

Christmas Eve
December 24, 2025
4:00 p.m. Service
11:00 p.m. Service

Service Music: ELW, Setting 10 (ELW, page 203)
Year A, Christmas Eve (ELW, page 20)



In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child.

Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

WELCOME!

Guests, we are glad you have joined us today! If you would like to receive contact from St. James following this worship service, please fill out a card from the pew slot and put it in the offering plate.

The Children will join us during our services tonight. Activity bags are available in the Narthex for anyone who wants to use them.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

WELCOME – 3:55p.m. / 10:55p.m.

PRELUDE

The assembly rises in body or spirit.

CALL TO WORSHIP

P: O Lord, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may ascend to your holy hill?

C: Those who walk blamelessly and do what is right and speak the truth from their heart;

P: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined!

C: The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it.

P: Come let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the Lord our God, our Maker.

C: For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

*O come, O come, Emmanuel / and ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here / until the Son of God appear*

-Refrain-

Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel / shall come to thee O Israel

*O come, Desire of Nations, bind / in one the hearts of humankind
Bid all our sad divisions cease / and be yourself our Prince of Peace*

-Refrain-

*O come, Thou Day-spring, come and cheer / Our spirits by Thine
Advent here Disperse the gloomy clouds of night / and death's dark
shadow put to flight*

-Refrain-

*O come, thou Wisdom from on high! / Who madest all in earth and
sky,
Creating us from dust and clay / To us reveal salvation's way*

-Refrain-

The assembly is seated.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

Tonight we light our four Advent candles for the last time.

We light the candle for Hope.

We light the candle for Peace.

We light the candle for Joy.

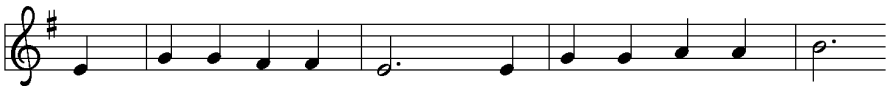
We light the candle for Love.

As we find ourselves wrapped in the season of wonder and light, may we find, even if only for a moment, the people God means us to be. May we call ourselves back, time and time again, to the mystery of our lives and the hope, peace, joy, and love God gives.

May our energies be used for the transformation of this world – turning despair into hope, from darkness into light, from fear into love. May we be bold. May we be daring. May we be love.

C: May Jesus – our Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love – light the world this Christmas.

KYRIE



- 1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.
- 2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.
- 3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.
 Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.
 Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

P: We continue to pray:

C: Repair our relationships, O God, restore what we have broken, renew our hearts, and bring us to new life. Amen.

P: Hear the good news: God the Faithful One loves you, ✠ in Christ Jesus your sins are forgiven, and by the power of the Holy Spirit you are set free. Just as you have been forgiven and raised to new life, so now rise to give glory to God. **C: Amen.**

The assembly rises in body or spirit.

CANTICLE: GLORY TO GOD *(4PM ring the bells on verse 3!)*



1 Glo-ry be to God in heav-en; peace, good-will to all the earth.

2 Glo-ry be to Christ for - ev - er, Lamb of God and Lord of love.

3 Joy-ful, joy-ful, we a - dore You, God of glo - ry, Lord of love;



Might-y God of all cre - a - tion, Fa - ther of sur - pass - ing worth:

Son of God and gra-cious Sav - ior, you have come from heav'n a - bove;

Hearts un-fold like flow'rs be-fore You, Op'ning to the sun a-bove.



we ex - alt you, we a - dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.

on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.

Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; Drive the dark of doubt a - way;



Saints and an - gels bow be - fore you; here on earth our songs we raise.

Hear our prayer; re - store, for-give us; in your prom-ise firm we stand.

Gi - ver of im - mor - tal gladness, Fill us with the light of day!

GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **C: And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray:

C: Almighty God, 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.

The assembly is seated

ST. JAMES CHOIR: *(4PM service only)*

A Carol of Hope.....Words by Don Besig & Nancy Price
Music by Don Besig

WORD

FIRST READING: Luke 2:1-14

The Shepherds and the Angels

¹ In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ Joseph 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. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.

⁷ And 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 in the guest room.

⁸ Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord

stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and 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 heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

A: Word of God. Word of Life. **C: Thanks be to God.**

The assembly rises in body or spirit.

CHRISTMAS CAROL—ELW *Angels We Have Heard on High*

(4PM Ring the bells on the refrain!)



