December 24, 2025 Christmas Eve





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# Welcome to Holy Trinity

We're glad you came today to join us in worshiping the one true God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He has graciously created us, mercifully redeemed us, and freely gives us all the treasures of heaven through His Word and Sacraments!

If you are a visitor with us today and want to find out more about what we teach, or are curious about church membership, please talk to our pastor. Please be sure to provide us with your contact information in our friendship register that is passed around before or after the service.

Restrooms are located on the north end of the fellowship hall through the doors to the Learning Center. Additional restrooms with changing tables are located to the left of the entrance to the fellowship hall, through the doors to the Learning Center, then to the left.

Parents who need to leave the service to have quiet time with their child are welcome to use any of our classrooms in the Learning Center.

HOLY TRINITY is a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS), a national church body headquartered in Mankato, Minnesota. We confess that we are saved by Grace Alone (Eph. 2:8) through Faith Alone (Acts 16:31) revealed in Scripture Alone (John 5:24). Though we are totally sinful from birth, Jesus Christ paid for our sins on the cross and gives us eternal life in heaven. We subscribe to the Lutheran Confessions (the Book of Concord, 1580) because they are a faithful and accurate summary of this Biblical doctrine. The ELS has been in fellowship with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) since 1872.



## A SERVICE OF LESSONS & CAROLS FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

**Opening Hymn** • 139, sts. 1, 2, 4, 5, "Once in Royal David's City"

- Once in royal David's city
   Stood a lowly cattle shed
   Where a mother laid her Baby
   In a manger for His bed.
   Mary was that mother mild,
   Jesus Christ her little Child.
- He came down to earth from heaven,
   Who is God and Lord of all,
   And His shelter was a stable,
   And His cradle was a stall;
   With the poor and mean and lowly
   Lived on earth our Savior holy.
- 4. And our eyes at last shall see Him, Through His own redeeming love; For that Child, so dear and gentle, Is our Lord in heav'n above; And He leads His children on To the place where He is gone.
- 5. Not in that poor lowly stable
  With the oxen standing by
  We shall see Him, but in heaven,
  Set at God's right hand on high;
  Where, like stars, His children crowned,
  All in white shall wait around.

-Stand-

## **Exhortation and Prayer**

PASTOR Dear people of God, in this Christmas season it is our duty and delight to hear again the message of the angels and, in heart and mind, to go to Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us—the Christ-Child lying in a manger.

Let us read and learn in Holy Scripture the story of the loving purposes of God from the first days after our fall into sin to the glorious redemption brought to us by this holy child.

But first, let us pray for people all over the world who would delight with us to know the good news of Jesus Christ, and who would join with us in singing his praises. Let us pray for the people of this community and for all those in our own congregation.

And, because this would please our Lord, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who are sad, the lonely and the unloved, and the elderly and the little children. We especially remember all those who do not know the Lord Jesus, those who do not love him, and those who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

Finally, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us in heaven, who live in greater light than we, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, who died in faith, and who live before the throne of God and praise him each day in his temple. We confess that we are united with them as we are united with one another.

To sum up all these petitions, let us pray as Christ himself 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.

-Be seated-

**First Lesson** • *Genesis* 3:8–15

The Seed of the woman will crush the serpent's head.

They heard the voice of the Lord God, who was walking around in the garden during the cooler part of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

<sup>9</sup>The Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"

 $^{\mbox{\tiny 10}}$  The man said, "I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, so I hid myself."

<sup>11</sup>God said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat?"

<sup>12</sup> The man said, "The woman you gave to be with me—she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

 $^{13}$  The Lord God said to the woman, "What have you done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

<sup>14</sup>The Lord God said to the serpent:

Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all the livestock, and more than every wild animal. You shall crawl on your belly, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. <sup>15</sup> I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed.

He will crush your head,
and you will crush his heel.

**Hymn** • 128, sts. 1, 4, 6, 8, "Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising"

- Come, your hearts and voices raising, Christ the Lord with gladness praising; Loudly sing His love amazing, Worthy folk of Christendom.
- Christ, from heav'n to us descending And in love our race befriending, In our need His help extending, Saved us from the wily foe.
- 6. From the bondage that oppressed us, From sin's fetters that possessed us, From the grief that sore distressed us, We, the captives, now are free.
- 8. Gracious Child, we pray Thee, hear us, From Thy lowly manger cheer us, Gently lead us and be near us Till we join th'angelic choir.

**Second Lesson** • *Genesis* 22:15–18

God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

The Angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven <sup>16</sup> and said, "I have sworn by myself, declares the Lord, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, <sup>17</sup> I will bless you greatly, and I will multiply your descendants greatly, like the stars of the sky and like the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the city gates of their enemies. <sup>18</sup> In your seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."

