



**Nativity of Our Lord - Christmas Eve
8:00 PM
December 24, 2025
St. James Lutheran Church
1213 US Highway 22
Phillipsburg, NJ**

Welcome to St. James!

Founded in 1750, the year 2025 marks our 275th anniversary of being God's church. We're so glad you're here! We pray you feel warmly welcomed as we gather to celebrate God's unconditional love in Jesus Christ. He who is the same, yesterday, today, and forever!

If you are visiting today: Thank you for joining us today! If you have any questions, please ask! Pastor Levi and the members of our church-community would be glad to help you out. Please sign the guest book or complete a hospitality card located in the pew racks.

Following along in the bulletin: *indicates the congregation stands. In our liturgical worship, **bold words** are spoken by the congregation. LBW refers to content found in the green hymnbook *Lutheran Book of Worship*. WOV refers to content found in the blue hymnbook *With One Voice*.

Presiding Minister
Assisting Minister
Musicians

The Rev. Levi Q. Powers
DJ Wrede
Dave Miller – Piano and Organ
Rob Adams -Trumpet
Rebecca Hansen – French Horn

Welcome

A very merry Christmas to all who come to worship the Christ Child.

Our liturgy this evening includes the Lord's Supper from which comes the word Christmas. It is the Christ Mass, the incarnation of our Lord and Savior: in a manger in Bethlehem, in the Word of proclamation, in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and in our hearts as we receive these gifts by faith and take him into the world.

Ancient chants and ancient scripture combine with candles, carols, and bright array to tell the story of the Christ Child's birth in the quiet of this special night. In the intimacy and lateness of the hour, we meditate by the manger, and in awe adore him as the infant God and King.

I. GATHERING

*CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

The sign of the cross ✠ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

In the name of the Father and of the ✠Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires are known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained servant of the church of Christ, and by Christ's authority alone, I forgive you the entirety of all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the **+** Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Prelude – “The First Noel”

Invitatory: Unto us a child is born. Unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be on his shoulder; and his name shall be called wonderful, mighty counsellor, everlasting father, the Prince of peace. O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he has done marvelous things. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. **Amen.**

***GATHERING HYMN: LBW 45 – “Oh Come, All Ye Faithful**

***GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all

And also with you.

DIALOGUE FOR CHRISTMAS

A. Blessed are you, O Christ, Son of God, you were before time began and came into the world to save us.

C. Blessed are you, Sun of righteousness, you shine with the Father's love and illumine the whole universe.

A. Blessed are you, Son of Mary; born a child, you shared our full humanity.

C. Let heaven and earth ring out their praise.

A. O Mystery of the Word made flesh, with all the voices of heaven, we celebrate your coming as our Savior.

C. Let all people and angels sing of your glory.

A. O Splendor of the Father's Light, with all the creatures on earth we sing and dance at your birth.

C. Praise and honor and glory to you, O Incarnate Word.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE - LBW 71 - “Angels We Have Heard on High”

PRAYER OF THE DAY

II. THE WORD

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7

²The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

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

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

CHRISTMAS PSALM: LBW 44 – Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14

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

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:



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

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke.
Glory to you, O Lord.

In 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!"

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

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: LBW 69 – I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve

***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,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**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,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who 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.**

***Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, and may say, "Peace be with you," or similar words.

The assembly is seated.

III. THE LORD'S SUPPER

OFFERTORY-What Child is This



*Scan the QR Code to give electronically.
An offering plate is in the back of the
sanctuary if you wish to give check or
cash. You are welcome to give to the
ministry of St. James Lutheran Church
freely and spontaneously. There is no
guilt or shame. If you do give, give with
a cheerful heart.*

