

CHRISTMAS EVE



Christ Our Shepherd Lutheran Church
Peachtree City, Georgia
December 24, 2023
6:30 and 8:30 P.M.

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Christmas Eve ☩ December 24, 2023 ☩ 6:30 and 8:30 P.M.

Fritz Wiese, Senior Pastor Miriam Beecher, Pastor

Larry Peterson, Director of Worship and Music

☐ = Pastor ☒ = Lector [reader] ☑ = Congregation ELW=Evangelical Lutheran Worship (red hymnal)

PRELUDES

Welcome to worship! Today's worship includes the sacrament of communion. Communion is offered by intinction: you may receive a wafer and dip it in the chalice with wine or white grape juice. Or you may pick up a prefilled communion "kit" on the altar rail as you approach the altar. Please tell an usher if you need a communion kit brought to you where you sit.

CHRISTMAS PROCLAMATION

Please stand as you are able.

GATHERING HYMN: *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

ELW Hymn 283

**1 O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him, born the king of angels:**

Refrain

**O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

**2 The highest, most holy, light of light eternal,
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father now in flesh appearing! *Refrain***

**3 Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God in the highest: *Refrain***

**4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: *Refrain***

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711-1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880, sts. 1, 3-4; tr. unknown, st. 2

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.

HYMN OF PRAISE: *Angels We Have Heard on High*

ELW Hymn 289

**1 Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.**

Refrain

Gloria in excelsis Deo; gloria in excelsis Deo.

**2 Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heav'nly song? *Refrain***

**3 Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn king. *Refrain***

Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864
Text in the Public Domain.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P Let us pray. Almighty God,
 G you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated

FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 9:2-7

- L The Word of the Lord. G Thanks be to God

MUSICAL OFFERING**GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-20** *(You may remain seated for the Gospel)*

- P The Birth of Our Lord according to Luke. G Glory to you, O Lord.

I. THE BIRTH: 2:1-7

CAROL: O Little Town of Bethlehem

ELW Hymn 279, sts. 1 & 2

- 1 O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!**
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.
- 2 For Christ is born of Mary, and, gathered all above**
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the king, and peace to all the earth!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893. Text is in the Public Domain.

II. THE ANNOUNCEMENT: 2:8-14

CAROL: Angels, from the Realms of Glory

ELW Hymn 275, sts. 1 & 2

- 1 Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;**
once you sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king.
- 2 Shepherds, in the fields abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,**
God with us is now residing, yonder shines the infant light.
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt., sts. 1-3; *Salisbury Hymn Book*, 1857, st. 4. Text is in the Public Domain.

Please stand as you are able.

III. THE REJOICING: 2:15-20

CAROL: Go Tell It on the Mountain

ELW Hymn 290

Refrain

- Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev'rywhere;**
go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!
- 1 While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,**
behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. *Refrain*
- 2 The shepherds feared and trembled when, lo, above the earth**
rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. *Refrain*
- 3 Down in a lonely manger the humble Christ was born;**
and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

Text: African American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work Jr., 1872-1925, stanzas, alt. Text is in the Public Domain.

- P The Gospel of the Lord. G Praise to you, O Christ.

You may be seated.

SERMON

Pastor Fritz

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY: *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

ELW Hymn 270

**1 Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king;
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"**

Refrain

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

**2 Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see! Hail, incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel! *Refrain***

**3 Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us second birth. *Refrain***

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt. Text is in the Public Domain.

OUR PROFESSION OF FAITH: THE APOSTLES' CREED

℘ Let us confess our baptismal faith together.

☩ 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.**

You may be seated.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

When the petition concludes "Hear us, O God," please respond, "Your mercy is great."

The prayers are ended with these words, "Abide with us, ... according to your abundant grace."

Please respond, "Amen."

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Fritz

Please stand as you are able.

THE EXCHANGE OF PEACE

℘ The peace of the Christ child be with you always.

☩ And also with you.

TO CONTINUE THE STORY

If you're a visitor, we're so delighted to worship with you tonight. If you'd like a call from our Director of Connecting Ministries, Barbara Anderson, for more info about COS, feel free to contact her at: connect@coslutheran.org

You may be seated.

INVITATION TO OFFERING

We worship the baby Jesus tonight because we know he grows up to bring God’s grace, healing, equipping and new life to the world. If you would like to help resource Jesus’ agenda, thanks for sharing your offering with this QR code, Venmo address, or via the offering baskets in the gathering space. Thank you for your generosity! Below are some examples of the difference your offerings can make:

- Help provide food and gas for those in need--\$15
- Help “make room at the COS inn” for AA, scouts, or musical groups to meet--\$25
- Help stream a service for shut-ins and travelers--\$50
- Help an under-resourced child go to church camp--\$225

Link to give: <https://coslutheran.org/give/>

We acknowledge that you may have already offered your gifts electronically or by mail. Thank you.



