

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

Member congregation of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (clclutheran.org)

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December 11, 2024 † Wednesday Midweek Advent Service



We Welcome Our Visitors who are with us this morning.

We hope that you are uplifted by the Gospel at our worship service.

We invite you to join us every Sunday.

† Preparation for Worship: Read Psalm 100 (Lutheran Service Book or Pew Bible) †

**Our Worship Service tonight will be Posted to Our Website tomorrow by
midafternoon.**

To Watch our Worship Service Online Please Click This Link:

<https://www.sslcwest.org/worship.html>



Opening Hymn 375 Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising

(LSB)



1 Come, your hearts and voices raising, Christ the
2 Christ, from heav'n to us descending, And in
3 Jacob's star in all its splendor Beams with
4 From the bondage that oppressed us, From sin's



Lord with gladness praising; Loudly sing His love a -
love our race befriending; In our need His help ex -
comfort sweet and tender, Forcing Satan to sur -
fetters that possessed us, From the grief that sore dis -



mazing, Worthy folk of Christendom.
tending, Saved us from the worldly foe.
render, Breaking all the powers of hell.
tressed us, We, the captives, now are free.

**5 Oh, the joy beyond expressing
When by faith we grasp this blessing,
And to You we come confessing
That Your love has set us free.**

**6 Gracious Child, we pray, O hear us,
From Your lowly manger cheer us,
Gently lead us and be near us
Till we join Your choir above.**

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607–76; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.

Tune: German, 14th cent.

Text: © 1941 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 130003862

Tune: Public domain

Invocation

We invoke (“call upon”) the name of the one true God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

P In the name of the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Responsive Reading

(selected verses of Psalm 98)

P Oh, sing to the LORD a new song!

C **For He has done marvelous things;**

P His right hand and His holy arm

C **have gained Him the victory.**

P The LORD has made known His salvation;

C **His righteousness He has revealed in the sight of the nations.**

P He has remembered His mercy and His faithfulness to the house of Israel;

C **All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.**

P Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth;

C **Break forth in song, rejoice, and sing praises.**

P Sing to the LORD with the harp,

C **With the harp and the sound of a psalm,**

P With trumpets and the sound of a horn;

C **Shout joyfully before the LORD, the King.**

Advent Prayer

P We pray:

Lord God, heavenly Father, we thank You for all that You foretold in days of old and for all that You did in preparation for Your Son’s coming into this world as our Savior and for carrying it out to perfect completion in the fulness of time. Grant us the grace to ever fully appreciate the great love You showed us in all of this and to praise Your holy name, through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

C Amen.

The 2nd Article of the Apostle's Creed *with explanation from Luther's Catechism (Sydow, p. 87)*

☑ I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven and sits on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary is my Lord.

He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sin, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and His innocent suffering and death.

He did this that I should be His very own, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in eternal righteousness, innocence, and joy; just as He is risen from death, lives and reigns in eternity.

This is most certainly true!

Introductory Remarks

The Prophecy Candle

The prophecy candle is the 1st candle (purple) lit the first week in Advent. It is symbolic of the long years of waiting during which the prophets kept alive the hope that the Son of God was coming to redeem His people from their sins.

Scripture Reading:

Isaiah 61:1-3 "The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to *those who are* bound; ² To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, ³ To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That

they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."

Hymn 705 Come, O Long-Expected Jesus

(WS)

1. ***Come, O long-expected Jesus,
Born to set Your people free;
From our sins and fears release us;
By Your death on Calvary.***

2. ***Born Your people to deliver;
Born a child and yet a king!
Born to reign in us forever,
Now Your gracious kingdom bring.***

3. ***By Your own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Your all-sufficient merit
Raise us to Your glorious throne.***

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-88, alt.

Tune and Setting: John Stainer, 1840-1901

The Bethlehem Candle

The Bethlehem Candle is the 2nd Advent Candle lit (Purple). It symbolizes the preparations being made for the coming of the Christ-child. The prophecy in Micah 5:2 that foretold Jesus' birthplace at Bethlehem may seem to be a minor revelation, but it shows how God prepared even the smallest detail for the coming of Christ.

Scripture Reading:

Micah 5:2 " But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting."