**Hymn** • 165, sts. 1–3, "Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord"

- Let the earth now praise the Lord,
   Who hath truly kept His word
   And the sinners' Help and Friend
   Now at last to us doth send.
- 2. What the fathers most desired, What the prophets' heart inspired, What they longed for many a year, Stands fulfilled in glory here.

Abram's promised great Reward,
 Zion's Helper, Jacob's Lord—
 Him of two-fold race behold—
 Truly came, as long foretold.

## **Third Lesson** • *Isaiah 9:2,6,7*

The prophet foretells the coming of the Savior.

<sup>2</sup>The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.

For those living in the land of the shadow of death, the light has dawned.

<sup>6</sup>For to us a child is born.

To us a son is given.

The authority to rule will rest on his shoulders.

He will be named:

Wonderful Counselor,

Mighty God,

Everlasting Father,

Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup>There will be no limit to his authority

and no end to the peace he brings.

He will rule on David's throne and over his kingdom,

to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness

from now on, into eternity.

The zeal of the Lord of Armies will accomplish this.

## **Hymn** • 125, sts. 1–3, "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!
 Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
 Joyful, all ye nations rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
 With th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
 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 th'incarnate Deity! Pleased as Man with man to dwell; Jesus, our Immanuel! Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"
- 3. Hail, the heav'nly Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righteousness! Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with healing in His wings. Mild He leaves His throne on high, Born that man no more may die; Born to raise the sons of earth; Born to give them second birth, Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

## **Fourth Lesson** • *Isaiah 11: 1–9*

A Branch from the stump of Jesse will bear fruit.

A shoot will spring up from the stump of Jesse, and a Branch from his roots will bear fruit.

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

<sup>3</sup>He will be delighted with the fear of the Lord.

He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,

nor will he render decisions based on what he hears with his ears,

<sup>4</sup> but with righteousness he will judge the poor,

and he will render fair decisions in favor of the oppressed on the earth.

He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,

and with the breath from his lips he will put the wicked to death.

<sup>5</sup>Righteousness will be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his hips.

<sup>6</sup>The wolf will dwell with the lamb,

and the leopard will lie down with the young goat,

the calf, the young lion, and the fattened calf together,

and a little child will lead them.

<sup>7</sup>The cow and the bear will graze together, and their young ones will lie down together.

The lion will eat straw like the cattle.

<sup>8</sup>The nursing child will play near a cobra's hole, and the weaned child will put his hand into a viper's den.

<sup>9</sup>They will not hurt or destroy anywhere on my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

## **Hymn** • 121, sts. 1, 2, 4, 5, "Behold a Branch is Growing"

[Tune: TLH 645]

- 1. Behold, a Branch is growing
  Of loveliest form and grace,
  As prophets sung, foreknowing;
  It springs from Jesse's race
  And bears one little Flow'r
  In midst of coldest winter,
  At deepest midnight hour.
- Isaiah hath foretold It
   In words of promise sure,
   And Mary's arms enfold It,
   A Virgin meek and pure.
   Through God's eternal will
   This Child to her is given
   At midnight calm and still.

- 4. This Flow'r, whose fragrance tender,
  With sweetness fills the air,
  Dispels with glorious splendor
  The darkness ev'rywhere.
  True man, yet very God;
  From sin and death He saves us
  And lightens ev'ry load.
- 5. O Savior, Child of Mary,
  Who felt our human woe;
  O Savior, King of Glory,
  Who dost our weakness know,
  Bring us at length, we pray,
  To the bright courts of heaven
  And to the endless day.

**Fifth Lesson** • *Luke 1:26–35, 38* 

The angel Gabriel announces to Mary the birth of a son.

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin pledged in marriage to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women."

<sup>29</sup> But she was greatly troubled by the statement and was wondering what kind of greeting this could be. <sup>30</sup> The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, because you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> Listen, you will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. <sup>33</sup> He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will never end."

<sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

<sup>35</sup>The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

 $^{38}$  Then Mary said, "See, I am the Lord's servant. May it happen to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

## **Hymn** • 113, sts. 1, 2, 4, "A Great and Mighty Wonder"

A great and mighty wonder, A full and holy cure:
 The Virgin bears the Infant With virgin honor pure!
 Repeat the hymn again:
 "To God on high be glory And peace on earth to men!"

2. The Word becomes incarnate And yet remains on high, And cherubim sing anthems To shepherds from the sky. Repeat the hymn again:

"To God on high be glory And peace on earth to men!"

4. Since all He comes to ransom, By all be He adored, The Infant born in Bethl'em, The Savior and the Lord. Repeat the hymn again:

"To God on high be glory And peace on earth to men!"

