



**ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**Our Mission**

*Growing Disciples - Making Christ Known*

✠                      ✠                      ✠

**DECEMBER 24, 2025**

**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 news 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 that 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”

16<sup>th</sup> Century English Ballad GREENSLEEVES  
Setting for Brass by William Hines

“Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella”

Traditional French carol, UN FLAMBEAU  
Organ setting by Keith R. Chapman

“On Christmas Night”

SUSSEX CAROL Traditional English Carol  
Setting for choir and organ by Paul Manz, transcribed by David M. Cherwien

*On Christmas night all Christians sing, to hear the news the angels bring, news of great joy,  
news of great mirth, news of our merciful King's birth. Then why should we on earth be sad,  
since our Redeemer made us glad, when from our sin he set us free, all for to gain our liberty?*

*All out of darkness we have light, which made the angels sing this night:*

*“Glory to God in highest heav'n; peace on earth and goodwill. Amen.”*

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

Traditional French Carol  
Fanfare and Theme with seven variations for  
two trumpets and organ by Raymond H. Haan

“Ave Maria”

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

*Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women, and blessed is  
the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,  
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

13th century plainsong DIVINUM MYSTERIUM  
Setting for choir and handbells by John Erickson

*Of the Father’s love begotten, ere the world’s began to be, he is Alpha and Omega, he the source,  
the ending he; of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see, evermore and evermore. Christ, to thee  
with God the Father, and, O Holy Ghost, to thee, hymn and chant and high thanksgiving, and unwearied praises be: honor,  
glory, and dominion, and eternal victory, evermore and evermore*

“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)

*The congregation is invited to join in the **Bold** responses.*

**Welcome**

Pastor Timothy McKenzie

*The congregation stands as the cross is carried into the sanctuary.*

**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,  
Wonderful Counselor,  
Mighty Savior, Prince of Peace.

**Amen.**

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

Trusting God's steadfast love and faithfulness,  
let us confess our sin.

Reconciling God,

**We yearn for your presence to transform  
our grief, pain, and despair.**

**We confess that we have not always prepared  
room in our hearts for your love;  
we have not always recognized  
your presence among us;  
we have not always embraced your message of peace.**

**We cry out, weary with the burden of violence,  
oppression, and fear.**

**We confess our failure to make room  
for those seeking refuge;  
our participation in violent systems  
that harm your innocent ones;  
our reluctance to embody your good news.**

**Be born in us today  
and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation.**

**Amen.**

God's grace upon grace flows over you.

† Christ's presence redeems the whole creation.

Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad!

**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

“All Is Well”

Michael W. Smith

Setting for choir, brass and organ by Ronn Huff; Taylor McNamara, alto

*All is well, all is well. Angels and men rejoice! For tonight darkness fell into the dawn of love's light. Let there be peace on earth. Christ is come, go and tell that He is in the manger. Sing alle, sing alleluia! Lift up your voice and sing. Born is now Emmanuel. Born is our Lord and Savior. Sing alleluia! All, all is well.*

## WORD

### First Reading

**Isaiah 9:2-7**

Andrea Long, lector

<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 Counsellor, 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 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

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893; Music: Lewis H. Redner, 1831-1908

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!

## Psalm 96

Jack Richardson, Nick Hanewinkel, Taylor McNamara, Amy Woodall, cantors

Psalm 96:11 (Robert Hobby) Refrain from Psalter for Worship Year C © 2006 Augsburg Fortress



*Sing to the LORD | a new song; sing to the LORD, | all the earth. <sup>2</sup>Sing to the LORD, bless the name | of the LORD; proclaim God's salvation from | day to day. <sup>3</sup>Declare God's glory a- | mong the nations and God's wonders a- | mong all peoples. <sup>4</sup>For great is the LORD and greatly | to be praised, more to be feared | than all gods. R <sup>5</sup>As for all the gods of the nations, they | are but idols; but you, O LORD, have | made the heavens. <sup>6</sup>Majesty and magnificence are | in your presence; power and splendor are in your | sanctuary. <sup>7</sup>Ascribe to the LORD, you families | of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD hon- | or and power. <sup>8</sup>Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the | holy name; bring offerings and enter the courts | of the LORD. R <sup>9</sup>Worship the LORD in the beau- | ty of holiness; tremble before the LORD, | all the earth. <sup>10</sup>Tell it out among the nations: "The | LORD is king! The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge the peo- | ples with equity." <sup>11</sup>Let the heavens rejoice, and let the | earth be glad; let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that | is therein. <sup>12</sup>Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your com- | ing, O LORD, for you come to | judge the earth. <sup>13</sup>You will judge the | world with righteousness and the peoples | with your truth. R*

