

## **GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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### **THE HOLY INNOCENTS A SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS DECEMBER 28, 2025**

**“Out of Egypt I have called my son.”**

**When Herod saw that he had been  
tricked...he sent his soldiers to kill  
all of the children in and around  
Bethlehem who were age two and  
under. *Matt. 2:13-18***



From the beginning, by virtue of our baptism, we are called Christian. We were “Christ-ened” at the font. Bearing his name, we share the same Father and are invited to address him intimately: Abba! Jesus bears our sins in humble obedience to the will of the Father. We pray that the mind of Christ, whose name we bear, would be our own and that others would come to know him. Today, we remember The Holy Innocent and pray for peace on earth and good will among all people.

**VISIT US AT:**

**[WWW.GRACELUTHERANTEANECK.ORG](http://WWW.GRACELUTHERANTEANECK.ORG)**  
**and on Facebook**

**Welcome to worship!**  
**Masking is optional**  
**but recommended while indoors.**

## PRELUDE

*Please stand.*

### ENTRANCE HYMN

*From Heav'n Above to Earth I Come*

**LBW 51**

**Stanzas 1, 2, 12 & 14**



1 From heav'n a - bove to earth I come to bring good  
2 To you this night is born a child of Mar - y,  
3 This is the Christ, God's Son most high, who hears your  
4 The bless - ing which the Fa - ther planned the Son holds



news to ev - 'ry - one! Glad tid - ings of great joy I  
cho - sen vir - gin mild; this new - born child of low - ly  
sad and bit - ter cry; he will him - self your Sav - ior  
in his in - fant hand, that in his king - dom, bright and



bring to all the world, and glad - ly sing:  
birth shall be the joy of all the earth.  
be and from all sin will set you free.  
fair, you may with us his glo - ry share.

12 O dearest Jesus, holy child,  
prepare a bed, soft, undefiled,  
a holy shrine, within my heart,  
that you and I need never part.

14 "Glory to God in highest heav'n,  
who unto us his Son has giv'n."  
With angels sing in pious mirth:  
a glad new year to all the earth!

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*, 1978  
Music: VOM HIMMEL HOCH, V. Schumann, *Geistliche Lieder*, 1539

Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

## DIALOGUE

P: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

C: **The light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness has not overcome it.**

P: Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness,  
on them light has shined.

C: **We have beheld Christ's glory,  
glory as of the only Son from the Father.**

P: To us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

C: **In the Word was life,  
and the life was the light of all people.**

## OPENING PRAYER

P: Almighty God, you have filled us with the new light of the Word who became flesh and lived among us. Let the light of Christ shine in all people; and may there be peace on earth and good will among all people. We pray this through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

***Please be seated.***

## LESSONS AND CAROLS

**Isaiah 9:2-7**     *The prophet foretells the coming of the Savior.*

<sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. <sup>4</sup>For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. <sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. <sup>6</sup>For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup>His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

**Please stand.**

**CAROL:**

**Lo, How a Rose Is Growing**  
**Stanzas 1 and 2**

**LBW 58**

2



1 Lo, how a rose is grow - ing, a bloom of fin - est grace;  
2 The rose of which I'm sing - ing, I - sa - iah had fore - told.  
3 The shep - herds heard the sto - ry the an - gels sang that night:  
4 This flow'r, so small and ten - der, with fra - grance fills the air;  
5 O Sav - ior, child of Mar - y, who felt all hu - man woe;



the proph - ets had fore - told it: a branch of Jes - se's race  
He came to us through Mar - y who shel - tered him from cold.  
how Christ was born of Mar - y; he was the Son of light.  
his bright - ness ends the dark - ness that kept the earth in fear.  
O Sav - ior, king of glo - ry, who tri - umphed o'er our foe:



would bear one per - fect flow'r here in the cold of  
Through God's e - ter - nal will this child to us was  
To Beth - le - hem they ran to find him in the  
True God and yet true man, he came to save his  
bring us at length, we pray, to the bright courts of



win - ter and dark - est mid - night hour.  
giv - en at mid - night calm and still.  
man - ger as an - gel her - alds sang.  
peo - ple from earth's dark night of sin.  
heav - en and in - to end - less day.

Text: German, 15th cent.; tr. Gracia Grindal, b. 1943

Music: ES IST EIN ROS. *Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengesäng*, Köln, 1599

Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

**Please be seated.**

**Micah 5:2-5a** *The king will come from Bethlehem.*

<sup>2</sup>But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. <sup>3</sup>Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. <sup>4</sup>And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; <sup>5</sup>and he shall be the one of peace. If the Assyrians come into our land and tread upon our soil, we will raise against them seven shepherds and eight installed as rulers.

