

**CHRISTMAS EVE**  
**DECEMBER 24, 2024**  
**IMMANUEL LUTHERAN**  
**CHURCH**  
*Lutheran Church*  
*Missouri Synod*



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**Rev. Ed Weber, Pastor**  
**eweber10@aol.com**  
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***Sunday***  
**9:00 AM**  
**Worship Service**

**10:30 am**  
***Adult Bible Class***  
***Sunday School***

**Holy Communion:**  
**Every Sunday**  
**Website**

***lutheranmercedes.***  
***com***

**FACEBOOK**  
***www.facebook.com/***  
***lutheranmercedes/***

**Office Hrs, M-F**  
**8:00 am to 12:00 pm**  
**CCLI # 2585**

**“For there is  
born to you this  
day in the city  
of David  
a Savior,  
who is  
Christ the Lord.”  
(Luke 2:11)**



# **CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE**

**December 24, 2024**

## **WELCOME to IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

We wish to extend a warm welcome to all our visitors here today. It is our hope that you will benefit by your worship here with us, and that you will return again soon. We would greatly appreciate it if everyone would fill out an Attendance/Communion card so that we can keep track of our attendance. They are located in the pew racks in front of you.

**AS WE GATHER** One of the great pleasures of the Advent and Christmas season is the singing of hymns and carols associated with the nativity of our Lord. Many of the texts of these well-loved songs were written specifically for services in the Christmas season; others were not. “Silent Night, Holy Night” (LSB 363) was written to be first sung at a Christmas Eve service in Austria in 1818, and “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (LSB 361) was initially included as part of a children’s Christmas program at Holy Trinity Church in Philadelphia in 1868. But another well-loved hymn associated with Christmas was not originally a Christmas song. “Joy to the World” (LSB 387) was written as a paraphrase of the second half of Psalm 98 by the English hymnwriter Isaac Watts in 1719. When the text was printed as part of a collection of Psalms in English verse, he gave the song the heading “The Messiah’s Coming and Kingdom.” Our celebration of the coming to earth of Jesus as our Messiah and Lord gives us a great “resounding joy” that lasts all through our years as we await the fullness of His kingdom yet to come!

## **RINGING OF THE BELL**

### **WELCOME**

P Luke records that the first angel who brought the good news of the birth of the Savior was suddenly joined by a multitude of the heavenly host who praised God together. What an amazing sight that must have been—and what amazing sounds for the

shepherds to hear! The music must have resounded off the rocks on the fields there outside of Bethlehem in an unforgettable way! Through our singing, we echo that praise this day.

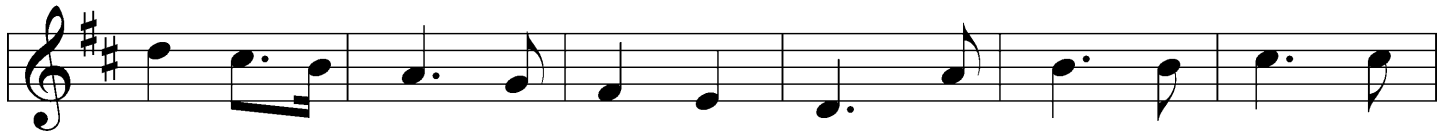
## PRELUDE

*(A quiet time for prayer and meditation in preparation for worship)*

## HYMN

### "Joy to the World"

LSB 387



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive her  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their songs em -  
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow Nor thorns in - fest the  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the na - tions



King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare Him  
 ploy, While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
 ground; He comes to make His bless - ings  
 prove The glo - ries of His righ - teous -



room And heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture  
 plains Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing  
 flow Far as the curse is found, Far as the curse is  
 ness And won - ders of His love, And won - ders of His



sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.  
 joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 found, Far as, far as the curse is found.  
 love, And won - ders, won - ders of His love.

Text and tune: Public domain

*Please Stand*

## INVOCATION

**P** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

## LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS CANDLE (Psalm 24:1, 3-5 John 8:12)

P Jesus Christ is the Light of the world,

**C the light no darkness can overcome.**

P Let Your light scatter the darkness

**C and illumine Your Church.**

P Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

**C The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein.**

P Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who may stand in His holy place?

**C He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully.**

P He shall receive blessing from the Lord,

**C And righteousness from the God of his salvation.**

P Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

*We light the Christ Candle as we sing "Angels from the Realms of Glory"*  
**LSB 367; vs. 1,2,5**



1 An - gels from the realms of glo - ry, Wing your flight o'er  
2 Shep - herds in the field a - bid - ing, Watch - ing o'er your  
△ 5 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God the Fa - ther,



all the earth; Ye who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry,  
flocks by night, God with us is now re - sid - ing,  
Spir - it, Son, Ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing



Now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth.  
Yon - der shines the In - fant Light.  
To the e - ter - nal Three in One.