## **Second Reading**

**Titus 2:11-14**

Andrea Long, lector

<sup>11</sup>For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, <sup>12</sup>training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, <sup>13</sup>while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup>He 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.**

<sup>1</sup>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. <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. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But

Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The 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 news of great joy”*

Pastor Timothy McKenzie

*Please stand as able.*

**Hymn of the Day**

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” ELW 270

MENDELSSOHN

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

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!”

**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)

Empowered by the news of Christ’s birth, let us pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need. *A brief silence.*

Gathering God, as the angel of the Lord announced good news of great joy for all the world, fill your church in every corner of the earth with such a joy that, united in love for Jesus Christ, we live with love for one another. Help us always to proclaim your peace and love for all people in this world. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

Creating God, all things were made through the Word who is Christ Jesus, and in whom all things hold together. On this holy night may our voices join together with the heavenly host, the roaring seas, the exulting fields, and whispering forests so that all creation might sing praises to you. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

Peaceful God, your Son comes as the Prince of Peace, yet the world trembles amid enmity, violence, and war. Bless the nations of the world and their leaders to seek the peace that comes only from you; help all leaders to set aside nationalist and partisan rhetoric, and in all things, to seek the common good for all fellow human beings, for we are all your children. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

Shepherding God, in Jesus, the Word became flesh and continues to dwell among us, knowing our fears and our hopes. Bless all on this holy night who struggle with illness, addiction, recovery, and grief. Through the hands of caregivers, first responders, and medical staff, be present with the sick and dying that they might know healing, strength, and hope. As we now pause in silence, please look with favor upon all whom we name, either aloud, or in the silence of our hearts. *Brief silence.* God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

Nurturing God, your Son was born in a stable in humble circumstances. Bless all this night who, because of life's circumstances, find themselves without a warm and safe place to stay. As you protected the Holy Family, so protect and watch over all in our community who are hungry, homeless, and despairing. Continue to bless this congregation to feed the hungry and to offer shelter to those in need. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

Everlasting Father, your kingdom has come near in Jesus, and in him we know your eternal love. Bless all who face a first Christmas without a loved one, confident in your Son's promise that he prepares a place for them in your kingdom, and lead us also at the last before your holy throne where we will see you face to face in your light and love. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior.  
**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**

“The First Noel”

Traditional English carol

Setting for choir, organ and brass by Dan Forrest

*The first Noel the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay; in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so dee. Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel. They looked up and saw a star shining in the east beyond them far; and to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night. Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel. Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heav'nly Lord, that hath made heav'n and earth of naught, and with His blood mankind hath bought. Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.*

*Please stand as able.*

**Offertory**

*(The offering is brought forward from the Narthex)*

“What Child Is This” ELW 296

GREENSLEEVES

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

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!

**Offering Prayer**

Let us pray. God of glory, great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior.

**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.

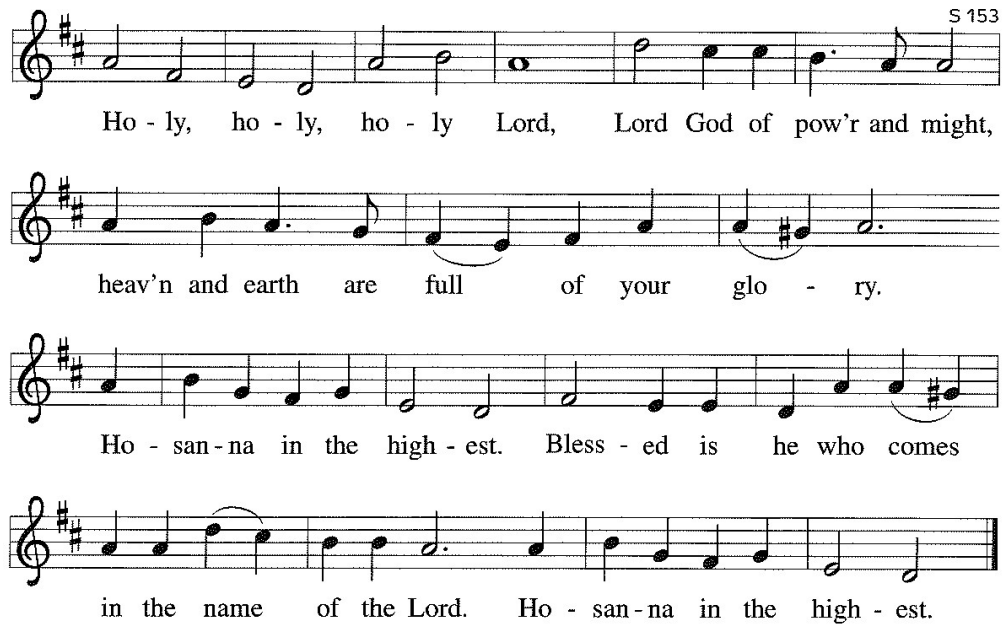
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

