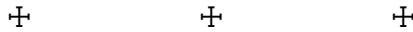




ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Our Mission

Growing Disciples - Making Christ Known



DECEMBER 24, 2023

CHRISTMAS EVE

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

8:30 PM SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good tidings for all people. His birth as the long-awaited Messiah is the one that Isaiah wrote of who will bring endless peace, establishing justice forever. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ is the blessed hope we wait upon. He is the Christ who brings salvation to all people. Filled with the light of Christ, we go forth to share this light with all the world.

PRELUDE

(8:00 PM)

Prelude

“What Child Is This”

16th Century English Ballad GREENSLEEVES
Setting for Brass by William Himes

“God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen”

18th Century English Carol
Organ setting by Alfred V. Fedak

“How Great Our Joy!”

Traditional German Carol; Setting for Choir and Organ by John Rutter

*While by the sheep we watched at night, glad tidings brought an angel bright. How Great our joy! Joy, joy, joy!
Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high! There shall be born, so he did say, in Bethlehem a child today.
How great our joy! This Child who shall redeem us all. How great our joy! This gift of God we'll cherish well,
that ever joy our hearts shall fill. How Great our joy!*

“Some Children See Him”

Alfred Burt
Christian Souza, tenor

*Some children see Him lily white, the Baby Jesus born this night.
Some children see Him lily white, with tresses soft and fair.
Some children see Him bronzed and brown, the Lord of heav'n to earth come down;
some children see Him bronzed and brown, with dark and heavy hair.
Some children see Him almond eyed, this Savior whom we kneel beside.
Some children see Him almond eyed, with skin of yellow hue.
Some children see Him dark as they, sweet Mary's Son to whom we pray;
some children see Him dark as they, and ah! They love him too!*

*The children in each different place will see the Baby Jesus' face
like their, but bright with heav'nly grace, and filled with holy light.
O lay aside each earthly thing, and with thy heart as offering,
come worship now the Infant King, 'tis love that's born tonight!*

“Fanfare and Variations on ‘Noel Nouvelet’ (Sing We Now of Christmas)

Traditional French Carol; Setting for Trumpets and Organ by Raymond H. Haan

“All Is Well”

Michael W. Smith and Wayne Kirkpatrick

Setting for Choir by Ronn Huff; Delenn Rumbolo, soprano

*All is well, all is well. Angels and men rejoice! Christ is come, go and tell that He is in the manger. Sing alle,
sing alleluia! All is well, all is well. Lift up your voice and sing. Born is now Emmanuel. Born is our
Lord and Savior. Sing alleluia! All is well!*

“He Is Born the Divine Christ Child”

French Traditional Carol; Setting for Brass by Lawrence D. Eden

“Once in Royal David's City” ELW 269

Tune IRBY by Henry J. Gauntlett; Setting by David Willcocks

Stanza 1: Amy Woodall, Alto Soloist

*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.*

Stanzas 2 & 3: Choir only

*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 meek and lowly, Lived on earth our Savior holy.*

*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.*

Stanza 4: Choir, Congregation, Brass and Organ

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;
there his children gather round, bright like stars, with glory crowned.

GATHERING

(8:30 PM)

Bold responses are spoken by the congregation.

Welcome

Pastor Timothy McKenzie

Please stand as able.

Processional Hymn

“O Come, All Ye Faithful” (ELW 283)

ADESTES FIDELES

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem;
come and behold Him born the king of angels:

Refrain: O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

The highest, most holy, light of light eternal,
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God in the highest: *Refrain*

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711-1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880, sts. 1, 3-4; tr. Unknown, st. 2; Music: attr. John Francis Wade

Please be seated.

Confession and Forgiveness

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is
marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
the Word made flesh,
our life and our salvation.

Amen.

The congregation may kneel or sit for the Confession. Silence is kept for reflection.

Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior,
let us confess our sin.

God of life,
**you promise good news of great joy for all people,
and call us to be messengers of your peace.**
**We confess that too often we hoard our joy,
our resources, and our security.**
We nurture conflict and build barriers.
**We neglect the needs of our neighbors
and ignore the groaning of creation.**
Have mercy on us.

Where we are self-centered, open our hearts.
Where we are reluctant, give us courage.
Where we are cynical, restore our trust.
**Renew us with your grace
and give us again the hope of eternal life in you.**
Amen.