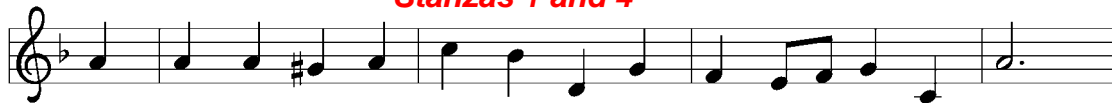
**Please stand.**

**CAROL:**

**O little town of Bethlehem**

**LBW 41**

**Stanzas 1 and 4**



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!

**Please be seated.**

**Luke 1:26-35, 38** *The annunciation to Mary.*

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup>But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>38</sup>Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

**Please stand.**

**CAROL:** *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came*

**WOV 632**

**Stanzas 1 and 2**



1 The an - gel Ga - bri - el from heav - en came,  
2 "For know a bless - ed moth - er thou shalt be,  
3 Then gen - tle Mar - y meek - ly bowed her head;  
4 Of her, Em-man - u - el, the Christ, was born



with wings as drift - ed snow, with eyes as flame:  
all gen - er - a - tions laud and hon - or thee;  
"To me be as it pleas - eth God," she said.  
in Beth - le - hem all on a Christ - mas morn,



"All hail to thee, O low - ly maid - en Mar - y,  
thy son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told,  
"My soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy God's ho - ly name."  
and Chris - tian folk through-out the world will ev - er say:



most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."  
most high - ly fa - vored la - dy." Glo - ri - a!  
Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy,  
"Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."

**Please be seated.**

**Luke 2:1-7** *The birth of Jesus*

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.

**Please stand.**

**CAROL:**

**Infant Holy, Infant Lowly**

**LBW 44**



1 In - fant ho - ly, in - fant low - ly, for his bed a cat - tle stall;  
2 Flocks were sleep - ing, shep - herds keep - ing vig - il till the morn - ing new



ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know - ing Christ the child is Lord of all.  
saw the glo - ry, heard the sto - ry, tid - ings of a gos - pel true.



Swift - ly wing - ing, an - gels sing - ing, bells are ring - ing, tid - ings bring - ing:  
Thus re - joic - ing, free from sor - row, prais - es voic - ing, greet the mor - row:



Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!  
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

Text: Polish carol; tr. Edith M. G. Reed, 1885–1933, alt.  
Music: W ŻŁOBIE LEŻY, Polish carol

**Please be seated.**

**Luke 2:8-16** *The shepherds go to see the Savior*

<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!" <sup>15</sup>When 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." <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

**Please stand.**

**CAROL:**

***Angels, from the Realms of Glory***  
***Stanzas 1 and 2***

**LBW 50**



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: REGENT SQUARE, Henry T. Smart, 1813–1879



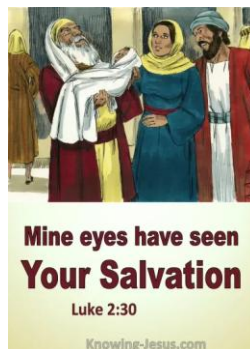
**Please be seated.**

**Luke 2:21-36** *Jesus receives his name*

<sup>21</sup>After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

<sup>22</sup>When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord <sup>23</sup>(as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), <sup>24</sup>and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

<sup>25</sup>Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. <sup>26</sup>It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. <sup>27</sup>Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, <sup>28</sup>Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, <sup>29</sup>“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; <sup>30</sup>for my eyes have seen your salvation, <sup>31</sup>which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, <sup>32</sup>a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.” <sup>33</sup>And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. <sup>34</sup>Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed <sup>35</sup>so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.” <sup>36</sup>There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage,