* OFFERTORY HYMN: LBW 41 – O Little Town of Bethlehem

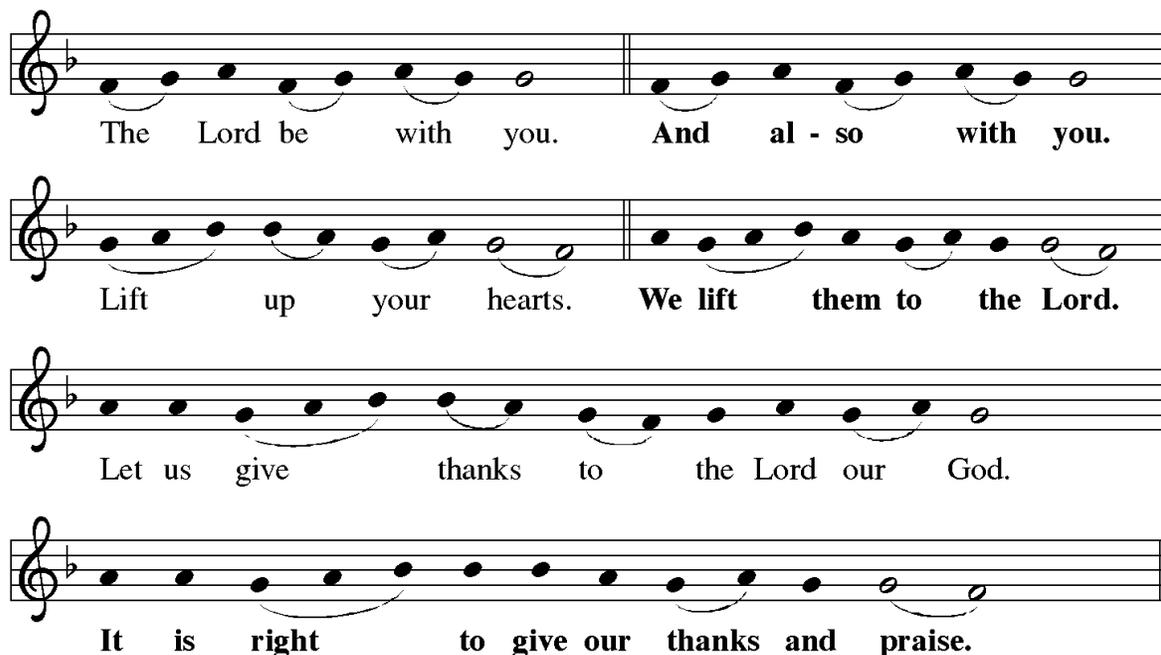
*OFFERING PRAYER

Prayer concludes: **Amen.**

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Together with the bread and the cup we receive the body and the blood of Christ. We invite all baptized Christians to this sacrament. Children and adults who do not yet receive Holy Communion are invited to come forward with arms folded for a blessing. If you need communion brought to you, please let an usher know.

We commune in tables of 10-15 people. The pastor will give you the bread, an assistant will give you a cup. Then two will come to pour into your cup-the first with grape juice, the second with wine. Whoever partakes receives orally the body and blood of Jesus Christ.



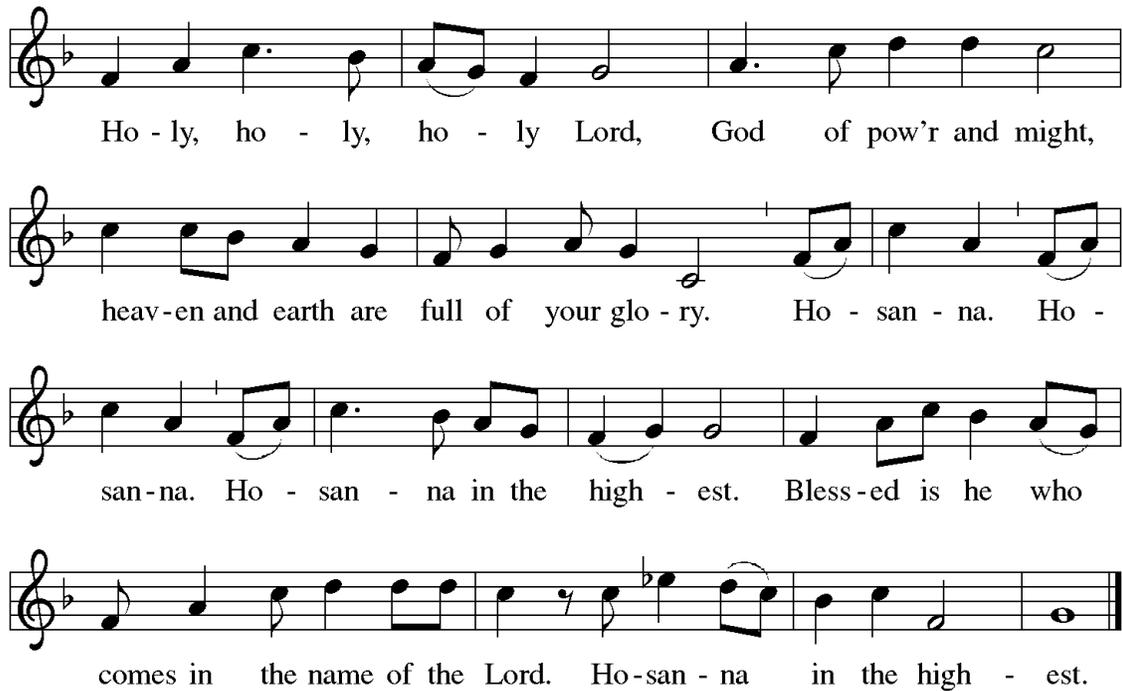
The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