Hear the good news:
We are children of God and heirs of God's promises
through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
In † Jesus we are forgiven and redeemed.
Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth
shall know the salvation of God.

Amen.

Please stand as able.

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ✠, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Please be seated.

Anthem

“Mid-winter”

Bob Chilcott

Choir, brass quintet and piano

In the bleak mid-winter frosty wind made moan, earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone; snow had fallen, snow on snow, in the bleak mid-winter, long ago. Our God, heav'n cannot hold him nor earth sustain: Heav'n and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign: In the bleak mid-winter a stable place, a place sufficed Lord God Almighty Jesus Christ. Angels and arch-angels may have gathered there, cherubim and seraphim thronged the air; but only his mother in her maiden bliss worshipped the beloved with a kiss. What can I give hi, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb; if I were a wise man I would do my part; what I can I give him my heart.

WORD

First Reading

Isaiah 9:2-7

Maddie Thompson, lector

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. ³You 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. ⁴For 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. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷His 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 onwards and for evermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Hymn

“O Little Town of Bethlehem” ELW 279

ST. LOUIS

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.

For Christ was 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 the earth!



¹O sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. ²Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. ³Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples. ⁴For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods. ⁵For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD made the heavens. ⁶Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary. ⁷Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. ⁸Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts. ⁹Worship the LORD in holy splendor; tremble before him, all the earth. ¹⁰Say among the nations, "The LORD is king! The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved. He will judge the peoples with equity." ¹¹Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it; ¹²let the field exult, and everything in it. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy ¹³before the LORD; for he is coming, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with his truth.

Second Reading**Titus 2:11-14**

Maddie Thompson, lector

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

*The Word of the Lord***Thanks be to God***Please stand as able.***Gospel Procession**"Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light" from *Christmas Oratorio*

Johann Sebastian Bach; Arr. S. Drummond Wolff

The Holy Gospel**Luke 2:1-20***The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 2nd chapter.***Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph 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. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And 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. ⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in

the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”¹⁵When 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.”¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child;¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

Sermon

“Good tidings of great joy to all”

Pastor Timothy McKenzie

Please stand as able.

Hymn of the Day

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” ELW 270

MENDELSSOHN

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king;
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled.”

Joyful, all you nations rise; join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic hosts proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king!”

Christ, by highest heav’n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, off-spring of a virgin’s womb.

Veiled in flesh the God-head see! Hail, incarnate deity!

Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel!

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king!”

Hail the heav’n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the son of righteousness!

Light and life to all he brings, ris’n with healing in his wings.

Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us second birth.

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king!”

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.; Music: Felix Mendelssohn, 1809-1847; arr. William H. Cummings, 1831-1915.

The Apostles’ Creed

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.**

Amen.

The congregation may kneel or sit for the prayers.

Prayers of Intercession

(Pastor McKenzie, prayers)

Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world God loves. *A brief silence.*

Glory to you, O God, for the song of the angels, proclaiming to the world Christ's holy birth. Grant to your church in every nation and language a new song proclaiming glad tidings of peace, reconciliation, and justice for all people. Hear us O God.

Your mercy is great.

Glory to you, O God, for stars that shine in the night, illuminating the expansive mystery of the cosmos. Provoke awe and wonder in our hearts at your creation, opening us to sustaining this planet home so that generations to come might declare your glory. Hear us O God.

Your mercy is great.

Glory to you, O God, for the child born to us who establishes a kingdom of justice and peace. Break the bonds of oppression, bring reconciliation to warring lands, and establish peace on earth from this time onward and forevermore. Hear us O God.

Your mercy is great.

Glory to you, O God, for Joseph and Mary's loving care. Lead us to offer our lives in loving care of all in need. This holy night bless the sick and the dying, grant warmth and safety to the homeless, and food to the hungry. Grant grace and strength to: Jay Harbinson, David Mathis, Virginia Stackel, Joseph Tolbert, Robert Shirley, Rachel Fulp, Danielle Clausen, Carl Sepmeyer, David Kutscher, Vann Milheim, Oakley Coburn, Arlene Fielding, Sergei Kobiakov, Bill Schwartz, Jimmy Schwartz, Roxi Tolbert, Shirley Larson, Ingrid Keiris, Martha Stackel, Tina Wiland, Ben Watson, Louisa Coburn, Mindy Curley, Dannye Olin Bragdon, Sarah Lindberg, Marilyn Denison, Eileen Dunlap, Jim Middleswarth, Christopher Shirley, Pat & Gary Ragsdale, Tanner Grant, Michael Frye, Ken Foust, and Gene Ellington. Hear us O God.

