

# SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS LUTHERAN CHURCH

## CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION

### WELCOME

### CALL TO WORSHIP & LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS CANDLES

*SCHREIER CHILDREN & GRANDCHILDREN*

On this holy night, a savior is born.

**Jesus, you are that child, who redeems all of creation.**

We lit the first candle in expectation of your coming.

We lit the second candle in hope of new life in you.

We lit the third candle in anticipation of your fulfillment of God's word.

We lit the fourth candle in wonder at your choice to become one of us.

Now we light these candles in joyful praise and celebration that you are in our midst  
at last, now and forever.

*(The candles are lit.)*

**Let us worship God, who comes to us even now. Amen!**

**GATHERING HYMN** | ANGELS, FROM THE REALMS OF GLORY

ELW #275



## Angels, from the Realms of Glory

1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
 2 Shep - herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,  
 3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;  
 4 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God, the Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son,

once you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:  
 God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - fant light.  
 seek the great de - sire of na - tions, you have seen his na - tal star.  
 ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing to the e - ter - nal Three in One.

*Refrain*

Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born king.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt., sts. 1–3; *Salisbury Hymn Book*, 1857, st. 4  
 Music: Henry T. Smart, 1813–1879

REGENT SQUARE  
 878787

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God of love, on this holy night, when all of creation cries out with joy at the birth of Jesus, still there is suffering in the hearts of many. Still there is fear and grief nearby and far away. Breathe hope into the world, as small and humble as the tiny babe in the manger, and by this hope, transform reality, that all might know the eternal joy of your redeeming love. In the name of our newborn savior, Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

## FIRST READING: LUKE 1:46-55

<sup>46</sup>And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the LORD, <sup>47</sup>and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, <sup>48</sup>for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; <sup>49</sup>for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. <sup>50</sup>His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. <sup>51</sup>He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. <sup>52</sup>He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; <sup>53</sup>he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. <sup>54</sup>He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, <sup>55</sup>according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

Word of God. Word of Life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## SECOND READING: PSALM 96:7-13 *(Please read responsively)*

<sup>7</sup>Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,

**ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.**

<sup>8</sup>Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;

**bring an offering, and come into his courts.**

<sup>9</sup>Worship the Lord in holy splendor;

**tremble before him, all the earth.**

<sup>10</sup>Say among the nations, “The Lord is king! The world is firmly established;

**it shall never be moved. He will judge the peoples with equity.”**

<sup>11</sup>Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;

**let the sea roar, and all that fills it;**

<sup>12</sup>let the field exult, and everything in it.

**Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy <sup>13</sup>before the Lord;**

for he is coming, for he is coming to judge the earth.

**He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with his truth.**

## CHILDREN’S SERMON | CHARLIE’S CHRISTMAS TREE

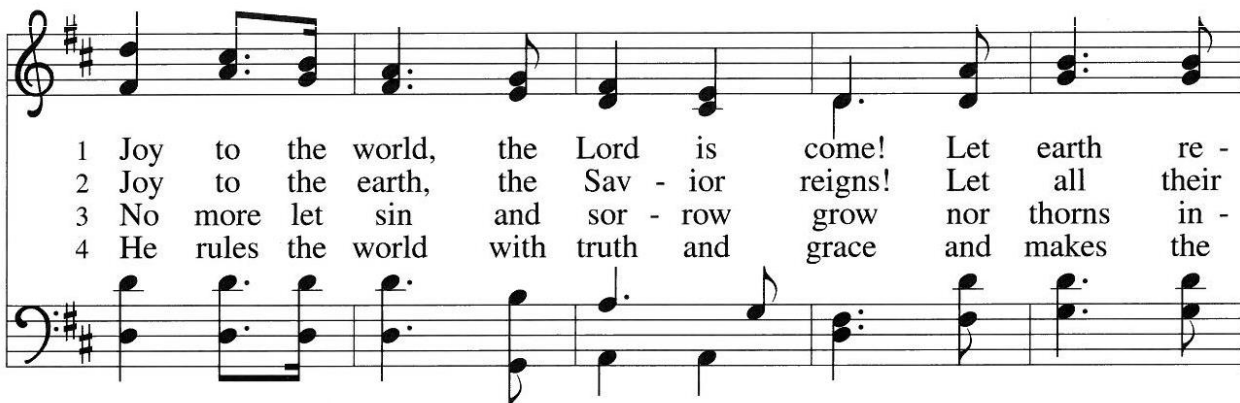
[https://youtu.be/LCz4FNe\\_S1U?feature=shared](https://youtu.be/LCz4FNe_S1U?feature=shared)