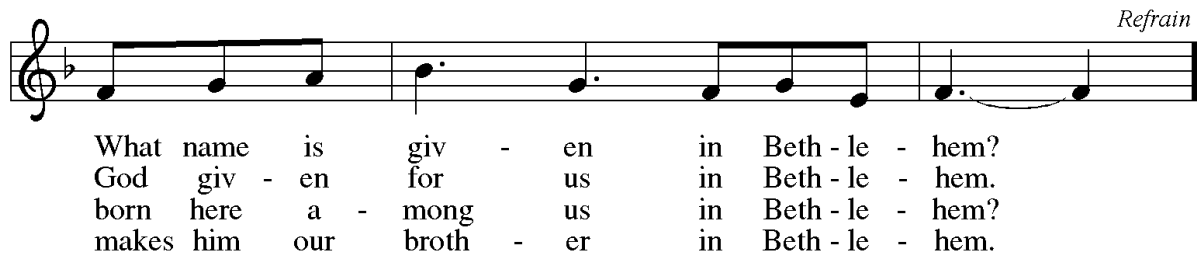
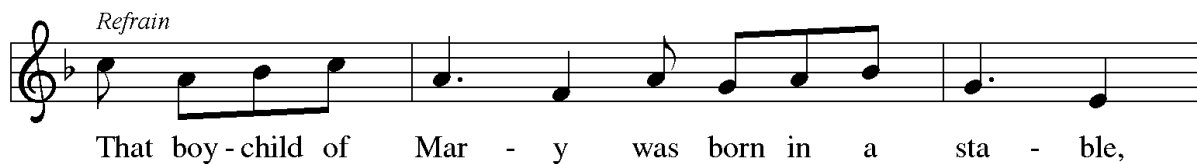


**Please stand.**

**CAROL:**

***That Boy-Child of Mary***  
***Stanzas 1 and 2***

**ELW 29**



5 One with the Father,  
he is our Savior,  
heaven-sent helper  
in Bethlehem.

6 Gladly we praise him,  
love and adore him,  
give ourselves to him  
in Bethlehem.

Text: Tom Colvin, 1925–2000

Music: BLANTYRE, Malawi traditional; adapt. Tom Colvin

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***Please be seated.***

**Matthew 2:1-11** *The magi follow the star.*

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

“And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for from you shall come a ruler  
who is to shepherd my people Israel.” ’

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.



**Please stand.**

**CAROL:**

**What Child Is This**  
**Stanzas 1 and 3**

**LBW 40**



- 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!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837–1898

Music: GREENSLEEVES, English ballad, 16th cent.

**Please be seated.**

**Matthew 2:13-18**    *The Slaughter of the Holy Innocents*

<sup>13</sup>Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him."

<sup>14</sup>Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt,

<sup>15</sup>and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

<sup>16</sup>When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent his soldiers to kill all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. <sup>17</sup>Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

<sup>18</sup>"A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more."

**Please stand.**

**CAROL:**

***Your Little Ones, Dear Lord***

**LBW 52**

***Stanzas 1 and 2***



1 Your lit - tle ones, dear Lord, are we, and  
2 With songs we has - ten you to greet, and  
3 Oh, draw us whol - ly to you, Lord, and  
4 Un - til at last we too pro - claim, with



come your low - ly bed to see; en - light - en ev - 'ry  
kiss the ground be - fore your feet. Oh, bless - ed hour, oh,  
to us all your grace ac - cord; true faith and love to  
all your saints, your glo - rious name; in par - a - dise our



soul and mind, that we the way to you may find.  
sweet-est night that gave you birth, our soul's de - light.  
us im - part, that we may hold you in our heart.  
songs re - new, and praise you as the an - gels do.

Text: Hans A. Brorson, 1694–1764; tr. Harriet Krauth Spaeth, 1845–1925, alt.  
Music: HER KOMMER DINE ARME SMÅ, Johann A. P. Schulz, 1747–1800

***Please be seated.***

**John 1:1-14** *The 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 in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

<sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. <sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. <sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.



**Please stand.**

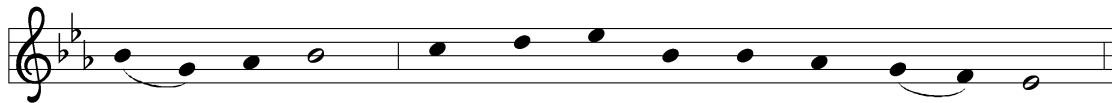
**CAROL:**

***Of the Father's Love Begotten***  
***Stanzas 1 and 2***

**LBW 42**



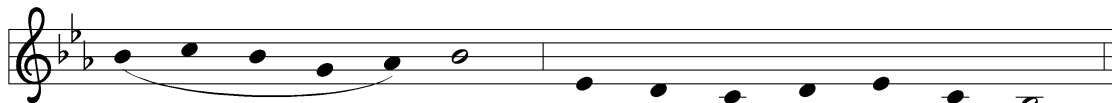
1 Of the Fa - ther's love be - got - ten ere the worlds be -  
2 Oh, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed, when the vir - gin,  
3 This is he whom seers in old time chant - ed of with  
4 Let the heights of heav'n a - dore him; an - gel hosts, his  
5 Christ, to thee, with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho - ly



gan to be, he is Al - pha and O - me - ga,  
full of grace, by the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing,  
one ac - cord, whom the voic - es of the proph - ets  
prais - es sing; pow'rs, do - min - ions, bow be - fore him  
Ghost, to thee, hymn and chant and high thanks - giv - ing