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



in ex - cel - sis De - o;

glo



-

ri - a

in ex - cel - sis

De

-

o.

Assembly remains standing for the reading of the gospel.

GOSPEL

P: The holy gospel according to **St. Luke 2:15-20**

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

The Shepherds Hurry to Bethlehem to Visit Jesus

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

P: The Gospel of the Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

Assembly is seated.

CHILDREN'S SERMON *(with Away in a Manger) (4PM service only)*

*Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head;
the stars in the heavens looked down where He lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.*

*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.*

The ushers will collect bells as children return to their seats.

SERMON *(11PM service only)*

The assembly rises in body or spirit to sing the Hymn of the Day.

HYMN OF THE DAY— O Holy Night

Verse 1

O holy night the stars are brightly shining
 It is the night of our dear Savior's birth
 Long lay the world in sin and error pining
 Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth

A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices
 For yonder breaks A new and glorious morn

Refrain 1

Fall on your knees / O hear the angel voices
 O night divine / O night when Christ was born
 O night divine / O night divine

Verse 2

Truly He taught us to love one another
 His law is love and His gospel is peace
 Chains He shall break for the slave is our brother
 And in His Name all oppression shall cease

Sweet hymns of joy In grateful chorus raise we
 Let all within us praise His holy Name

Refrain 2

Christ is the Lord / O praise His Name forever
 His power and glory / Evermore proclaim
 His power and glory / Evermore proclaim

Refrain 1

OFFERING

We offer with joy and thanksgiving what God has first given us

OFFERING

The ushers will receive your offerings to the honor of our newborn King.

Congregation will stand as the offering is presented at the altar.

OFFERTORY CAROL – ELW 270 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*



- 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 righ - teous - 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 you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God-head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with an - gel - ic hosts pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.



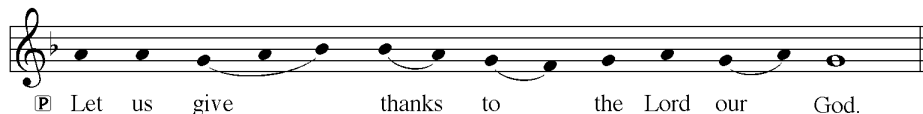
Refrain
Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king!"

OFFERING PRAYER

A: 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. **C: Amen.**

MEAL

GREAT THANKSGIVING



P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,

through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,
 heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. 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, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
 Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
 Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
 Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
 Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
 the Word made flesh.

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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:



With this bread and cup
we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.
We look with hope for his coming. **C: Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.
Come among us. Bless this meal.
May your Word take flesh in us.
Fill us with your light.
Bring the gift of peace on earth. **C: Come, Holy Spirit.**

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel,
Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High,
one God, now and forever.



P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, we pray as Jesus taught us.

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. Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. 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

P: God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised. All are welcome here. **C: Thanks be to God.**

The assembly is seated.

Come, for Christ invites you. Communion today will be distributed at the altar rail (please stand or kneel, as you are comfortable), the ushers will direct you forward to receive the bread (which is gluten-free) and cup either wine (red) or grape juice (white).

COMMUNION CAROL ELW 229 *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence* (11PM Service only)



- 1 Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and trem - bling stand;
- 2 King of kings, yet born of Mar - y, as of old on earth he stood,
- 3 Rank on rank the host of heav - en spreads its van-guard on the way;
- 4 At his feet the six - winged ser - aph, cher - u - bim with sleep - less eye,



pon - der noth - ing earth - ly - mind - ed, for with bless - ing in his hand
 Lord of lords in hu - man ves - ture, in the bod - y and the blood,
 as the Light of light, de - scend - ing from the realms of end - less day,
 veil their fac - es to the pres - ence, as with cease - less voice they cry:



Christ our God to earth de - scend - ing comes full hom - age to de - mand.
 he will give to all the faith - ful his own self for heav'n - ly food.
 comes, the pow'rs of hell to van - quish, as the dark - ness clears a - way.
 "Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia, Lord Most High!"

COMMUNION CAROL ELW 279 *O Little Town of Bethlehem*



O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
 For Christ is born of Mar - y, and, gath - ered all a - bove
 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is giv'n!
 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.
 oh, come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Im - man - u - el!

5. The baby in the manger grew to a man one day.
 And still we try to listen now to what he had to say.
 Put up your swords forever, Forgive your enemies.
 Love your neighbor as yourself, Let your little children come to me.