Your mercy is great.

Glory to you, O God, for the faithfulness of shepherds who believed good tidings in the darkest of night. Grant the joy of faith to all in this congregation; be with those who travel this season; and offer your peace to all who grieve the loss of loved ones. Hear us O God.

Your mercy is great.

Glory to you, O God, for the multitude of the heavenly host. We rejoice in the faith and zeal of all your saints who have witnessed to Christ's birth, and lead us like them, to declare your salvation for all people with lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly. Hear us O God.

Your mercy is great.

Pondering the mystery of eternal love made flesh in Christ Jesus, we commend all for whom we pray to the mercy of God.

Amen.

Peace

(Please stand as able, sharing the peace of the risen Christ.)

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Please be seated.

MEAL

OFFERING

(Offerings for the mission of the church are gathered by the ushers.)

Anthem

“Simeon’s Song”

Bradley Ellingboe

© 2003 Neil A. Kjos Music Press

Lord, now you let your servant go in peace; your word has been fulfilled. For my eyes have seen, my own eyes have seen the salvation of your people: to be a light to lighten the nations and to be the glory of your people Israel, your word has been fulfilled. My own eyes have seen your salvation. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. As it was, is now and will be forever. Amen.

Please stand as able.

Offertory

(The offering is brought forward from the Narthex)

“What Child Is This” ELW 296

GREENSLEVES

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!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898; Music: English ballad, 16th cent.

Offering Prayer

Let us pray. God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.

Amen.

Holy Communion

The Great Thanksgiving

S 144a

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

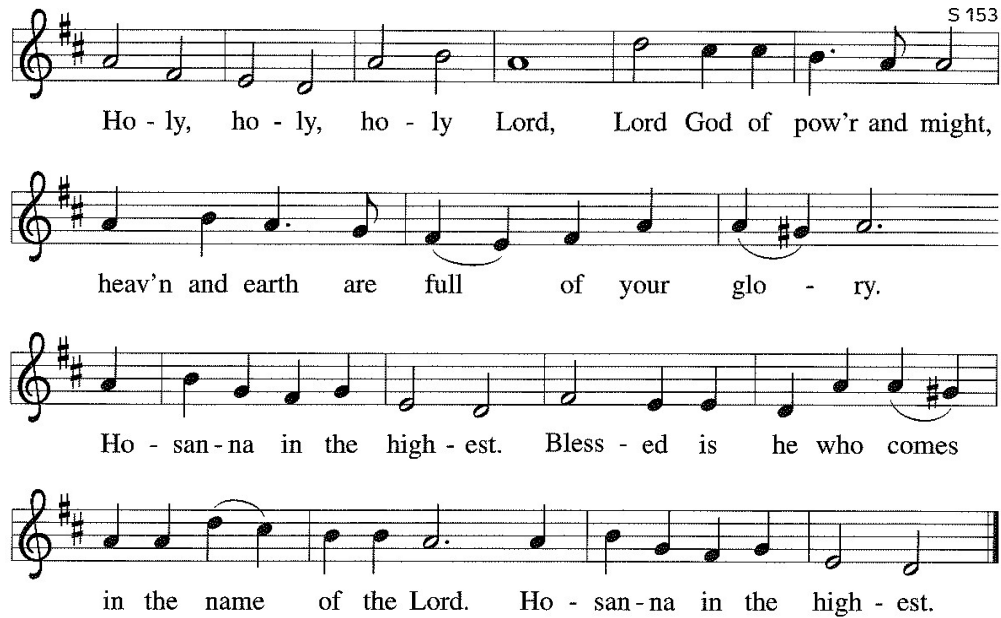
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Proper Preface

Sanctus

“Holy, Holy, Holy” from *Holy Communion Setting Four*



S 153

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Words of Institution

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
Broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

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

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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.

Invitation

Glory to God in the highest!
Come to the table of peace.

Please be seated.