Text and tune: Public domain

## Psalm 34:1-3, 5, 7, 22

**C My soul makes its boast in the LORD; let the humble hear and be glad.**

**C Those who look to Him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed.**

P The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him, and delivers them.

**C The LORD redeems the life of His servants; none of those who take refuge in Him will be condemned.**

## + SERVICE OF THE WORD +

P The Lord be with you.

**C And with your spirit.**

P Let us pray. Gracious God, on this blessed day, we celebrate our Lord's birth as the fulfillment of Your promise of redemption from sin. With the company of song-filled angels in heaven and jubilant people on earth, we welcome Jesus as the Savior of the world and Lord of our hearts, who now lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C Amen.**

*Please be Seated*

**OLD TESTAMENT READING**

*Isaiah 9:2-7* (We see a great light.)

2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined.

3 You have multiplied the nation and increased its joy; they rejoice before You according to the joy of harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

4 For You have broken the yoke of his burden and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian.

5 For every warrior's sandal from the noisy battle, and garments rolled in blood, will be used for burning and fuel [c]of fire.

6 For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

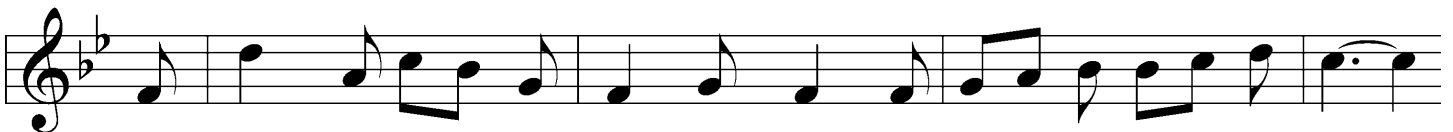
C **Thanks be to God.**

*(Choir sings vs. 1 and 3, congregation sings vs. 2 and 4)*

**HYMN**

*It Came upon the Midnight Clear*

**LSB 366**



1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, That glo-rious song of old,  
2 Still through the clo-ven skies they come With peace-ful wings un-furled,  
3 All you, be-neath your heav-y load, By care and guilt bent low,  
4 For lo, the days have come to pass By proph-ets seen of old,



From an-gels bend-ing near the earth To touch their harps of gold:  
And still their heav'n-ly mu-sic floats O'er all the wea-ry world.  
Who toil a-long a drea-ry way With pain-ful steps and slow:  
When down in-to the cir-cling years Came Christ as was fore-told.



“Peace on the earth, good-will to all, From heav’n’s all - gra - cious king.”  
A - bove its sad and low-ly plains They bend on hov - ’ring wing,  
Look up, for gold - en is the hour, Come swift - ly on the wing,  
His word of peace shall to the earth God’s an - cient prom - ise bring,



The world in sol - emn still - ness lay To hear the an - gels sing.  
And ev - er o’er its ba - bel sounds The bless - ed an - gels sing.  
The Prince was born to bring you peace; Of Him the an - gels sing.  
And all who take this gift will hear The song the an - gels sing.

Text and tune: Public domain

*Please Stand*

## PSALM *Psalms 96*

- P** Oh sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth!
- C** **Sing to the LORD, bless His name; tell of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous works among all the peoples! For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the LORD made the heavens. Splendor and majesty are before Him; strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.**
- P** Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!
- C** **Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name; bring an offering, and come into His courts! Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness; tremble before Him, all the earth!**
- P** Say among the nations, “The LORD reigns!
- C** **Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved; He will judge the peoples with equity.”**
- P** Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it; let the field exult, and everything in it!
- C** **Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the LORD, for He comes, for He comes to judge the earth.**