MUSICAL OFFERING

Please stand as you are able.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>P The Lord be with you.</p> <p>P Lift up your hearts.</p> <p>P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.</p> <p>P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, ... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:</p> <p>C O HOLY CHILD of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray; cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell; oh, come to us, abide with us, our Lord Immanuel!—ELW Hymn 279, st. 4</p> | <p>C And also with you.</p> <p>C We lift them to the Lord.</p> <p>C It is right to give our thanks and praise.</p> |
|---|--|

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893. Text in public domain.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD’S PRAYER

- C** **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.**

You may be seated.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

*Please approach the altar using the diagonal aisles and return by the side or middle aisles.
You will be offered a wafer, which you may dip in either the chalice of wine or the white grape juice.
You may also choose a packaged cup with wine or grape juice, or a gluten-free wafer with wine.*

COMMUNION HYMN: *Away in a Manger*

ELW Hymn 277

- 1** **Away in a manger, no crib for his bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**
- 2** **The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.**
- 3** **Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.**

Text: North American, 19th cent. Text is in the Public Domain.

COMMUNION HYMN: *What Child Is This**ELW Hymn 296*

- 1** What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!
- 2** Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary!
- 3** So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby;
joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898. Text is in the Public Domain. Text is in the Public Domain.

COMMUNION HYMN: *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice**ELW Hymn 288*

- 1** Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;
ox and ass before him bow, and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!
- 2** Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this!
He has opened heaven's door, and we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!
- 3** Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
now ye need not fear the grave; Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Text: Medieval Latin carol; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-1866. Text is in the Public Domain.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

- P** God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life.
As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace.
Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
- C** Amen.

CANDLELIGHTING CAROL: *Silent Night, Holy Night!**ELW Hymn 281*

*Tip the UNLIT candle to the candle that is burning to light the UNLIT candle.
Do NOT tip the candle once it is lit.*

- 1** Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child. Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.
- 2** Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar, heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!
- 3** Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792-1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820-1885. Text is in the Public Domain.

PASTORAL BLESSING and BENEDICTION

☞ Almighty God, who sent the Holy Spirit to Mary, proclaimed joy through the angels, sent the shepherds with good news, and led the magi by a star, bless you this day ✝ through the word made flesh.

☞ **Amen.**

Please, carefully extinguish your candle.

Do not blow too hard to prevent wax from splattering on clothes or on the pews.

Keep the candle UPRIGHT until the wax hardens.

Please stand as you are able.

SENDING HYMN: *Joy to the World*

ELW Hymn 267

- 1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room
and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.**
- 2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**
- 3 No more let sin and sorrow grow nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.**
- 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.**

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748. Text is in the Public Domain.

SENDING

☞ Christ the Savior is born!
Go in peace. Proclaim this good news. Invite all to join in connecting to Jesus' pathway of joy and life.

☞ **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

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Altar Guild: Carol Talbot

Tech crew: (4:30) Curt Griffin, Joni Siefert, Erica & Greyson Harris

(6:30) Brad Milburn, Josef Agada, Kendra Campbell-Milburn

(8:30) Carol Jensen-Linton, Brad Milburn, Kendra Campbell-Milburn

SHARE A SEAT AT THE TABLE. When the shepherds and magi visited Jesus, could they sit in a chair as they worshiped? Probably not. But what about future worshipers? In April 2024, COS will begin our first sanctuary renewal project in over 35 years. If you'd like to fund a new chair, or part thereof, to provide a comfortable seat of future welcome as one has been provided for you tonight, please use this QR code or Venmo info. The full cost of a chair is \$325. Your generosity may be offered in honor or remembrance of someone.



GIFTS of POINSETTIAS

David and Miriam Beecher, in honor and gratitude for our COS family!

Leona Davis, in memory of my dear family, my parents Paul and Nancy Davis and my sister Evelyn Davis.

Karl and Cheryl Dietmeyer, in honor of our grandchildren, Caroline and Jesse Ferree.

Laura and Kevin Hawkins, in memory of Madge VanDevender.

Carol Jensen-Linton, in memory of Ron Linton

John and Marilyn Lehmann, in memory of our parents and in honor of June Banks.

Kathie Manes, in memory of John Manes.

Carolyn Martin, in memory of Harvey Martin.

Chuck and Susie McVea, in memory of Giovanna and Enzo McEwen and in honor of their family.

Laura and John Musil, in honor of their grandchildren: Troy, Laurel, Emma, Abigail and Sam.

Joyce and George Pilch, in honor of our children and grandchildren.

Kayleigh Pointek.

Guy, Elizabeth and Jack Richards, in memory of Catherine Crosby Richards

Nancy Shepack, in memory of John and Lynn Hart.

Linda and Bill Volckmann, in memory of our parents and our siblings

and in honor of our children and grandchildren and to the Glory of God.

Pastor Fritz & LuAnne Wiese, in honor of all the amazing volunteers who bring joy and life to COS.

Gloria Wilkins, in honor of Maya and George Wilkins.