Distribution of Holy Communion

Holy Communion is offered continuously in front of the freestanding altar, or at the rail of the high altar in two ways, by

wafer and wine in a small cup or “Communion Kit.” Please follow the ushers’ prompts, walking forward to the desired communion station, and returning via the side aisles. If receiving a “kit” please seal the used utensils in the zip-lock bag, placing the bag after worship in the marked bowl in the Narthex. Gluten free wafers and grape juice are also available.

Communion Music

“Lamb of God” from *Christmas Carol Mass*

Carroll Thomas Andrews

English Carol, Original adapt Carroll Thomas Andrews, 1918-2014, Adapt. John T. Kyler ©1966, 2022 GIA Publications, Inc.

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the
world, have mer-cy on us, have mer-cy on us.
Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the
world, grant us peace, grant us peace.

“Silent Night, Holy Night!”

Tune by Franz Gruber; Setting for Brass by James Curnow

“Ave Maria”

Charles Gounod

Adapted from Prelude in C Major BWV 846 by J. S. Bach; Kate Suchanek, soprano

*Ave Maria! You are highly favored, God is with thee.
Blessed, blessed are you, are you above all women, blessed be your offspring,
Blessed be your son the son of God, the Lord most high!*

*Holy Maria! Holy Maria, Maria!
Pray, oh, pray for us, for us wretched sinners,
now and at the hour of our death, at the hour of our death. Amen.*

“Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”

Traditional Polish Carol; Setting for Brass by Roger Harvey

Anthem

“O Holy Night” (Cantique de Noel)

Adolphe Adam

Madeline Phillips, soprano

*O holy night! The stars are brightly shining, it is the night of our dear Savior's birth;
Long lay the world in sin and error pining, till He appear'd and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices, for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.
Fall on your knees! Oh, hear the angel voices, O night divine, O night when Christ was born,*

O night divine, O night, O night divine. Truly He taught us to love one another; His law is love and His gospel is peace. Chains shall He break, for the slave is our brother, and in His name all oppression shall cease. Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we, let all within us praise His holy name. Christ is the Lord, then ever praise we, His pow'r and glory forevermore proclaim.

Please stand as able.

Post-Communion Blessing

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and keep you in his grace.

Post-Communion Prayer

Let us pray. God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

The Lighting of the Candles

The Sanctuary lights are dimmed, and the ushers come forward. Please tilt your unlit candle while keeping the lighted candle upright.

“Silent Night, Holy Night” ELW 281

STILLE NACHT

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child. Holy Infant so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar, heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior is born. Christ, the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at your birth. Jesus, Lord at your birth.

SENDING

SENDING BLESSING

God bless you and keep you,
✠ Jesus grant you grace and truth,
and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts,
now and forever.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Christ the Savior is born!
Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.
Thanks be to God.

Recessional Hymn

“Joy to the World” ELW 267

ANTIOCH

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.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,
while fields and flocks, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sin and sorrow 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.

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.

Text: Eleanor Fargeon, 1881-1965 ©Miss E. Fargeon Will Trust, by permission of David Higham Assoc.
Arr. ©1999 Novello & Co. Ltd. London; Music: French carol; arr. Barry Rose, b. 1934

Please be seated. Please extinguish your candle and place in one of the baskets as you leave church.

Postlude

“A Carol Fantasy”

Traditional Carol.
Setting for Brass by John Iveson



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Worship Leaders: Pastor Timothy McKenzie (prayers); crucifer: Michael Lakeman; acolytes/torchbearer: Maddie Thompson, Riley Smith; Bible bearer: Jonathan Lakeman; lector: Maddie Thompson; live streaming camera: Ron Wenzel; soundboard: Alan Harms; ushers: John Simon, Sean Fielding, Dale Hopp, Tom Sehorn; greeters: Mary L. Hopp; communion assistants: Cliff Edahl, Jay Jacob, Kevin & Karen Feezor, Gretchen Payne; communion helper: Kay Finlon; musicians: St. Mark's Choir; Brass Quintet: Stacey Mills, Russell Smith, Trumpets; Richard Goldfaden, horn; Brent Ballard, Keith Johnson, trombones; Christian Souza, Delenn Rumbolo, cantors; Amy Woodall, alto soloist; Kate Suchanek, Madeline Phillips, Delenn Rumbolo, soprano soloists; Christian Souza, tenor; Lester Ackerman, Director of Music Ministry and Organist



Parish News

From the pastor -

"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. 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 on-

ward and forevermore." (Isaiah 9:6-7)

As we celebrate the Nativity of Jesus Christ, we are encountered by the God whose kingdom dwells in the human heart, a kingdom crossing all borders of nation, culture and language. Isaiah points toward a kingdom giving unity to human beings across the globe and across time. In Christ, our time has been forever interrupted by God's eternity. Isaiah's "born for us" reveals that the Messiah's kingdom of peace will be established not in one particular nation or people, but in all nations and peoples.

