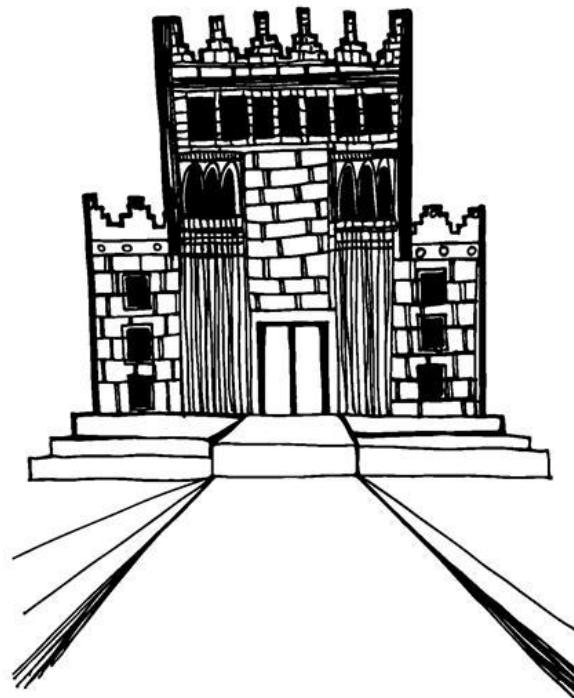


SAINT MICHAEL LUTHERAN CHURCH



Songs and Stories of Christmas
First Sunday of Christmas

December 28, 2025

400 River Road, Columbia, South Carolina 29212

*In the order of service, congregational responses are printed in **bold**.
Our worship **begins** at the Prelude, as we hear God's word in music.*

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Please Stand if you are able

GATHERING HYMN

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

ELW 282

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.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. O Lord God, you know that we cannot place our trust in our own powers. As you protected the infant Jesus, so defend us and all the needy from harm and adversity, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Please Sit

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song

FIRST READING: Isaiah 63:7-9

God does not delegate divine intervention to a messenger or angel. God's own presence brings salvation. The prophet and all who read these words join in celebrating God's gracious deeds. God trusts that God's people will not act falsely.

⁷ I will recount the gracious deeds of the LORD,
the praiseworthy acts of the LORD,
because of all that the LORD has done for us
and the great favor to the house of Israel
that he has shown them according to his mercy,
according to the abundance of his steadfast love.

⁸ For he said, “Surely they are my people,
children who will not act deceitfully,”
and he became their savior
⁹ in all their distress.

It was no messenger or angel
but his presence that saved them;
in his love and pity it was he who redeemed them;
he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SONG

Of the Father's Love Begotten

ELW 295

PSALM 148 (Read Responsively)

¹ Hallelujah! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise God in the heights.

² **Praise the LORD, all you angels; sing praise, all you hosts of heaven.**

³ Praise the LORD, sun and moon; sing praise, all you shining stars.

⁴ **Praise the LORD, heaven of heavens, and you waters above the heavens.**

⁵ Let them praise the name of the LORD, who commanded, and they were created,

⁶ **who made them stand fast forever and ever,
giving them a law that shall not pass away.**

⁷ Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps;

⁸ **fire and hail, snow and fog, tempestuous wind, doing God's will;**

⁹ mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars;

¹⁰ **wild beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds;**

¹¹ sovereigns of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the world;

¹² **young men and maidens, old and young together.**

¹³ Let them praise the name of the LORD, whose name only is exalted,
whose splendor is over earth and heaven.

¹⁴ **The LORD has raised up strength for the people and praise for all faithful
servants, the children of Israel, a people who are near the LORD. Hallelujah!**

SONG

Away in a Manger

ELW 277

SECOND READING: Hebrews 2:10-18

Through Jesus' suffering and death, the trail to eternal salvation has been blazed for us. We do not fear death, because he has conquered the power of death. Thus Christ, our merciful and faithful high priest, has the final say over the destiny of our lives.

¹⁰ It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

¹¹ For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, ¹² saying,

“I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.”

¹³ And again, “I will put my trust in him.”

And again, “Here am I and the children whom God has given me.”

¹⁴ Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. ¹⁶ For it is clear that he did not come to help angels but the descendants of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Please Stand if you are able

SONG

Joy to the World

ELW 267

GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18-25

The Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew, the 1st chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

In a dream, Joseph is warned to flee to Egypt to protect the infant Jesus from the jealousy of Herod.

¹³ Now after [the magi] had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” ¹⁴ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.”

¹⁶ When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the magi. ¹⁷ Then what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

¹⁸ “A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.”

¹⁹ When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, ²⁰ “Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” ²¹ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. ²³ There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazarene.”