**P** He will judge the world in righteousness, and the peoples in His faithfulness.

**C** **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

*Please be Seated*

*(Choir sings vs. 1 and 3, congregation sings vs. 2 and 4)*

**HYMN**

**O Little Town of Bethlehem**

**LSB 361**



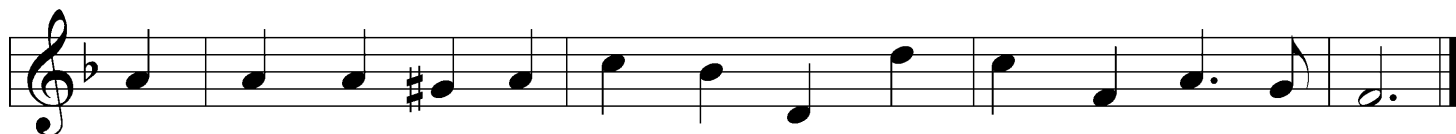
1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!  
2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, And, gath - ered all a - bove  
3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly The won - drous gift is giv'n!  
4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, De - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by;  
While mor-tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won-d'ring love.  
So God im-parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of His heav'n.  
Cast out our sin, and en - ter in, Be born in us to - day.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing light.  
O morn-ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth,  
No ear may hear His com - ing; But in this world of sin,  
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad tid - ings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to-night.  
And prais - es sing to God the king And peace to all the earth!  
Where meek souls will re - ceive Him, still The dear Christ en - ters in.  
O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Im - man - u - el!

Text and tune: Public domain

**EPISTLE READING**

*Titus 2:11-14*

*(The grace of God has appeared.)*

11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,



12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## **HYMN**

## *Gentle Mary Laid Her Child*

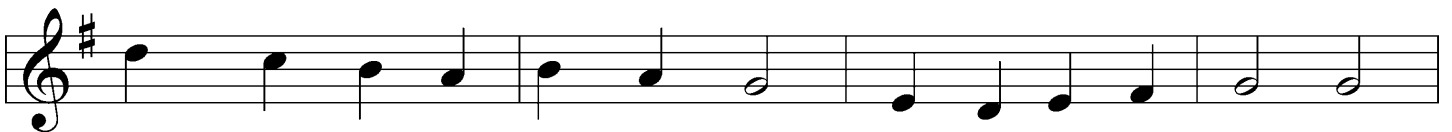
**LSB 374**



1 Gen - tle Mar - y laid her child Low - ly in a man - ger;  
2 An - gels sang a - bout His birth, Wise Men sought and found Him;  
3 Gen - tle Mar - y laid her child Low - ly in a man - ger;



There He lay, the Un - de - filed, To the world a strang - er.  
Heav - en's star shone bright - ly forth Glo - ry all a - round Him.  
He is still the Un - de - filed But no more a strang - er.



Such a babe in such a place, Can He be the Sav - ior?  
Shep - herds saw the won - drous sight, Heard the an - gels sing - ing;  
Son of God of hum - ble birth, Beau - ti - ful the sto - ry;



Ask the saved of all the race Who have found His fa - vor.  
All the plains were lit that night, All the hills were ring - ing.  
Praise His name in all the earth; Hail the King of glo - ry!

Text and tune: Public domain

*Please Stand*

## **HOLY GOSPEL**

*Luke 2:1-20*

(The birth of Jesus Christ)

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

**C** Glory to You, O Lord.

1 And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. 2 This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. 3 So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

4 Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, 5 to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. 6 So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. 7 And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. 10 Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. 11 For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12 And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

14 "Glory to God in the highest,  
And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

15 So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." 16 And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. 17 Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. 18 And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. 19 But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. 20 Then the shepherds

returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

## APOSTLES CREED

**All** I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

**And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

*Please be Seated*

## HYMN OF THE DAY

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

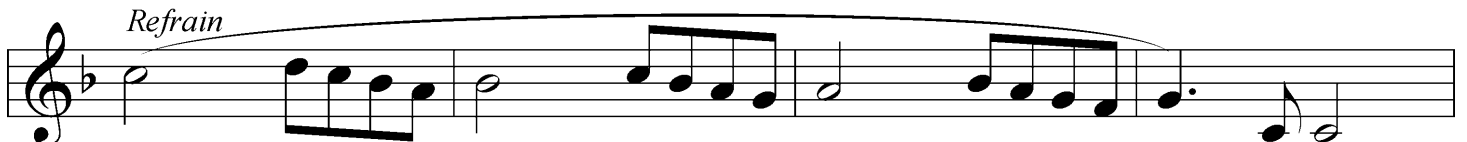
**LSB 368**



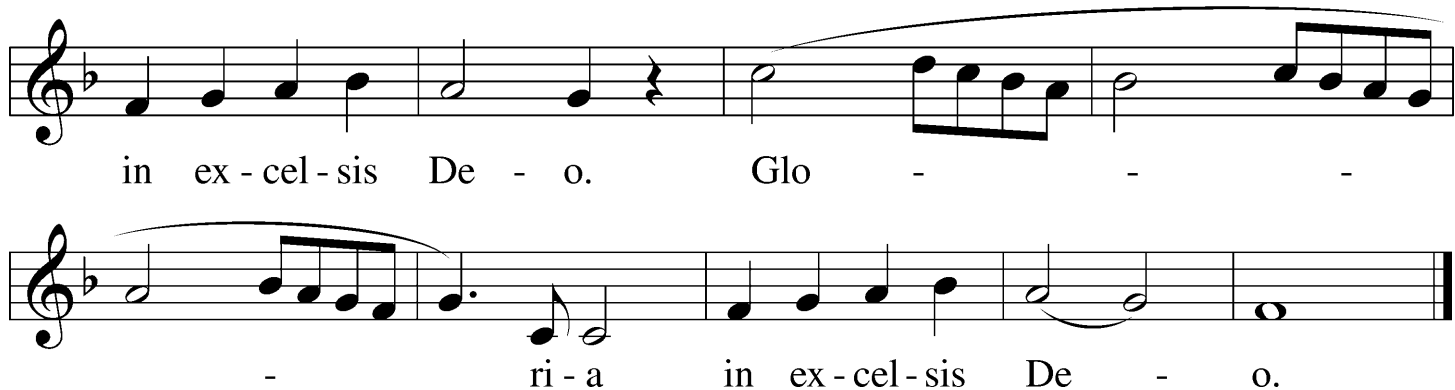
1 An - gels we have heard on high, Sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,  
2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?  
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;



And the moun - tains in re - ply, Ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.  
What the glad - some tid - ings be Which in - spire your heav' - n - ly song?  
Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.



Glo - - - - - ri - a



Text and tune: Public domain

## CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

## *"The Angel's Song"*

Luke 2:8-14

### OFFERING

*Please Stand*

### OFFERTORY

### *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

**LSB 380**



- 1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King;
- 2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
- 3 Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righteous-ness!



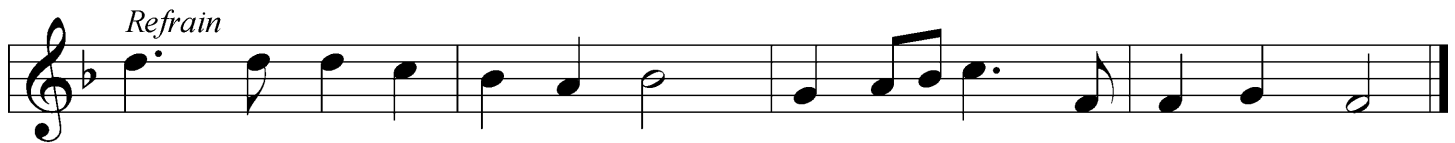
Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"  
 Late in time be-hold Him come, Off - spring of a vir-gin's womb.  
 Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with heal - ing in His wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;  
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see, Hail the in-car - nate De - i - ty!  
 Mild He lays His glo - ry by, Born that man no more may die,



With the an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth-le-hem!"  
 Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Je - sus, our Im-man-u - el!  
 Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec-ond birth.



Hark! The her-ald an-gels sing, “Glo-ry to the new-born King!”

Text and tune: Public domain

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

**P** Let us pray. O Dayspring from on high, babe of Bethlehem, we follow in the steps of those who knelt in humble adoration at Your manger so many years ago. Like shepherds of old, we thrill to hear the message that the herald angel brings: “Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” We, too, go to see this thing that has happened. The glory shines around us as well. Our hearts grow warm before the meaning of the miracle. God is love, indeed, and there is hope for all who humbly open up their lives to You. You have come to do for us what we are so helpless to do for ourselves. Empower us to fulfill in faithfulness the things that You have given us to do, so that like ancient shepherds, our daily walk may become for us a road of glory and a mission of peace.

As You did with Mary and Joseph, so make Your home in our human lives and hearts. As Joseph and Mary went up from Galilee to Judea, lead us wherever we may help to carry out Your plan for human-kind. As Mary brought into this world “a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Your people Israel,” so enable us, too, to bring Your peace to desperate people.

Grant that all who see our worship of the newborn babe wonder at the way we keep this day. And O Bethlehem’s royal prince, let there be some who, because of us, ponder these things deep within their hearts.

We praise You, the sun of righteousness, who has risen with healing in Your wings; we praise You now and evermore.