If you have ever worshipped in another nation or language, you will readily understand that through faith, Jesus Christ is born into the hearts of people all over this world, crossing boundaries and borders, making us all sisters and brothers with Jesus. At Christmas we celebrate a holy mystery that has been, as Isaiah wrote, growing "continually" since Jesus' birth. He seeks to dwell in your heart so that through you, Christ might extend his reign of justice and righteousness further and further across time and space. Your life is the means by which God furthers this kingdom. Christ has come down to earth to raise you to heaven so that you might share God's infinite kingdom of grace and peace with all whom you meet.

A blessed Christmas to you,
Pastor Tim McKenzie
pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org

Worship and Congregational Life

Christmas Eve Altar Flowers are given in Honor of the Birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Celebration of First Communion: On this holy night, Ella Puky celebrates her first communion, having completed the "Fed and Forgiven" program. May the light of Christ lead Ella all her life!

Blessed Christmas to you! The church office will be closed 12/25 Christmas Day, in celebration of the Nativity of Our Lord.

12/31 First Sunday of Christmas (New Year's Eve morning) one service at 10:30am

REMINDER: To our able bodied members please park across Queens Rd in our church parking lot or on the

side of the church along Edgehill Rd and come in side door saving the parking lot by the church for less able bodied members. Thank you.

Financial note: To ensure that your 2023 donation/ gifts/contribution are received and processed for this tax year, contributions must be received by noon on Wednesday, Dec. 27. If you have not done so, please consider making a pledge for 2024. Thank you for your faithfulness to Christ's ministry at St. Mark'

Thinking of joining St. Mark's? Please see Pastor Tim to set up a time to talk. All people are welcome at St. Mark's!

Stewardship

Stewardship 2024

Sharing our gifts is important to St. Mark's ongoing mission. A pledge is a prayerful commitment to giving in response to God's grace. A pledge may be offered at any time, but pledges help a congregation establish a responsible budget for the coming year. Please consider making a financial pledge to St. Mark's. Brochures are available in the Gathering Place. Thank you for your faithful gifts to St. Mark's ministries. An online pledge option is also available from our website, or you may use the QR code.

You may use the QR code at left (hover your phone camera to connect) for immediate access to St. Mark's website donation page. Pledges and donations for Altar Flowers may also be made using this code.



Music Notes

"**Joy to the World, the Lord Is Come!**" ELW 267 had its first appearance in the Collection Psalms of David, published in 1719 by the great English hymn writer Isaac Watts (1674-1748). This hymn was not written for either Advent or Christmas but is a paraphrase of the second half of Psalm 98. Watts gives it the heading "The Messiah's Coming and Kingdom". In our *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* "Joy to the World" is the last hymn for Advent, and in the *Lutheran Book of Worship* it was the first Christmas hymn. The tune **ANTIOCH** (named for the ancient Greek city near the current city of Antakya, Turkey) was composed by the early American church musician Lowell Mason (1792-1872). It was marked in his publication from 1836 *Occasional Psalm and Hymn Tunes* arr. from Handel". It is possible he had two melodies from Handel's *Messiah* in mind: "Glory to God" and "Comfort Ye", which perfectly express the joy of Isaac Watt's hymn.

Christmas Eve Brass Quintet We welcome five guest instrumentalists to our Christmas Eve worship! Their presence with us is made possible by gifts to the Music Fund of St. Mark's Lutheran, dedicated to the Glory of God, from the Anne Martin Schwartz Music Endowment, William & Mabel Doser Music Endowment, and these individuals: Steve & Sandy Rach, Grey Hunter Hamilton, Marcia Newlin, Barbara Baker, Larry Dagenhart, Tom & Judy Tolbert, David Thomason & Ted Seman, Lowell Engelhard, Cliff & Joann Edahl, Paul Koehnke & Jay Norvell, Jay & Amy Jacob, Lester Ackerman & Layton Campbell.