**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

God is now in flesh appearing.  
 Come to the feast of joy!

*Please be seated.*

### Distribution of Holy Communion

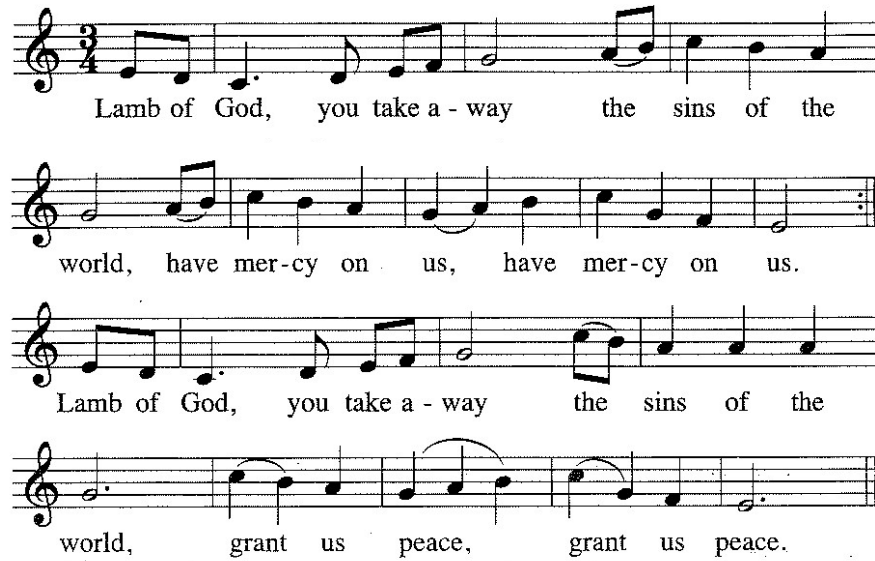
*Holy Communion is offered continuously by intinction at the Lord's table and at the high altar. Please follow the ushers' prompts, walking forward to the desired communion station and returning via the side aisles. Gluten free wafers and grape juice are always available.*

**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

“O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright”

Tune WIE SCHON LEUCHTET by Philipp Nicolai  
Setting for horn and organ by David Cherwien

**Communion Hymn**

“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming” ELW 272 Stanzas 1 & 2

ES IST EIN ROSE

Text: German carol, 15th cent.; tr. Theodore Baker, 1851-1934, sts. 1-2  
Music: *Alte catholische kirchensänge*, Köln, 1599; arr. Michael Praetorius, 1571-1621

Lo, how a rose e’er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!  
Of Jesse’s lineage coming as seers of old have sung,  
it came, a flow’r so bright, amid the cold of winter,  
when half-spent was the night.

Isaiah had foretold it, the rose I have in mind;  
with Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind.  
To show God’s love aright, she bore to us a Savior,  
when half-spent was the night.

“I Saw Three Ships”

Traditional English Carol  
Setting for Brass by Lawrence D. Eden

**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.

**Amen.**

### **Post-Communion Prayer**

Let us pray. Incarnate God, you are among us at this table. May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence. Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us. **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

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792-1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820-1885; Music: Franz Gruber, 1787-1863

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**

The triune God, glorious Mystery,  
holy Incarnate One, abiding Comforter,  
✠ bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy.

**Amen.**

### **DISMISSAL**

Glory to God in the highest!  
**And peace to God's people on earth!**  
Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.  
**Thanks be to God.**

*Sanctuary lights return. Please extinguish your candle.*

### **Recessional Hymn**

“Joy to the World” ELW 267

ANTIOCH

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

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.

