

**CHRISTMAS EVE
FAMILY COMMUNION SERVICE
SAINT PAUL, NORTHVILLE**

December 24, 2025
10 PM



God Appears—Light in the Darkness

AS WE GATHER

A very merry Christmas to all who come to worship the Christ Child.

An array of candles exemplify the Christ as "light of the world" (John 8:12).

Tonight we gather amid the busyness to reflect, rejoice, and ponder anew the joy of our Savior born to us. We prepare our hearts to receive the greatest gifts ever given through Him—hope, forgiveness, newness, and an assured promise of eternal life through faith in Christ.

"God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people" (Titus 2:11). Jesus came into the darkness of our world, as He was born of Mary, to redeem us. He is called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).

Preservice Music

WELCOME

O Little Town of Bethlehem



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!

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

OPENING SENTENCES *1 Timothy 3:16; Luke 2:19*

Pastor: Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness:

People: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.

Pastor: But Mary treasured up all these things,

People: pondering them in her heart.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION *Isaiah 9:2*

Pastor: In our Christmas joy, let us confess our sins.

People: Mighty God, on this day of celebration, we confess our sin to You. We are by nature sinful. Without Your help, we are powerless to overcome it. We confess our impatience with You and with others, our seeking after worldly passions, and our self-indulgent ways of life. By our sin, we have hurt others, ourselves, and You. We plead with You to forgive our sins for the sake of Christ and to transform our broken lives.

Pastor: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light, and the light shines on them. The grace of God has appeared through the birth of our Savior Jesus, bringing salvation to all people. As a called and ordained servant of the Word made flesh and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: Let us join our voices with the multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

People: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!"

Angels We Have Heard on High



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?



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?



Refrain
Glo - - - - ri - a



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



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

Pastor: Let us pray.

O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that as we have known the mysteries of that Light on earth we may also come to the fullness of His joys in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

(Please be seated)

OLD TESTAMENT *Isaiah 7:10–14*

(The sign of Immanuel)

¹⁰ Later, the Lord sent this message to King Ahaz:¹¹ “Ask the Lord your God for a sign of confirmation, Ahaz. Make it as difficult as you want—as high as heaven or as deep as the place of the dead.”

¹² But the king refused. “No,” he said, “I will not test the Lord like that.”

¹³ Then Isaiah said, “Listen well, you royal family of David! Isn’t it enough to exhaust human patience? Must you exhaust the patience of my God as well? ¹⁴ All right then, the Lord himself will give you the sign. Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel (which means ‘God is with us’).

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE *1 John 4:7–16*

(God is love.)

Reader: ⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

People: ⁹ In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Reader: ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.¹² No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

¹³ By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.

People: ¹⁵ **Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.** ¹⁶ **So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.**

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

(Please stand)

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 1:18–25*

(The birth of Jesus Christ)

Reader: ¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

People: ²¹ **She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."** ²² **All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:** ²³ **"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).**

Reader: ²⁴ When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵ but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

Reader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ

Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life ✝ of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER

Pastor: Mighty and loving God our Father, hear our prayer for the whole Church gathered this night around the manger of our Savior, Jesus Christ, our Lord. May the good news of the Savior descend upon all people of the entire world, granting the miracle of repentance and faith in the hearts and minds of all. Bring true peace among nations and people.

People: **May we reflect Your saving light. Amen.**

(Please be seated)

What Child Is This



1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mar - y's lap is
 2 Why lies He in such mean es-tate Where ox and ass are
 3 So bring Him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; Come, peas - ant, king, to



sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet While
 feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here The
 own Him. The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; Let



shep - herds watch are keep - ing? This, this is
 si - lent Word is plead - ing. Nails, spear shall
 lov - ing hearts en - throne Him. Raise, raise the



Christ the king, Whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
 pierce Him through, The cross be borne for me, for you;
 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!