2023 CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS AND WREATHS

If you "sponsored" a Poinsettia plant this year, you may pick up a plant by contacting the church office to arrange a time, or by picking one up after the Christmas Eve service.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

Betty H. Weaver
Richard Cansler
Parents and Sister
Charlie Cox
Amy and Ron Hill
Albert J. Edahl
Avery Grace Lepkowski
Rev. Dr. Carl McKenzie
Takamasa Esashi
Nancy Guentert Bowman
Louis and Kathleen Guentert
Larry and Janet Williams
Ralph and Marion Williams
Marie Anne Daniels
Sam Temple
Charlie Cox

GIVEN BY

Lisa W. Barnette and Family
Karen Covington
Karen Covington
Benny and Judy Cox
Cliff and Joann Edahl
Cliff and Joann Edahl
Michael and Rebecca Lepkowski
Jonathan McKenzie
Timothy and Mari McKenzie
Ken and Elizabeth Williams
Ken and Elizabeth Williams
Ken and Elizabeth Williams
Ken and Elizabeth Williams
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous

2023 CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS AND WREATHS

IN HONOR OF:

St. Mark's Staff
Gretchen and Hunter Clarke
Virginia H. Edahl
Our Children and Grandchildren
My Family
Les Ackerman and St. Mark's Choir
Millie Cansler
Evelyn Gerdes
St. Mark's Soup Kitchen Volunteers
Eric and Melba Daniels
Gene Daniels
Nanette Temple and Lisa Pierce
Bennie and Judy Cox

GIVEN BY

Millie Cansler
Benny and Judy Cox
Cliff and Joann Edahl
Cliff and Joann Edahl
Pat Fox
Pat Fox
Joanne Marz
Joanne Marz
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous

SPONSORSHIPS

Joe and Ruth Barrett
Larry Dagenhart, Sr.

WREATHS

IN MEMORY OF:

Richard Cansler
My Husband, John
Parents John and Lenore Rach
Parents John and Esther Gerfen

GIVEN BY

Millie Cansler
Karen Covington
Steve and Sandy Rach
Steve and Sandy Rach

IN HONOR OF:

Les Ackerman and St. Mark's Choir
Those who lack and need food, shelter, mental health care: May they receive
what they need to thrive

GIVEN BY

Karen Covington
Dave and Eileen Dunlap

St. Mark's Prayer List

Jay Harbinson, David Mathis, Virginia Stackel, Joseph Tolbert, Robert Shirley, Rachel Fulp, Danielle Clausen, Carl Sepmeyer, David Kutscher, Vann Milheim, Oakley Coburn, Arlene Fielding, Sergei Kobiakov, Bill Schwartz, Jimmy Schwartz, Roxi Tolbert, Shirley Larson, Ingrid Keiris, Martha Stackel, Tina Wiland, Ben Watson, Louisa Coburn, Mindy Curley, Dannye Olin Bragdon, Nathaniel Coburn, Sarah Lindberg, Marilyn Denison, Eileen Dunlap, Jim Middleswarth, Christopher Shirley, Pat & Gary Ragsdale, Tanner Grant, Michael Frye, Ken Foust, and Gene Ellington.
Please email Pastor McKenzie with Prayer List and other prayer requests (pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org)

Readings for 12/31/2023,

First Sunday of Christmas (10:30 am only)

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

Psalm 148

*The splendor of the Lord is over
earth and heaven. (Ps. 148:13)*

Galatians 4:4-7

Luke 2:22-40

Birthdays

12/25 Marc Ginns

12/25 Tyler Andujar

12/25 Phillip Foust

12/27 Sally McCauley



Do you feel like you are in crisis? In Isaiah it is written, "Fear not, for I am with you; do not be dismayed for I am your God." Stephen ministers are here to show the Lord's love and comfort for you in times of trial. If you would like to confidentially speak to a Stephen Minister, please contact Pastor Tim (pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org)

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Our Ministers

All the people of God at St. Mark's

Rev. Dr. Timothy McKenzie, Senior Pastor

pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org

Lester Ackerman,

Director of Music Ministry, Organist

les@saintmarkscharlotte.org

Sue Wadgyar, Parish Administrator

admin@saintmarkscharlotte.org

Jessie Craig, Finance Administrator

finance@saintmarkscharlotte.org

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

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