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

## Postlude

“A Carol Fantasy”

Traditional Carols  
Setting for Brass by John Iveson

† † †

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**Worship Leaders:** Senior Pastor Timothy McKenzie (prayers); Associate Pastor Alexandra Joy Rode; crucifer: Andrew Puky; acolyte: Ella Puky; Bible bearer: Ali Jacob; lector: Andrea Long; live streaming camera: Joe Barrett; soundboard: Kevin Feezor; ushers: Mark Ginns, Susan Ginns, Rod Stephens, Sally McCauley; greeter: Evelyn Gerdes; communion assistants: Andrea Long, Andrew Puky, Tom Puky, John Simon; communion helper: Chris Miller; musicians: St. Mark's Choir; St. Mark's Handbells; Brass Quintet: Stacey Mills, Russell Smith, Trumpets; Rachel Niketoupolos, horn; Brent Ballard, Keith Johnson, trombones; Jack Richardson, Nick Hanewinkel, Amy Woodall, Taylor McNamara, cantors; Kate Suchanek, Madeline Phillips, soprano soloists; Lester Ackerman, Director of Music Ministry and Organist

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## *Parish News*

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### **From the Senior 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.” (Isaiah 9:6)

At Christmas, God's kingdom draws near to us in the birth of Jesus the Messiah, whose kingdom crosses all borders of nation, culture, and language. In Jesus, human time now forever includes God's eternity. Isaiah's words about Jesus, “born for us,” reveal God's kingdom of peace established, not in one nation or

people, but for all nations and people. He is the eternal now, Emmanuel, God with us.

Jesus is born anew in the manger of your heart and in the hearts of fellow sisters and brothers around the world in every nation. Jesus Christ seeks to dwell in your heart, that through you, he might extend his reign of peace and love to all people. He lives your humanity that you might share his peace and love with all whom you meet.

Blessed Christmas!  
Senior Pastor Timothy McKenzie  
pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org

## **Worship and Congregational Life**

**Christmas Eve Altar Flowers** are given to the glory of God and in celebration of Jesus Christ who is "Emmanuel, God with us" by Pastor Timothy and Mari McKenzie.

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

### **12/28 First Sunday of Christmas 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 2025 donation/gifts/contribution are received and processed for this tax year, contributions must be received by January 3. If you have not done so, please consider making a

pledge for 2026. Thank you for your faithfulness to Christ's ministry at St. Mark's.

**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 2026**

Your pledge helps St. Mark's ministries of worship, service and fellowship continue over the coming year. **2026** Pledge cards 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.

**"O Little Town of Bethlehem" ELW 279** The hymn text was written by Phillips Brooks (1835-1893) in 1868 for a Sunday school service at Holy Trinity Church in Philadelphia. Brooks returned from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1865, inspired by being in a field with shepherds on Christmas Eve. Wishing to share his impressions and feelings in hymn form, he wrote the words for the children of his church. His organist and Sunday School superintendent Lewis Redner (1831-1908) wrote the tune **ST. LOUIS** at Brooks request the evening before its first sharing on Sunday morning, December 27, 1868.

**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, 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, A.J. Pridgen & Christopher Miller, Meg Fielding, Randall Darnell, and Lester Ackerman & Layton Campbell.

## 2025 CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS, WREATHS AND ALTERNATE DONATIONS

*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  
Husband John  
Charlie Cox  
Amy and Ron Hill  
Al Edahl  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert B. Johnson  
Mr. and Mrs. Horace E. Hoke  
Carol and Mark Johnson  
Avery Grace Lepkowski  
Gerry Parks  
John and Charlotte McCauley, my parents  
Scott McCauley, my brother  
Rev. Dr. Carl McKenzie  
Takamasa Esashi  
Our Parents

### GIVEN BY

Lisa Barnette and Family  
Karen Covington  
Benny and Judy Cox  
Joann and Cliff Edahl  
Joann and Cliff Edahl  
Rob and Susan Johnson  
Rob and Susan Johnson  
Rob and Susan Johnson  
Michael and Rebecca Lepkowski  
Andrea Long  
Sally McCauley  
Sally McCauley  
Barbara McKenzie  
Pastor Tim and Mari McKenzie  
Lynda and Partick Walters

