ever say,

“You are my Son, today I have begotten you”?

Or again,

“I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son”?

⁶And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,

“Let all God’s angels worship him.”

⁷Of the angels he says,

“He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire.”

⁸But of the Son he says,

“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,

the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom.

⁹You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;

therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.”

¹⁰And, “You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands;

¹¹they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment,

¹²like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end.”

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Alleluia and Verse (p.156)

Holy Gospel: John 1:1–18

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵(John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”) ¹⁶And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷For the law was given

through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Nicene Creed (p.158)

Office Hymn: “Now Sing We, Now Rejoice” LSB 379

Sermon

Prayer of the Church

Offertory (p.159)

Service of the Sacrament

Preface (p.160)

Sanctus (p.161)

Prayers of Thanksgiving (p. 161)

The Lord's Prayer (p.162)

The Words of Institution (p.162)

Pax Domini (p.163)

Agnus Dei (p.163)

Distribution of the Sacrament

Distribution Hymns:

“The Infant Priest Was Holy Born” LSB 624

“Gentle Mary Laid Her Child” LSB 374

“Angels We Have Heard on High” LSB 368

Post Communion Canticle (p.164)

Post Communion Collect (p.166)

Benediction (p.166)

Hymn: “Angels from the Realms of Glory” LSB 367

*Unto Us
a Child is Born*

