

December 24, 2025

Christmas Eve



CHRIST THE SAVIOR IS BORN



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Welcome! Thank you for joining us for worship today. In our services we gather before our almighty God to receive his gifts and to offer him our worship and praise. Through God's powerful Word and sacraments he renews our faith and strengthens us to serve in joy.

PRAYER BEFORE WORSHIP: Father, open my heart to hear and believe your word, so that through faith your Son, he may take his rightful place not just in the manger, but also within my heart. In his name I pray. Amen.

SERIES THEME: "Silent Night" was written originally in German by Joseph Mohr, with music composed by Franz Gruber. The carol was first performed on Christmas Eve in 1818 at St. Nicholas Church in Oberndorf, Austria. Legend says the church organ was broken, prompting Gruber to compose a simple guitar accompaniment. Subsequently accompanied by many instruments and translated into many languages, the text paints the picture of the incarnation. The last phrase is repeated, so in the second stanza we hear it twice: "Christ the Savior is born!" Every word of that phrase is significant, and every line of the Christmas carol describes a Bible truth. We use the beloved hymn to ponder the profound message of the Twelve Days of Christmas.

SERVICE THEME: Families cherish their Christmas traditions. Year after year, they decorate the tree with the same ornaments, play the same music, bake the same Christmas cookies. Without asking, family members know when they will open presents. If you try to change your family's Christmas traditions, you might be in trouble!

Because our celebration of Christmas has so many unchanging traditions, we might miss the fact that the birth of Christ the Savior meant radical change for the world. Would the change be an improvement or another step in decline? The angels answer the question. They don't sing "Watch out for impending doom!" They sing "glory" and "peace," praising God with alleluias!

In the Twelve Days of Christmas, our worship follows this pattern.

Christmas Eve	<i>Christ the Savior Is Born</i>
Christmas Day	<i>Holy Infant, So Tender and Mild</i>
Christmas 1 (Dec 27/28)	<i>Son of God</i>
Epiphany (Jan 3/4)	<i>Love's Pure Light Beams from Thy Holy Face</i>

Order of Worship



Preservice Anthem: Behold

Bella, Aerie, Jeremy Camp

It seemed like an ordinary night but we've never seen stars shining so bright.
There's something about this star even though it seems so far. Hallelujah!

Refrain: Behold, Jesus is born. Glory to God in the highest!
Behold, Jesus is born. Glory to God forever!

Now is hope in our lives cause God is loving and kind.
Even though we fail, He's still Emmanuel. Refrain

He is our shepherd and he is our strength. I won't be afraid.
He is our comfort and he is our fill. I won't be afraid. Refrain

Introduction and Welcome

Hymn: On Christmas Night All Christians Sing

CW 338



1 On Christ-mas night all Chris-tians sing to hear the news the
2 When sin de - parts be - fore his grace, then life and health come
3 All out of dark - ness we have light, which made the an - gels



an - gels bring, on Christ - mas night all Chris - tians sing to
in its place, when sin de - parts be - fore his grace, then
sing this night, all out of dark - ness we have light, which



hear the news the an - gels bring, news of great joy, news
life and health come in its place; an - gels and saints with
made the an - gels sing this night: "Glo - ry to God and



of great mirth, news of our mer - ci - ful King's birth.
joy may sing, all for to see the new - born King.
peace to men now and for - ev - er - more. A - men."

Please stand.

Minister: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Amen.

CHRISTMAS DIALOGUE

M: Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them.

C: Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.

M: He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.

C: Our eyes have seen his salvation which he prepared in the sight of all nations.

M: The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord,

C: and he will delight in the fear of the Lord.

M: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

C: Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end.

M: Being in very nature God, he did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

C: Though he was rich, yet for our sake he became poor, so that we through his poverty might become rich.

M: God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

C: Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Be seated.

Men's Chorus Anthem

Lord of the Stars

By Ruth Elaine Schram

Lord of the stars, the sun, the moon, the midnight sky,
Lord of the earth, the lands, the seas, the air,
We have heard the prophecies of Your miraculous birth.
When will You come to us? When will You come to us?
O come, O come, Emmanuel, O come to us, O come to us.

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to us.

Prayer of the Day

M: Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true light. Grant that as we have known on earth the wonder of that light, we may also behold him in all his glory in the life to come; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

First Reading

Micah 5:2-5a

The prophet foretold that the Savior would come from a little town called Bethlehem to bring peace to the world

²“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel,
whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.”

³Therefore Israel will be abandoned
until the time when she who is in labor bears a son,
and the rest of his brothers return to join the Israelites.

⁴He will stand and shepherd his flock
in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they will live securely, for then his greatness
will reach to the ends of the earth.

⁵And he will be our peace

M: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm of the Day: Let the Heavens Rejoice

Psalm 96A

The assembly joins the choir for the refrains and the "Glory be".