## **Sixth Lesson** • *Luke 2:1–7*

St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governing Syria. <sup>3</sup>And everyone went to register, each to his own town. <sup>4</sup>And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the town of Nazareth, into Judea, to the town of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was from the house and family line of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, his wife, who was pledged to him in marriage and was expecting a child.

<sup>6</sup> And so it was that while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. <sup>7</sup> And she gave birth to her firstborn son, wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

## **Hymn** • 137, sts. 1–4, "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

- 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 on earth.
- 3. How silently, how silently The wondrous gift is giv'n!
  So God imparts to human hearts The blessings of His heav'n.
  No ear may hear His coming, But in this world of sin,
  Where meek souls will receive Him, still the dear Christ enters in.
- 4. 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; O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!

## **Seventh Lesson** • Luke 2:8–20

The shepherds go to the manger.

There were in the same country shepherds staying out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock at night. <sup>9</sup> An angel of the Lord appeared to 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 behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which will be for all people: <sup>11</sup> Today in the town of David, a Savior was born for you. He is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> And this will be a sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup> Suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude from the heavenly army, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup> "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward mankind."

<sup>15</sup>When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Now let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup>So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

<sup>17</sup>When they had seen him, they told others the message they had been told about this child. <sup>18</sup> And all who heard it were amazed by what the shepherds said to them. <sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

# **Hymn** • 145, sts. 1–3, "What Child Is This?"

- 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!

## **Eighth Lesson** • *Matthew 2:1–12*

The Magi are led by the star to Jesus.

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, when Herod was king, Wise Men from the east came to Jerusalem. They asked, <sup>2</sup> "Where is he who has been born King of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." <sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was alarmed, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup> He gathered together all the people's chief priests and experts in the law. He asked them where the Christ was to be born. <sup>5</sup>They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, because this was written through the prophet:

<sup>6</sup>You, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are certainly not least among the rulers of Judah: because out of you will come a ruler, who will shepherd my people, Israel."

<sup>7</sup>Then Herod secretly summoned the Wise Men and found out from them exactly when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. When you find him, report to me, so that I may also go and worship him."

<sup>9</sup> After listening to the king, they went on their way. Then the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them, until it stood still over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they rejoiced with overwhelming joy. <sup>11</sup> After they went into the house and saw the child with Mary, his mother, they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> Since they had been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they went back to their own country by another route.

## **Hymn** • 168, sts. 1–3, "As with Gladness Men of Old"

As with gladness men of old Did the guiding star behold;
 As with joy they hailed its light, Leading onward, beaming bright;
 So, most gracious Lord, may we Evermore be led by Thee.

- As with joyful steps they sped, Savior, to Thy lowly bed,
   There to bend the knee before Thee, whom heav'n and earth adore,
   So may we with willing feet Ever seek Thy mercy seat.
- 3. As they offered gifts most rare At Thy cradle, rude and bare,
  So may we with holy joy, Pure and free from sin's alloy,
  All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to Thee, our heav'nly King.

-Stand-

## **Ninth Lesson** • *John 1:1–14*

St. John unfolds the great mystery of the incarnation.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup>Through him everything was made, and without him not one thing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind. <sup>5</sup>The light is shining in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. <sup>6</sup>There was a man, sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as an eyewitness to testify about the light so that everyone would believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light.

<sup>9</sup>The real light that shines on everyone was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not recognize him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, yet his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who did receive him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. <sup>13</sup>They were born, not of blood, or of the desire of the flesh, or of a husband's will, but born of God.

<sup>14</sup>The Word became flesh and dwelled among us. We have seen his glory, the glory he has as the only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

-Be seated-

## Lighting of the Candles

When individual candles are to be lighted, do not tip a lit candle, or the hot wax may spill. Tip only unlit candles to receive the flame from those already lit.

## **Hymn** • 140, "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!
- 3. Silent night! Holy night!
  Son of God, love's pure light
  Radiant beams from Thy holy face
  With the dawn of redeeming grace,
  Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
  Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.
- 4. Silent night! Holy night!
  Wondrous star, lend thy light;
  With the angels let us sing,
  Alleluia to our King;
  Christ the Savior is born,
  Christ the Savior is born

-Stand-

# **Prayer**

- **P** The Lord be with you.
- **G** And also with you.
- **P** Let us pray.

When all was still and it was midnight, your eternal Word, O Lord, descended from the almighty throne to dwell among us. May we receive him in the peace of forgiven hearts and proclaim your gracious goodwill to all people on earth, for he is God with us, Emmanuel, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**G** Amen.

## **Blessing**

- Amen.

-Be seated-

## **Closing Hymn** • 138, "Joy to the World"

- 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 men 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 sins and sorrows 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.

#### **NOTES**

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