**C Amen.**

## LORD’S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9–13

**ALL 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.

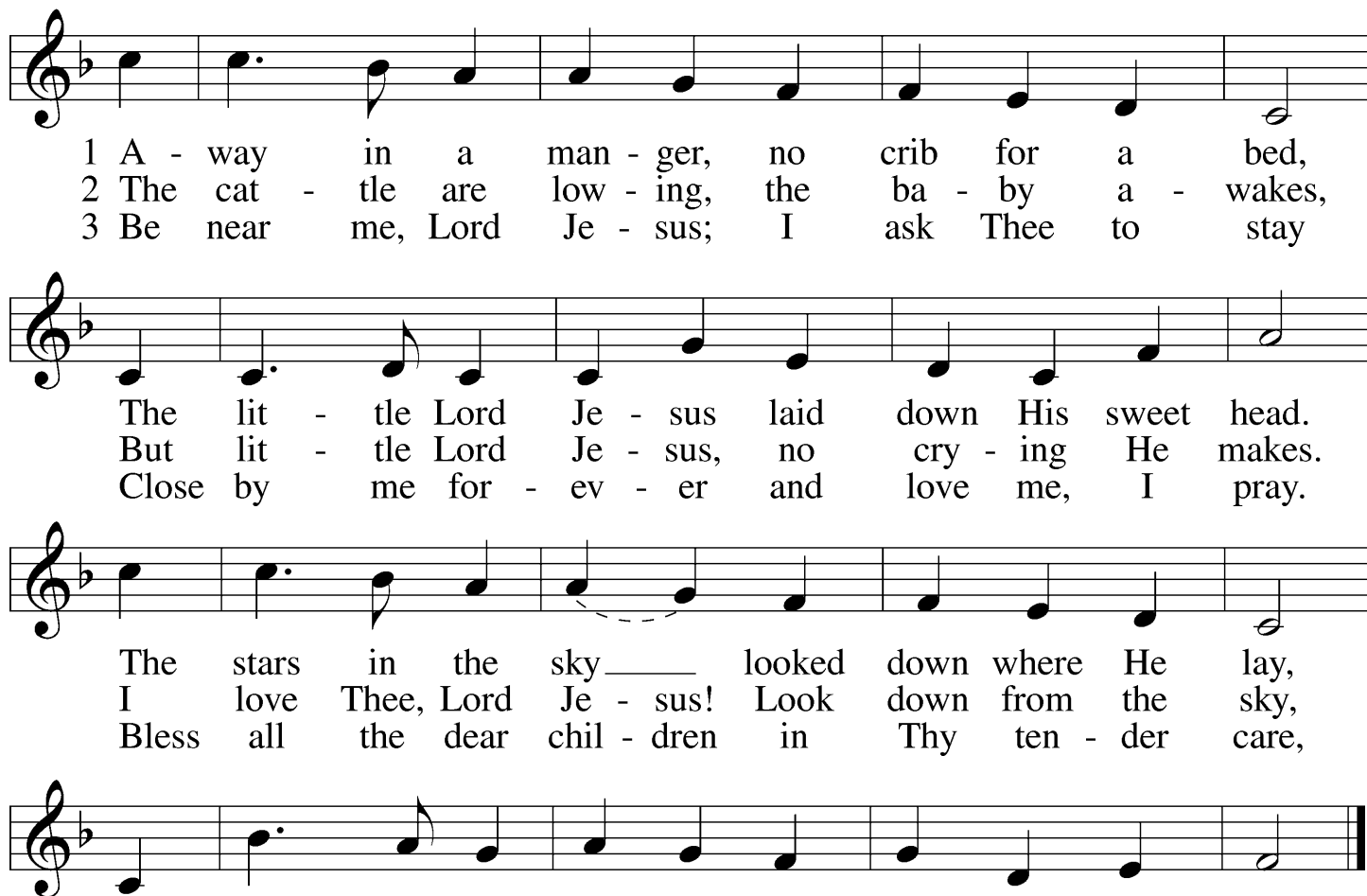
## CANDLELIGHTING

*[During the following hymn, the pastor takes the light from the Christ candle to the ushers. They pass the light on to the congregation.]*

## HYMN

*Away in a Manger*

LSB 364



1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed,  
2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,  
3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask Thee to stay

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down His sweet head.  
But lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing He makes.  
Close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.

The stars in the sky \_\_\_\_\_ looked down where He lay,  
I love Thee, Lord Je - sus! Look down from the sky,  
Bless all the dear chil - dren in Thy ten - der care,

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.  
And stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.  
And take us to heav - en to live with Thee there.

Text and tune: Public domain

## BENEDICTION

Numbers 6:24-26

**P** The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine  
on you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His countenance  
upon you, and give you peace.

**C** Amen.

*(Dim lights)*

**HYMN**

*Silent Night, Holy Night*

**LSB 363**



1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,  
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake  
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,



all is bright Round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.  
at the sight; Glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,  
love's pure light Ra - diant beams from Thy ho - ly face



Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, Sleep in heav - en - ly  
Heav'n - ly hosts sing, Al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is  
With the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy



peace, Sleep in heav - en - ly peace.  
born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!  
birth, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth.

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