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

SONG

Amen, Amen

Spiritual

Pastor sings verses, congregation sings refrain

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Empowered by the news of Christ’s birth, let us pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

God of grace, you show us mercy not according to our worthiness, but according to the abundance of your steadfast love. Grant us the courage to go into the world and do likewise. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of abundance, the sun and moon praise you and the shining stars sing of your love. Where we have desecrated your creation, make us into a healing balm for what we have broken. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of righteousness, when leaders fail to fulfill their calls to enact justice, you suffer alongside us. Propel those in power to see you reflected in the faces of all they serve. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of life, you claim us as your own and care for us as Christ’s siblings. Pour out your compassion in every place your people suffer, and protect them in the palm of your hand. *We pray especially for . . .* Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of compassion, you nurture children as the apple of your eye. As you sheltered your son Jesus from Herod’s grasp, shelter all children in danger. As you comforted Rachel, comfort all who have lost children to violence. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of love, you console those who weep for lost beloved ones. Even as we mourn, we offer thanks for those who have gone before us, trusting in your comfort and protection. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

Please Sit

THANKSGIVING

We give in grateful response for all God's gifts; God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

OFFERING

We offer secure online giving through Tithe.ly. Please see the back page for more. Offering plates located at each entrance/exit. If you need an envelope or assistance, please ask an usher.

SONG

Silent Night

ELW 281

Please Stand if you are able

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. God of glory, great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

BLESSING

The triune God, glorious Mystery, holy Incarnate One, abiding Comforter, **+** bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

Go Tell It On the Mountain

ELW 290

DISMISSAL

Glory to God in the highest! **And peace to God's people on earth!**
Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace. **Thanks be to God.**

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ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

Ushers: Bill Smoak, Mike Burgess
Lector: Linda Frick

ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the glory of God and in honor of son Rob's birthday by Sandra Michelsen.

THIS WEEK AT SAINT MICHAEL *Mon & Fri Update Calls from PFA at 4:55 pm*

TODAY, December 28th

9:15 a.m. Sunday School

Tuesday, December 30th

Wednesday, December 31st

Thursday, January 1st

Friday, January 2nd

Saturday, January 3rd

Next Sun, January 4th

9:15 a.m. Sunday School

Songs & Stories of Christmas

10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion

12:00 p.m. AA Meeting (*Back to Basics Group*) FH

10:00 a.m. NO Bible Study—Red Letter Jesus—Fellowship Hall

12:00 p.m. AA Meeting (*Back to Basics Group*) FH

10:00 a.m. AA Meeting (Morning Group) ChEd

9-10 a.m. NO Choir Rehearsal—Choir Room

Second Sunday of Christmas

10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion

Kris will return to the office on Tuesday, January 6th. She will be checking email, voicemail.

LORD, IN YOUR MERCY, HEAR OUR PRAYERS: FRIENDS—#HOME, ^REHAB, *SENIOR LIVING

Ken & #Dot Black

#Barbara DeVore

Grady & #Melinda Sharpe

Jackie Dunning

***Don & Gwen Buff**

#Virgie Dreher

***Tommae Sligh**

Lisa Gillespie

***Rose Colley**

***Barbara Fowler**

Dea Baughman

Douglas Gourley

***Helen Derrick**

***Alma Paulson**

Donny Day

Joy Gunter

Bo Harris
David Heinrich
Vicky Huggins
Jill Lee

Patrick Lindler
Angie Matlosz
Terry Matlosz
Gary McManus

Harry O'Quinn
Brooke Pittman
Jane Potts
Marlene Stirewalt

Ed Thomas
Bruce Whelchel

MEMBERS & FAMILIES OF THE US ARMED FORCES & MILITARY, INCLUDING:

Tyler Alexander, USMC: Sherri Spangler's grandson Samantha Davis, USA; Gene & Diana Riley's niece
Zachary Davis, USN-*deployed*; Carolyn Cook's grandson Grant Frick, SCNG; Linda Frick's grandson
Hunter Purvis USA-*deployed*; Jerry & Cheryl Baxter's son-in-law



SAINT MICHAEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

If you are a guest, welcome! Ushers have *Connections Card* to drop it in the offering plate so that we can get to know you better. As you leave, be sure to introduce yourself to the pastor. If you would like to learn about membership or have any questions, please call the church office. We look forward to seeing you again soon!

Tithe.ly online giving direct via the ONLINE GIVING tab at www.stmichael1814.com and available in the app store, www.tithe.ly/give. One-time or recurring gifts can be scheduled. The process is quick, safe, and funds are deposited immediately.

Restrooms located in both Administrative and Christian Education Buildings.

Children are always welcome in our worship service, but for those who desire, a nursery is located in the Administrative Building. We stream via Facebook Live.

LARGE PRINT bulletins and **Children's** books & activities available from an usher.

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

The People of Saint Michael, Ministers

The Reverend Frank W. Anderson, Pastor

Karen Shevenell, Cantor + Kris Esgar, Parish Administrator

WiFi: StMichaels_Guest PW: Sundays!!