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.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise...**Here the minister continues with the preface for the day, concluding:** ...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
 heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
 san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who
 comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

***THE WORDS OF GIFT**

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.

***THE 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

COMMUNION

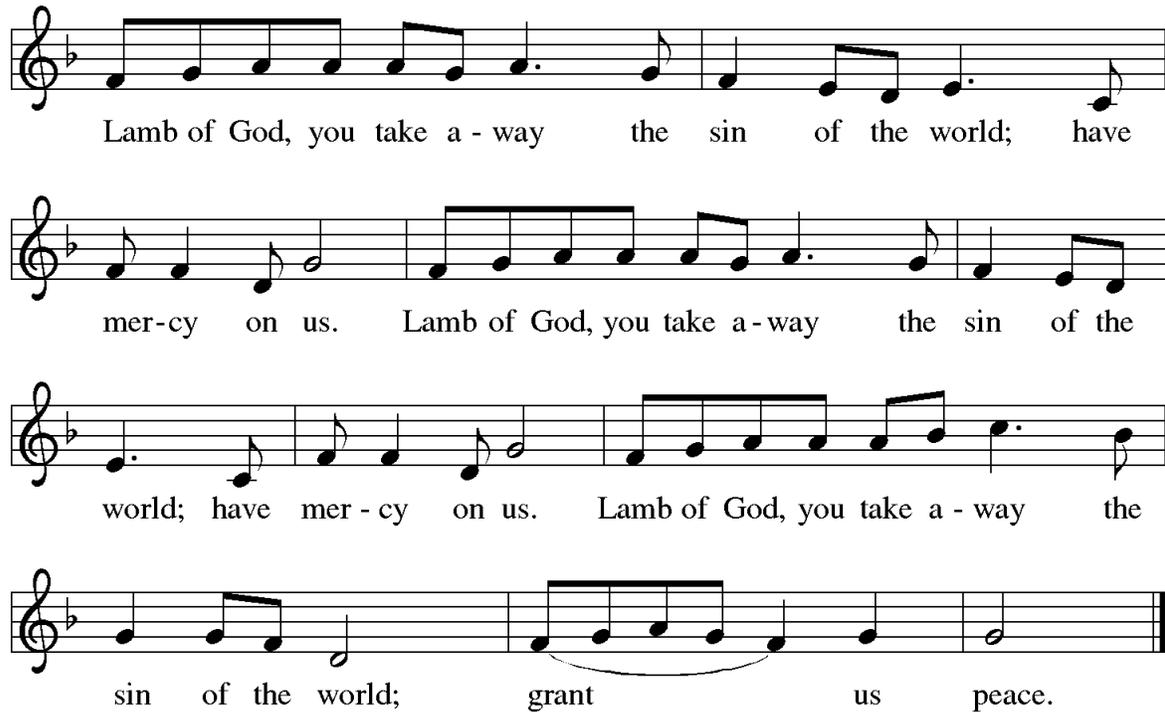
When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

and each person may respond

Amen.



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.

HYMNS SUNG DURING COMMUNION:

LBW 58 - Lo, How a Rose Is Growing

LBW 54 - It Came upon the Midnight Clear

LBW 55 - Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

*POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Prayer concludes: **Amen.**

IV. SENDING

Office of Light

Pastor: Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

The Light of the Word-made-flesh comforts you, that no matter how dark the world, Christ, the Light of Life, is always with you. Let us sing. (After singing *Silent Night*, you may extinguish your candle).

SENDING HYMN: LBW 65- Silent Night, Holy Night!

*** BLESSING**

*** DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Christ is born for you.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE – Joy to the World

Please join us tomorrow to continue the celebration for Christmas Day service at
10am.