Hymn 361 O Little Town of Bethlehem

(LSB)



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!
2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, And, gath - ered all a - bove
3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly The won - drous gift is giv'n!
4 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.
O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Im - man - u - el!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835–93

Tune: Lewis H. Redner, 1831–1908

Text and tune: Public domain

The Shepherd Candle

The Shepherd Candle is the 3rd candle (pink) lit and reminds us of the blessed reason for us to rejoice with great joy and of our responsibility to share the message of the Savior and His promises. The shepherds left their task and went in joyful haste to see the Christ-child; then they returned to tell others about the good news of the Savior.

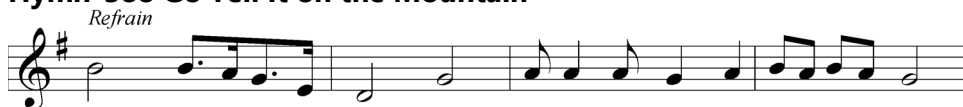
Scripture Reading

Luke 2:8,15-20 ⁸Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night...¹⁵So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to

Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶ And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. ¹⁷ Now when they had seen *Him*, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. ¹⁸ And all those who heard *it* marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. ¹⁹ But Mary kept all these things and pondered *them* in her heart. ²⁰ Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

Hymn 388 Go Tell It on the Mountain

(LSB)



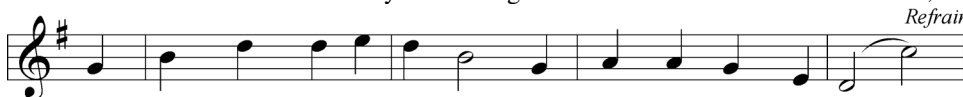
Go tell it on the moun - tain, O-ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;



Go tell it on the moun - tain That Je - sus Christ is born!



- 1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing O'er si - lent flocks by night,
- 2 The shep-herds feared and trem - bled When lo, a - bove the earth
- 3 Down in a lone - ly man - ger The hum-ble Christ was born;



Be - hold, through - out the heav - ens There shone a ho - ly light.
 Rang out the an - gel cho - rus That hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
 And God sent us sal - va - tion That bless - ed Christ - mas morn.

Refrain

Text (sts. 1–3): John W. Work II, 1873–1925, alt.

Text (ref) and tune: African American spiritual

Text and tune: Public domain

The Angel Candle

The Angel Candle is the 4th candle (purple) lit and reminds us of the activity of the angels before and after Jesus' birth, bearing messages, ministering, protecting, and praising God; they will be with Jesus at His final coming on Judgment Day to gather the nations before the judgment seat of God.

Scripture Reading

Luke 2:9-14 ⁹ And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. ¹⁰ Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. ¹¹ "For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² "And this *will be* the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

HYMN 368 Angels We Have Heard on High

(LSB)



- 1 An - gels we have heard on high, Sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
- 2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
- 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;



And the moun - tains in re - ply, Ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad - some tid - ings be Which in - spire your heav' n - ly song?
Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.

Refrain



Glo - - - - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - -



- ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

Text: tr. The Crown of Jesus, 1862, Part 2, London, alt.

Text and tune: French

Text and tune: Public domain

Offering *We offer our gifts to the Lord, remembering that He has first given to us that we might have to give to Him.*

Prayer of the Church *We bring our prayers to God.*

Lord's Prayer

LSB 209

C **Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
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.**

Benediction *The blessing given by God for the blessing of His people (Numbers 6:24-26).*

P The LORD bless you and keep you.
The LORD make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you.
The LORD lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.

C **♩ Amen, Amen, Amen.**

Closing Hymn 392 God Loves Me Dearly

(LSB)



1 God loves me dear - ly, Grants me sal -
2 I was in slav - 'ry, Sin, death, and
3 He sent forth Je - sus, My dear Re -
4 Je - sus, my Sav - ior, Him - self did
5 Now I will praise You, O Love E -



va - tion, God loves me dear - ly, Loves e - ven me.
 dark - ness; God's love was work - ing To make me free.
 deem - er; He sent forth Je - sus And set me free.
 of - fer; Je - sus, my Sav - ior, Paid all I owed.
 ter - nal; Now I will praise You All my life long.



There - fore I'll say a - gain: God loves me



dear - ly, God loves me dear - ly, Loves e - ven me.

Text: August Rische, 1819–1906; tr. composite

Tune: German

Text and tune: Public domain

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next Sunday: **10:00 a.m. Worship Service**

12/15/24 **11:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal**

11:15 a.m. Children Christmas Eve Practice

Upcoming:

Tuesday **5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Children's Service**

12/24/24

Wednesday **10:00 a.m. Christmas Day Worship Service**

12/25/24

Wednesday **10:00 a.m. New Year's Day Service**

1/1/25