Refrain



Tone



Sing to the LORD a / new song;

sing to the LORD, / all the earth.

Sing to the LORD, / praise his name;

proclaim his salvation day / after day.

Declare his glory among the / nations,

his marvelous deeds among all / peoples.

Ascribe to the LORD the glory / due his name;

bring an offering and come in- / to his courts. *Refrain*

Let all creation rejoice before the LORD, / for he comes,

he comes to / judge the earth.

He will judge the world in / righteousness

and the peoples in his / faithfulness.

Glory be to the Father and / to the Son

and to the Holy / Spirit,

as it was in the be- / ginning,

is now, and will be forever. / Amen. *Refrain*

Second Reading

Titus 2:11-14

The grace God showed us in sending his Son changes not only our present lives but also our eternal destiny.

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. ¹²It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus

⁸And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

¹³Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

Be seated.

Choir Anthem: Hope Has Arrived

By Rebecca J. Peck

To a world that waited in darkness, the glorious Light has shined.
The promised One has been given to rescue all mankind;
Telling forth the great announcement, angels loudly singing,
“Born this day is Christ the Savior”, hear the message they are bringing.

Refrain: Hope has arrived, He’s lying in a manger. Love is fast asleep on the hay;
In a tiny baby boy, peace and joy have come.
Hope has arrived, He’s God’s only Son.

We who know the joy of salvation are called to reflect His light
To those who still walk in darkness, we share the hope of Christ;
Like the angels, we proclaim it with our joyous singing,
Telling all the wondrous message, Hear the good news we are bringing *Refrain*

Ev’ry longing in the hearts of man has been fulfilled within Him;
He’s peace in our trouble, joy in our struggles, and hope to start over again.
Refrain

Gospel

Luke 2:15–20

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

¹⁶So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying

and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

M: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise be to you, O Christ!**

Be seated.

Hymn of the Day: All My Heart Again Rejoices

CW 329



1 All my heart a - gain re - joic - es as I hear
2 Hear! The con - quer - or has spo - ken: "Now the foe,
3 Should we fear our God's dis - plea - sure, who, to save,
4 See the Lamb, our sin once tak - ing to the cross,



far and near sweet - est an - gel voic - es.
sin and woe, death and hell are bro - ken!"
free - ly gave his most pre - cious trea - sure?
suf - f'ring loss, full a - tone - ment mak - ing.



"Christ is born!" their choirs are sing - ing till the air
God is man, man to de - liv - er, and the Son
To re - deem us he has giv - en his own Son
For our life his own he ten - ders, and his grace



ev - 'ry - where now with joy is ring - ing.
now is one with our blood for - ev - er.
from the throne of his might in heav - en.
all our race fit for glo - ry ren - ders.

- 5 Softly from his lowly manger Jesus calls one and all,
"You are safe from danger.
Children, from the sins that grieve you you are freed; all you need
I will surely give you."
- 6 Come, then, banish all your sadness! One and all, great and small,
come with songs of gladness;
we shall live with him forever there on high in that joy
which will vanish never.

Sermon

“Christ Appears”

- 1) In Grace
- 2) In Glory

Hymn: Angels We Have Heard on High

CW 346



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 ti - dings 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.

Offering



Connect Card

Our members give offerings to support God’s work in our church. Offerings can be put in the basket or made online by scanning the code. Visitors may give, but aren’t expected to.

We ask members and visitors alike to fill out the connection card and place it in the basket now or as you leave. Please share your prayer requests that we can pray for you.



Give Online

Lighting of the Christmas Candles

We light our individual candles at this time. The pastor lights his candle from the white candle on the Advent wreath. This is the Christ candle, which symbolizes Christ, the Light of the world. The ushers light their candles from the pastor's candle, then light the candle of each worshiper nearest the aisle. In this way the light of Christ is shared with all who worship here tonight. The lighted candle is never tilted, but is always held upright when giving light to another.



Christmas Prayer

M: O God, who makes us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of your only Son, Jesus Christ; grant that, as we joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, so may we also behold him with sure confidence when he shall come to be our judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

Blessing

M: May he who by his incarnation gathered things earthly and heavenly into one, fill us with such joy that comes with the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life.

And the blessing of God Almighty— Father, Son ✠, and Holy Spirit—be upon you and remain with you always.

C: **Amen.**



Hymn: Silent Night, Holy Night

CW 337 sts. 1-3



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.

Silent Prayer & Announcements

Candles may be extinguished at this time and returned to the ushers as you leave church. We leave worship tonight with the quiet joy of a promise kept. When we gather again tomorrow morning we will sing with full praise as the whole world rejoices in our Savior's birth.