## GOSPEL HYMN | JOY TO THE WORLD

ELW #267

# Joy to the World

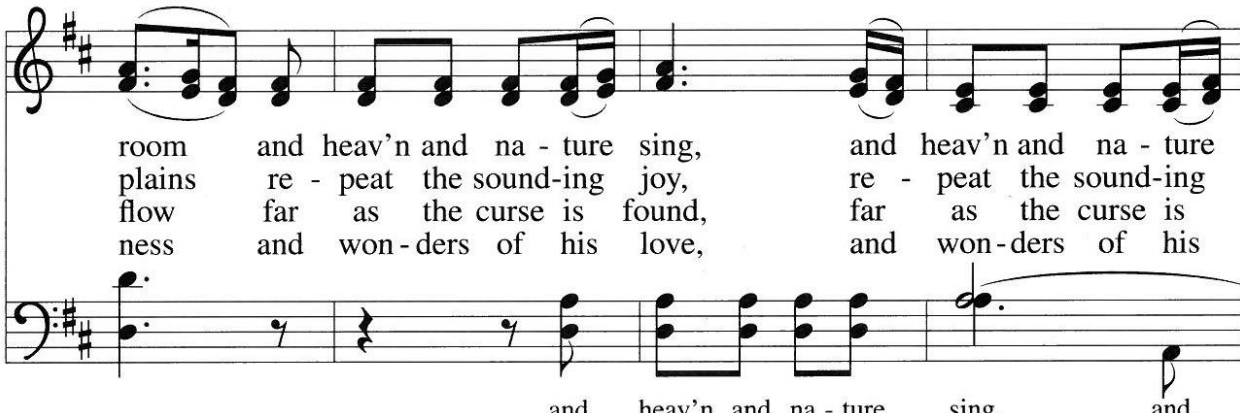
267



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their  
 3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him  
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings  
 na - tions 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

and heav'n and na - ture sing, and



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.

heav'n and na - ture sing,

## GOSPEL: LUKE 2:1-14

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>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 for them in the inn.

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>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: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

This is the Gospel of our LORD.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## SERMON

*PASTOR JANET KETTERING*

## SPECIAL MUSIC | STILL A BACH CHRISTMAS

*PEYTON SAWYER, SOLOIST  
MARGARET SCHARFF, PIANIST*





## CHRISTMAS EVE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in God, the creator and giver of life, who brought all creation to birth; who lovingly parents us, protecting, nurturing, and cherishing us.

We believe in Jesus Christ: God born among us as a fragile baby, embodying both love and the need for love, and calling us to rest in God as trustingly as a tiny child.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, breathed into us at our birth, always drawing us on to be born again, encouraging, comforting, nourishing our growth and inspiring our living.

We believe in the reconciliation of the world to God, through Christ. And we believe that each new child is a glimpse of the face of God, a sign of the life to come, and a call to live in peace and celebrate living together. Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth. Amen.

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Good and gracious God, on this holy night, draw us into the mystery of your love revealed in the birth of your Son. On this holy night in which You join heaven and earth, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all those in need.

*(A brief silence.)*

We pray for the Church around the world as it celebrates the birth of Christ. Bless all who are entrusted with sharing the teachings of Christ, empowering them to proclaim his teachings with truth and courage across our world. God of Love, **hear our prayer.**

Bestow your wisdom on all who govern, that in honoring the earth and its diverse races, cultures, and religions, we may celebrate the light of this holy night. God of Love, **hear our prayer.**

Grant reconciliation to those surrounded with conflict and violence, that they may live in the peace of this holy night. God of Love, **hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for all who are cold, hungry, or alone this night. Embrace with your tender care all who wander alone or have no place to lay their head. Bless them with the hope of this holy night. God of Love, **hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for all who are anxious, depressed, or ill. Draw near to those who find this season a source of pain or grief, and to all who are suffering or sick, especially those we remember in our own hearts... Bless them with the comfort of this holy night. God of Love, **hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for parents, families, and newborn infants. Strengthen families in the bonds of love and commitment, that they may delight in the joy of this holy night. God of Love, **hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for ourselves and for the blessings of Christmas. Open our hearts to your presence, that we may be transformed by the new birth of this holy night. God of Love, **hear our prayer.**