he the source, the end - ing he, of the things that are, that  
bore the Sav - ior of our race, and the babe, the world's re -  
prom - ised in their faith - ful word; now he shines, the long - ex -  
and ex - tol our God and King; let no tongue on earth be  
and un - wea - ried prais - es be: hon - or, glo - ry, and do -



have deem - been, and that fu - ture years shall see,  
pect - er, first re - vealed his sa - cred face,  
si - ed; let cre - a - tion praise its Lord  
min - lent, ev - 'ry voice in con - cert ring  
and e - ter - nal vic - to - ry



ev - er - more and ev - er - more.  
ev - er - more and ev - er - more.  
ev - er - more and ev - er - more.  
ev - er - more and ev - er - more.  
ev - er - more and ev - er - more! A - men.

Text: Marcus Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, 348–413; tr. composite  
Music: DIVINUM MYSTERIUM, plainsong mode V, 13th cent.

## RESPONSIVE PRAYER

- P: Glory to God in the highest,  
C: **and peace to God's people on earth.**  
P: Blessed are you, Prince of peace.  
You rule the earth with truth and justice.  
C: **Send your gift of peace to all nations of the world.**  
P: Blessed are you, Son of Mary.  
You share our humanity.  
C: **Have mercy on the sick, the dying, Christians under persecution  
and all who suffer this day.**  
P: Blessed are you, Son of God.  
You dwell among us as the Word made flesh.  
C: **Reveal yourself to us through your Word  
that we may bear your light to all the world.**

## THE NICENE CREED

- A: Let us confess our faith with Christians throughout the world by using the Nicene Creed.
- C: **We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**
- We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God,  
Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;  
by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin  
Mary, and was made man.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**
- We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.  
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.  
He has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen**



**PEACE**      *Please stay at your seat as you share the sign of peace.*

P:     The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C:     And also with you.

*Please be seated.*

## THE OFFERING

*Please place your offering in the plate located on the table  
at the back of the sanctuary before or after Worship.*

### OFFERTORY CAROL:

*In the Bleak Midwinter*

**ELW 294**



1 In the bleak mid - win - ter, frost - y wind made moan,  
2 Heav - en can - not hold him, nor . . . earth sus - tain;  
3 What . . . can I give him, poor . . . as I am?



earth stood hard as i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;  
heav'n and earth shall flee a - way when he comes to reign;  
If I were a shep - herd I would bring a lamb;



snow had fall - en, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
in the bleak mid - win - ter a sta - ble place suf - ficed  
if I were a wise . . . man I would do my part;



in the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go.  
the Lord . . . God al - might - y, Je - sus Christ.  
yet what I can I give him— give my heart.

Text: Christina Georgina Rossetti, 1830–1894  
Music: CRANHAM, Gustav Holst, 1874–1934

***Please stand.***

### **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

**A:** Let us pray.

Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C:** **Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

**P:** Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, we say the prayer Jesus has taught us:

**C:** **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,  
Now and forever. Amen.**

### **BLESSING:**

**P** May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ Child. Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

**C:** **Amen.**

***Please be seated.***

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Please stand.**

**SENDING HYMN:**

***The First Noel***

**LBW 56**



1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to  
2 They look - ed up and saw . . a star shin - ing  
3 And by the light of that . . same star three . .  
4 This star drew near to the . . north-west, o'er . .  
5 Then en - tered in those wise . . men three, full . .



cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where  
in . . the east . . be - yond . . them far; and to the  
wise . . men came . . from coun - try far; to seek for a  
Beth - le - hem . . it took . . its rest; and there it  
rev - 'rent - ly . . . up - on . . their knee, and of - fered



they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's  
earth it gave . . . great light, and . . so it con -  
king was their . . . in - tent, and to fol - low the  
did both stop . . . and stay right . . o - ver the  
there in his . . . pres - ence their . . gold, . . . and



*Refrain*

night that was so deep.  
tin-ued both day and night.  
star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -  
place where Je - sus lay.  
myrrh, and frank - in - cense.



el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

Text: English traditional

Music: THE FIRST NOWELL, English traditional

## DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Christ is with you.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE

### A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO

Lynn for coordinating the Service  
and to  
all of the worship leaders!