SERVING GOD, SERVING US:

Preacher: Pastor JonAlden Pedersen Liturgist: Pastor Ryan Wolfe
Pianist: Madison Boerner Choir Director: Luke Dorn
Men's Chorus Director: Steve Angus Handbell Director: Jessie Wolfe
Choir Quartet: Jessie Wolfe, Allison Dorn, Luke Dorn, Tom Stob

Acknowledgments

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Christmas Poinsettias

IN LOVING MEMORY

Sue Galler

Bill Galler

Tom & Dorothy Gerson

John & Arlene Cromien

Harold, Carol & Dickie Wohlers

Linda Wohlers

Gib & Eulah Schmorckel

Gilbert & Rosella Ecker

Kay Berden

Tracy & Ella Berdan

Howard & Pearl Elder

Franklin & Verna Gruetzmacher

Harold & Mabel Zolldan

Len & Vi LeMay

Stan Vetsch

Kent Hadrits

Alfred & Johanna Stoller

Levi & Hazel McKean

Dennis & Linda McKean

Lyle & Aris Crawford

Donald & Barbara Anderson

Donald Roettger

Geraldine Roettger

John Falck

Gayle Krause

Janice & Lloyd Grobe

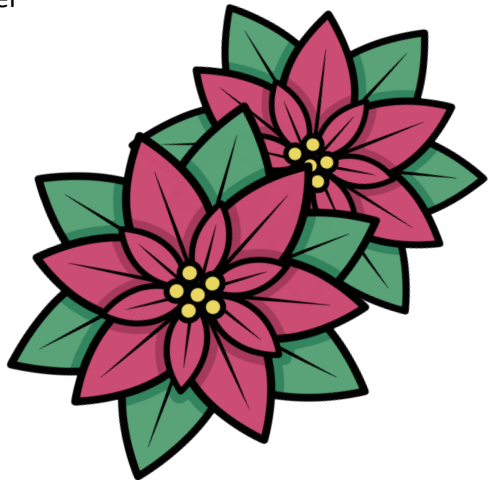
Victor Prescott

Charles & Amanda Dahlke

Collin Fitzgerald

Carl & Emma Bourman

Herb & Catherine Monthie



12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS



We thank you for joining us this evening. You are probably familiar with the song *The Twelve Days of Christmas*. It is aptly named. The early Christian church would celebrate Christmas for twelve days. The Season of Christmas begins on December 25th with the great Festival of the Nativity. On January 6th, the Festival of Epiphany brings the season of Christmas to an end.

Thursday, December 25 at 10:00AM

Silent Night: Holy Infant, So Tender and Mild

We ponder some of the most profound words in Scripture, teaching us the meaning of this baby in the manger. Worship includes the celebration of Holy Communion for our members. Join us at 9:45am to sing some of our favorite Christmas carols.

Weekend of December 28th (Regular service times)

Silent Night: Son of God

The Son of God took on flesh for two reasons: to be our substitute and our sacrifice. In life AND in death Jesus is the only gift who could have given us peace and forgiveness.

Wednesday, December 31st at 4:30pm

While not a part of our Christmas series or a religious festival, it makes sense that we would spend time with the Lord as one year opens and another closes. The New Year's Eve service is shorter and devotional, and includes Holy Communion.

Weekend of January 4th (Regular service times)

Silent Night: Love's Pure Light Beams from Thy Holy Face

The season of Christmas ends on January 6th, known as Epiphany, "the Gentile Christmas." In this weekend's services we consider the way God guided the wise men to Jesus and made it clear that salvation in Jesus is for us Gentiles too.



WELCOME TO WORSHIP

For our guests

We are glad that you joined us to worship our Savior today. If you have questions about our church or service simply ask an usher or someone near you. We're happy to help!

Please take note of a few helpful things:

- ✦ Restrooms with diaper-changing tables are located straight down the hall opposite the sanctuary entrance.
- ✦ Our sanctuary is equipped with a "loop" system for hearing assistance. Please set hearing aids to the "T" position or ask an usher for a headset.
- ✦ You will find a connection card in your pew. Please share names, contact information, and prayer requests.
- ✦ Salem members give an offering to support the work we do for the Lord. Guests are not expected to give anything, but if you wish to donate you can place it in a basket as it's passed during the service or give online.
- ✦ Our services are streamed live on our YouTube channel. If you would prefer not to be on camera, please sit in the seats located beneath the balcony.

For those with young children

We love to see families worship together and we welcome children to sing, pray, and grow with us in our services.

We provide a few special worship aids and helps for families:

- ✦ Children's bulletins & activity bags are available in the entry, just to the left of the office hallway. Ask an usher if you need help finding them.
- ✦ If you or your child needs a quiet space, you can use the fireside room down the hallway across from the restrooms. The service is streamed live on a TV in the room.
- ✦ On Sunday mornings, children of all ages are invited to come to the front of church for the children's message. Parents are welcome too!

**Salem Lutheran Church exists to glorify God
by teaching his timeless Truth, that all may
grow in grace and faith to share tomorrow's eternity.**