Let us give thanks for all the faithful departed who have been bearers of the Word made flesh. Give us grace to follow your holy ones in lives of faith and commitment, that we may we join with the hosts of heaven in singing the praises of this holy night. God of Love, **hear our prayer.**

All these things and whatever else you see that we need, grant us, O God, for the sake of him who died and rose again, and now lives and reigns in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## **OFFERING**

### **OFFERING HYMN | STILL, STILL, STILL**

Still, still, still  
one can hear the falling snow  
for all is hushed the world is sleeping  
Holy star, its vigil keeping  
Still, still, still  
one can hear the falling snow  
Sleep, sleep, sleep  
'tis the eve of our Saviour's birth  
The night is peaceful all around You  
Close Your eyes let sleep surround You  
Sleep, sleep, sleep  
'tis the eve of our Saviour's birth  
Dream, dream, dream  
of the joyous day to come  
While guardian angels without number  
watch you as you sweetly slumber  
Dream, dream, dream  
of the joyous day to come

## OFFERING PRAYER

God of Grace and Love, **we cannot possibly match the gift you gave us in Jesus. For his sake, accept these humble offerings and transform them by your power for your work of justice and reconciliation in all the earth. Amen.**

## CELEBRATION OF COMMUNITY THROUGH HOLY COMMUNION

### CHRISTMAS EVE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

The Lord be with you. **And also 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.**

For this sacred time, for this holy night, for the gift of incarnation, we give you our deepest thanks and highest praise, O God. In the fullness of your time, you came to us an infant, confounding the wise and encouraging the faithful, so that you might know us and live as us; teach us, heal us, and save us. May your Spirit come to us now, and settle upon this bread and cup, that they might become for us the spiritual presence of the body and blood of Christ.

Just as Jesus' birth was for the whole world, this bread and wine is for everyone: For the hungry, for the lost, for those who search, and those who have found; for those who question and those who know peace.

And, so, we come, remembering that on the night in which he gave himself up for the world, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to those gathered, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the promise of forgiveness in my blood, poured out for you and for all people. Do this in remembrance of me.

As we share this feast, may we be fed with grace and courage, with hope and joy, strengthened to go out into the world as messengers of your Good News, united in the hope that is ours in the prayer that Jesus taught us:

**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.**



This is, indeed, our Lord's Table, where all are truly welcomed and nourished in love. If you wish to receive a blessing without the bread and wine, please come forward, indicating your desire by crossing your arms over your chest.

*At the direction of the Ushers, please form two lines in the center aisle, and proceed to the the Altar to receive either the elements or a blessing, then return to your seat using the outside aisles.*

## **SHARING THE MEAL**

This is the Body of Christ, broken in love for you...

This is the Blood of Christ, poured out in forgiveness of you...

## **POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

God of shepherds and kings, **you lead us, in hope, to trust in your presence in every time and place. Guide us by the light of your star. Lead us to the manglers of this world, where uncertainty is met with hope and transformation is known in love. Amen.**

### **BENEDICTION & SENDING**

We rejoice in God's steadfast presence in our lives, and in God's unique presence in the life of Jesus of Nazareth – who was born of Mary and grew from childhood into adulthood, in all his life manifesting the peace, love, and justice of God.

His teachings are undimmed by the centuries. His call and his promise are as clear to us today as they were to his disciples so long ago.

Come to us, Lord Jesus. Be born in us this night: In our hearts, in our minds, and in our lives. May the light of your life be kindled in us and lead us to the shining truth of God with us, God for us, God in us. **Amen.**

## **CANDLE LIGHTING | SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT**

**ELW #281**

*We invite you to light your candle as we sing along with Silent Night.  
Please tip your candle into the lit candle extended to you,  
then extend it to the person next to you.*

*When all candles are lit, we will stand together and raise our candles to sing Silent Night.*

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

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!

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.