**\*\*\*NO BIBLE STUDY ON THURSDAY THIS WEEK.\*\*\***  
*Bible Study will resume January 8<sup>th</sup>.*



**Pastor Niederer will be away**  
**Friday, Dec 26<sup>th</sup> – Thursday, Jan 1<sup>st</sup>**

If you have need of a Pastor during that time,  
please call

Pastor Danielle McCleary  
St. Matthew, Secaucus  
804-461-8740



**Following The Service Today**  
In the Memorial Room



### **December Birthdays**

Aizhan, Liz, and Bennett

Wishing everyone with a birthday this month many blessings!!!

May God's face shine upon you all the days of your lives!



### **At Grace in Memorial Room**

**Wednesdays, January 7<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>, at 1:30 PM**



### **COMMEMORATIONS FOR THE WEEK**

#### **The Holy Innocents, Martyrs**

**Sunday, December 28, 2025**

This day commemorates the young children killed by Herod in Bethlehem in his jealous attempt to murder the baby Jesus, a sobering reminder of the evil that led Christ to be born for our salvation.

#### **Name of Jesus**

**Thursday, January 1, 2025**

By Jewish law, every baby boy was circumcised and named on the eighth day of life, so on the eighth day of Christmas the church celebrates this event in Jesus' life. The keeping of the covenant as well as Jesus' name are signs of God's salvation given to us through him.

#### **Johann Konrad Wilhelm Loehe, renewer of the church, died 1872**

**Friday, January 2, 2025**

Loehe was a pastor in nineteenth-century Germany. Loehe's chief concern was that a congregation find its life in the holy communion, and from that source evangelism and social ministries would flow. He sent pastors to North America, Australia, New Guinea, Brazil, and Ukraine.



## PRAYERS

**Joan Costello** (Jackie's mother-in-law & Kaitlin's & Lindsay's grandmother); **Doris Baumann, Dale Lambson, and Family; Darla Lambson** (leukemia); **Brad Gohmann** (cancer); Zulema's family and friends: **Katie and Surella Borowski; Rose Davis** (cancer); **Marc & Bella Yaffe** and **Leslyn Cooke; Susan Bethke** (Lynn's cousin undergoing chemo and other treatment for a brain tumor); **Marion Soohoo** (Will's Mother-in-law recovering from surgery); Sue Papera's friends and family: **Arlene Rizzo** (cancer) and Arlene's family; **Chris Palmer** (health concerns); **Caleb** (mental health issues); **Jenny L.** (health issues); **Carol Mulvaney** (breast cancer); **Michael Mulvaney** (prostate cancer); **Edward Foley** (back surgery); **Janet Thalmann; Paul Thalmann; Beverly Philip** (severe dementia), **Kathy O'Brien, Bert Maltz** (health concerns), **Michele Rusciano; Al & Mark Crovatto; Anita Bontekoe** (health concerns), **Hana Kim** (health concerns); **Ben Bontekoe** (health concerns); **Fred Lewis** (health concerns); **Mary Ellen's family and friends: Susan Beever; Dominick Capalba** (6 year old with brain cancer); **Patty Fitzgerald** (terminal lung cancer); Kay Roseen's family: **Jessica and Casey O'Neil** (Kay Roseen's daughter and son-in-law who work for the State Department); **Marcia & Chuck Hendron** (Kay's parents – memory care); **John Steffen** (Lorli's brother with health concerns); **Tammy** (Lorli's niece with an immune disorder); **Judy Letwink** (Lorli's nephew's Mother-in-law recovering from a stroke); **Gisela N.** (Lorli's friend with bladder cancer); **Erika Ilgenfritz** (health concerns); **James Ilgenfritz** (Erika's son); **Chris Niederer** (Pastor's son with immune system disorder); **Eric Niederer** (Pastor's son with a chronic condition); **Nancy Barbee** (Pastor's friend with lung cancer); **Dennis Keohane** (Catherine's uncle); **Willi Harper's Aunt Kelly** (health concerns); **Donna Maxwell** (recovering from hip surgery); **Jim and James Mingo, Kristen Zelinski, and Jimmy Jamieson** (Donna M's Family Members); **Rick Gentile** (Donna G's son with health concerns); **Mary Sue Kaplow** (health concerns); **Gail Storero** (health concerns); (baby) **Chris** (Ruth DiCicco's daughter) & **Bob Wheeler; Jeanne H.** (Lorli's sister with health issues); **Krystyna Kirsch; Alison (Ali) Krasnow & Family**; Christians under persecution and all experiencing violence, captivity, injustices, and war; organizations and individuals who are providing resources, care, and relief for those in need: front line workers, medical researchers, health care workers, and firefighters; and all affected by natural disasters and wildfires.

***Let Lynn or Pastor know of changes needed on the prayer list.***

*Have an  
Enjoyable,  
Healthy, and Happy  
New Year!*

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