### IN HONOR OF:

Gretchen and Hunter Clarke  
Virginia H. Edahl  
Pastor Tim McKenzie and Pastor Ali Rode  
Les Ackerman, Elaine Johnson, and Sue Wadgyamar  
The Members and Friends of St. Mark's  
Our Children and Grandsons

### GIVEN BY

Benny and Judy Cox  
Joann and Cliff Edahl  
Rob and Susan Johnson  
Rob and Susan Johnson  
Pastor Tim and Mari McKenzie  
Lynda and Patrick Walters

## WREATHS

### IN MEMORY OF:

Richard Cansler  
Our Parents Roger and Marie Dunlap and Carl and Viola Sepmeyer  
Gladys, Milton, and Ed Long  
Our Parents

### GIVEN BY

Millie Cansler  
Dave and Eileen Dunlap  
Andrea Long  
Steve and Sandy Rach

### IN HONOR OF:

St. Mark's Pastors and Staff  
Andrew and Kaitlin Dixon's Wedding October 24, 2025  
Bishop Emily Hartner for officiating Andrew and Kaitlin's Wedding  
Our Children and Grandchildren

### GIVEN BY

Karen Covington  
Neil and Charlotte Dixon  
Neil and Charlotte Dixon  
Steve and Sandy Rach

## NOURISH UP

### IN MEMORY OF:

Betty H. Weaver  
Mike Brunnemer, John Foust, Doris Foust, and Steve Foust

### GIVEN BY

Lisa Barnette and Family  
Phil and Laura Foust

Arlene McIntyre  
Our Cherished Parents: Jane and Tom Waggoner, and Carol and Bill Milheim  
Jan Lewis

Michael and Rebecca Lepkowski  
Carol and Doug Milheim  
Kjerstin and Harsh Shukla

### IN HONOR OF:

Worship and Music Committee  
Claire Dixon  
All those who hunger or need help today or any other day in the year to come  
Nancy Brunnermer (aka La Niña)  
Social Ministry Committee and our Generous Church Family  
Nancy and Edward  
Pastor Tim McKenzie and Les Ackerman

### GIVEN BY

Karen Covington  
Neil and Charlotte Dixon  
Dave and Eileen Dunlap  
Phil and Laura Foust  
Marc and Susan Ginns  
Kjerstin and Harsh Shukla  
Judy and Tom Tolbert

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### St. Mark's Prayer List

Harry Kendrick, Mary Lou R., Kendal Turner, Sheila Pierfelice, Rochelle Dagenhart, Janice Darnell, Pastor Glen Sea, Mark Barbee, Diane Thornton, Polly Needham, John Graham, Mark Thornton, Tom Tolbert, Dr. Samuel Davis, Bob Roach, Payton McAdams, Dale Hopp, Bill Coppedge, Marcia Newlin, Andres & Silvia Puky, Ashlyn Bordelon, Betsy League, Carmelita Harris, Lucille Johnson, Marilyn Stevens, Satoko Yamada, Judy Cox, Ross Boheler, Charlene Oppermann, Elaine Ketner Sherman, Gene Ellington, Tanner Grant, Christopher Shirley, Eileen Dunlap, Dannye Olin Bragdon, Mindy Curley, Louisa and Oakley Coburn, Roxi Tolbert, Bill Schwartz, Arlene Fielding, David Kutscher, Danielle Clausen, Joseph Tolbert, and Jay Harbinson.

Please email Pastor McKenzie with Prayer List and other prayer requests ([pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org))

#### Readings for 12/28/2025

#### First Sunday of Christmas (one service at 10:30am)

Isaiah 63:7-9  
Psalm 148  
Hebrews 2:10-18  
Matthew 2:13-23

#### 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 ([pastortimsmc@gmail.com](mailto:pastortimsmc@gmail.com))

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### Our Ministers

All the people of God at St. Mark's

Rev. Dr. Timothy McKenzie, Senior Pastor  
[pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org)

Rev. Alexandra Joy Rode, Associate Pastor  
for Family Ministry  
[pastorali@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:pastorali@saintmarkscharlotte.org)

Lester Ackerman,

Director of Music Ministry, Organist  
[les@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:les@saintmarkscharlotte.org)

Sue Wadgyamar, Parish Administrator  
[admin@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:admin@saintmarkscharlotte.org)

Elaine Johnson, Finance Administrator  
[finance@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:finance@saintmarkscharlotte.org)