**PLEASE EXTINGUISH YOUR CANDLE  
AND RETURN IT TO THE BASKET  
OUTSIDE THE SANCTUARY,  
SHARING A SIGN OF  
GOD'S LOVE AND PEACE  
AS YOU CARRY THE LOVE OF GOD MADE  
FLESH INTO THE WORLD**

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

**This is Christ's church.**

**There is a place for you here.**

We are the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace.  
Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person--questions, complexities and all.  
Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

**CLICK LINK TO ACCESS READINGS, SERMONS & SPECIAL EVENTS FROM PAST SUNDAYS:**

**[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/@SHEPHERDOFTHEHILLSLUTHERAN6221/VIDEOS](https://www.youtube.com/@shepherdofthehillslutheran6221/videos)**

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**CHRISTMAS EVE PRAYER** – [WWW.CHRISTIANAID.ORG.UK/](http://WWW.CHRISTIANAID.ORG.UK/)

**CHRISTMAS EVE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** – NATHAN NETTLETON, *AS ADAPTED*

**CHRISTMAS PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH** – THISISCHURCH, *AS ADAPTED*

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**CHRISTMAS PRAYER AT THE TABLE** – THOM M. SHUMAN AND CHERYL LAWRIE, *AS ADAPTED*

**CHRISTMAS EVE WORDS OF INSTITUTION** – REV. ANDY JAMES, *AS ADAPTED*

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION** – REV. ANDREW O'NEIL, *AS ADAPTED*

**BENEDICTION & SENDING** – JEANYNE SLETTOM, *AS ADAPTED*

**WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS:**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT:** CAROLINE MICHALAK

**ALTAR GUILD:** GERRY & KEN MOORHEAD, LYNN TRUMBLE & KAY WERPY

**ASSISTING MINISTER:** REV. PHIL KETTERING

**AUDIO TECHNICIAN:** MARK "FUZZ" NEWKIRK

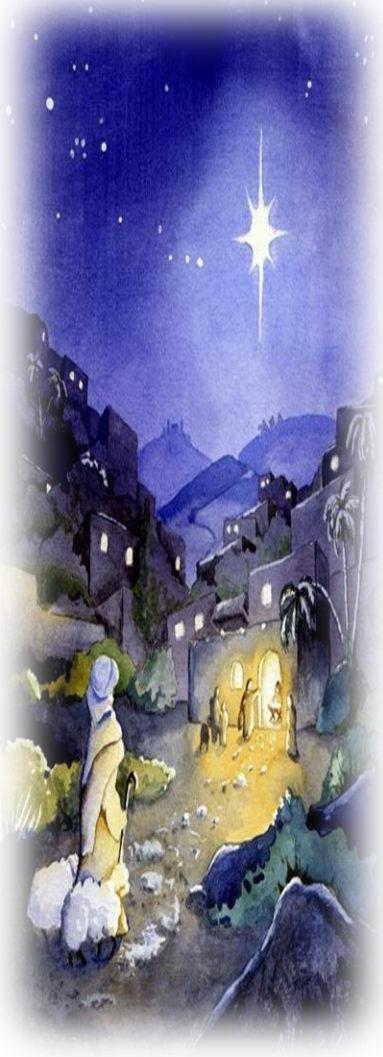
**LECTOR:** DAN WARREN

**LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS CANDLE:** SCHREIER CHILDREN & GRANDCHILDREN

**PASTOR:** REV. JANET KETTERING

**PIANIST:** MARGARET SCHARFF

**SOLOIST:** PEYTON SAWYER



## **DAILY NARRATIVE READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 25, 2025**

### **Thursday, December 25, 2025**

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/luke-28-20-shepherds-visit2025>

Luke 2:8-20      Shepherds Visit

### **Friday, December 26, 2025**

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/matthew-21-12-wise-men2025>

Matthew 2:1-1      Wise Men

### **Saturday, December 27, 2025**

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/luke-241-52-the-boy-jesus-in-the-temple2025>

Luke 2:41-52      The Boy Jesus in the Temple

### **Sunday, December 28, 2025**

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/john-119-34-a-voice-in-the-wilderness2025>

John 1:19-34      A Voice in the Wilderness

### **Monday, December 29, 2025**

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/psalm-321-2-the-joy-of-forgiveness-i2025>

Psalm 32:1-2      The Joy of Forgiveness I

### **Tuesday, December 30, 2025**

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/psalm-323-4-the-joy-of-forgiveness-ii2025>

Psalm 32:3-4      The Joy of Forgiveness II

### **Wednesday, December 31, 2025**

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/psalm-325-the-joy-of-forgiveness-iii2025>

Psalm 32:5      The Joy of Forgiveness III