COMMUNION CAROL ELW 296 *What Child Is This*

(4PM Service only)



- 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar - y's lap is sleep - ing?
- 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?
- 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas - ant, king, to own him.



Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
 Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.
 The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.



This, this is Christ the king, whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
 Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
 Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

The assembly rises in body or spirit at the invitation of the presiding minister.

COMMUNION BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in eternal life. **C: Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A: God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus. **C: Amen**

SENDING

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

A: We light the Christ Candle because tonight Jesus, the promised one, is born.

SHARING THE LIGHT

A: And now, having heard God's Word and fed at his Table, let us share Christ's light with the world.

The ushers offer to light the first person's candle in each row. That person then turns and offers the light to the next person and continues down the row. Please dip the unlit candle into the lit candle so as to prevent dripping hot wax. As you leave, blow out your candle and place it in the basket near the doors.

SENDING HYMN ELW 281 *Silent Night*



Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,
 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,



ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.
 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 your ho - ly face,



Hold - er Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher
 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 your



Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh.
 peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

DISMISSAL (by Howard Thurman “The Work of Christmas”)

P: When the song of the angels is stilled,
 When the star in the sky is gone,
 When the kings and princes are home,
 When the shepherds are back with their flock,
 The work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost, to heal the broken, to feed the hungry, to release the prisoner, to rebuild the nations, to bring peace among peoples, to make music in the heart.

P: Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus. **C: Thanks be to God.**

NOTE: The office will be **CLOSED** on Christmas Day (12/25) and on New Years Day (1/1/2026). Have a very Merry Christmas and safe and happy New Year!

Finance Committee—In order to be counted for 2025, all pledges and contributions must be received at the church no later than Sunday, December 28th. All contributions received after that date will be counted in January of 2026. If you are mailing your contribution, allow plenty of time for the mail processing. Contact Marilyn Pieart with any questions at (563)340-6529.

We livestream our services on YouTube each week to help us worship together and stay connected even when we are not at full health or out of town!

Youtube Link:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzjqnGF4g_QWtn_I2SqL5Q

Christmas Poinsettia Memorials

Donated By:

Jay & Judie Brooks	In Memory of our parents and Jack Fowler, grandson
Deb Crooks	To the Glory of God
Maxine Duhm	In Memory of Ken
Jason & Melissa Forari Anna & Jack	In Memory of Dad, Papa
Frieda Houldsworth	In Memory of husband Ernie & Loved ones
Troy Larkin	To the Glory of God
Steve & Marilyn Pieart	To the Glory of God
Shirley Richlen	In Memory of Denny & Friend Larry
Maggie Sanquist	In Memory of Richard Corken
The Southwell Family	In Memory of Edith Hafman

Prayers for Healing and Support

Congregational Members

Ed Arp, **Lynn** Chamberlain, **Bev** Chappen, **Sandy** Henry, **Frieda** Houldsworth, **Jeryl** Krumbholz, **Jim** Krumbholz,
Doug Larson, **Bert** Leder, **LaVonne** Mienke, **Mark** Peters, **Jean** Rowe,
Dave Schmidt

Family and Friends

Amanda (friend of Melissa), **Becky** (sister of Ellen Hogbin)
Carol (friend of Joleen & Erik Bakken), **Carol** (friend of Steve & Sue Miller) **Crew** (Susie and Jeff Seitz' new grandson),
Donna (Ed Arp's sister),
Drew (Pat Larson's friend), **Emmett** (friend of Diana Worley),
Hattie (Frieda's sister), **Jenn** (family of Bryce/Kim & Gary/Eunice),
Joe (Janene's son-in-law), **John** (Susie & Jeff Seitz' friend), **Joseph** (friend of Bryce & Kim), **Karen and Ed** (Shirley's Aunt and Uncle),
Konnor (Bert Leder's grandson), **Mark** (friend of Jason Forari), **Michelle** (friend of Joleen & Erik Bakken), **Phil** (Steve Miller and Pat Sorensen's brother), **Stan** (relative of Fritz Voss), **Steve** (friend of Pat Larson),
Tami (family of Maggie Bayliss),
Wally (Frieda's nephew)

Those Whose Duty it is to Protect Others

Anthony Karasek (Judy Larson's great nephew)
 CPT **Eli** Smith (Jerry and Myrna Mattly's grandson)
Nathan Pearson USAF (Jenna & Kane Schmidt's friend)
Tyler McLaughlin, First Responder (Family of Pat Larson)

*If you have anyone who needs to be taken off or added,
 please notify the church office.*