MESSAGE - *Pastor Christopher Fairbairn*

OFFERING OF OUR TITHES AND GIFTS

If you brought your offering tonight, you are welcome to leave it in the offering box you will find at the back of the church. **Thank you.**

We invite our guests and members to fill out our Friendship Card during worship, which is found on the back of the pew. Please leave your card at the end of the pew near the center aisle as you leave.

(Please stand)

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

Pastor: The Lord be with you. *2 Timothy 4:22*

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts. *Colossians 3:1*

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. *Psalms 136:1*

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always. *John 20:19*

People: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

(Please be seated)

THE DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

COMMUNION WINE: For those who may not be able to take regular wine, we offer non-alcoholic wine, which is the light colored wine in the center of the communion tray.

++ We offer **Gluten-free** wafers upon request. ++

Panus Angelicus / C. Frank

Soloist / Jeff Shapiro

It Came upon the Midnight Clear



1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, That glo-rious song of old,
 2 Still through the clo-ven skies they come With peace-ful wings un-furled,
 3 All you, be-neath your heav-y load, By care and guilt bent low,
 4 For lo, the days have come to pass By proph-ets seen of old,



From an-gels bend-ing near the earth To touch their harps of gold:
 And still their heav'n-ly mu-sic floats O'er all the wea-ry world.
 Who toil a-long a drea-ry way With pain-ful steps and slow:
 When down in-to the cir-cling years Came Christ as was fore-told.

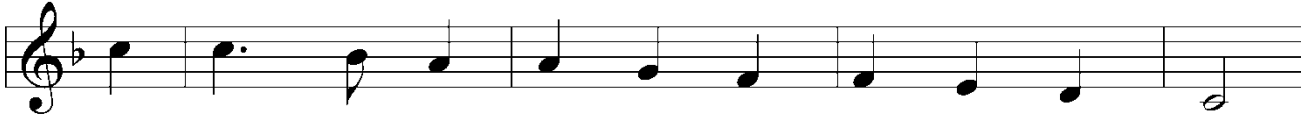


“Peace on the earth, good-will to all, From heav’n’s all-gra-cious king.”
 A-bove its sad and low-ly plains They bend on hov-’ring wing,
 Look up, for gold-en is the hour, Come swift-ly on the wing,
 His word of peace shall to the earth God’s an-cient prom-ise bring,



The world in sol-emn still-ness lay To hear the an-gels sing.
 And ev-er o’er its ba-bel sounds The bless-ed an-gels sing.
 The Prince was born to bring you peace; Of Him the an-gels sing.
 And all who take this gift will hear The song the an-gels sing.

364 Away in a Manger



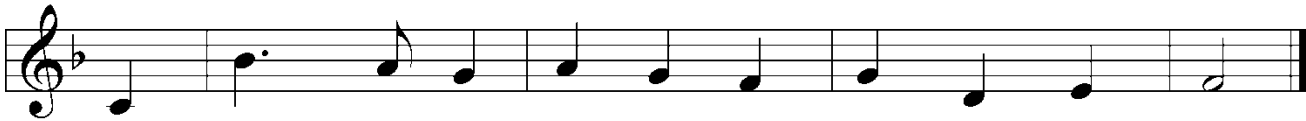
1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed,
 2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask Thee to stay



The lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down His sweet head.
 But lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing He makes.
 Close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.



The stars in the sky _____ looked down where He lay,
 I love Thee, Lord Je - sus! Look down from the sky,
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in Thy ten - der care,



The lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 And stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.
 And take us to heav - en to live with Thee there.

O Come, All Ye Faithful



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, Joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
 2 High - est, most ho - ly, Light of Light e - ter - nal,
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, Sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,



come ye, O come — ye to Beth - le - hem;
 Born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal He comes;
 Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!



Come and be - hold Him Born the king of an - gels:
 Son of the Fa - ther Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
 Glo - ry to God — In — the — high - est:

Refrain



O come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a - dore Him,



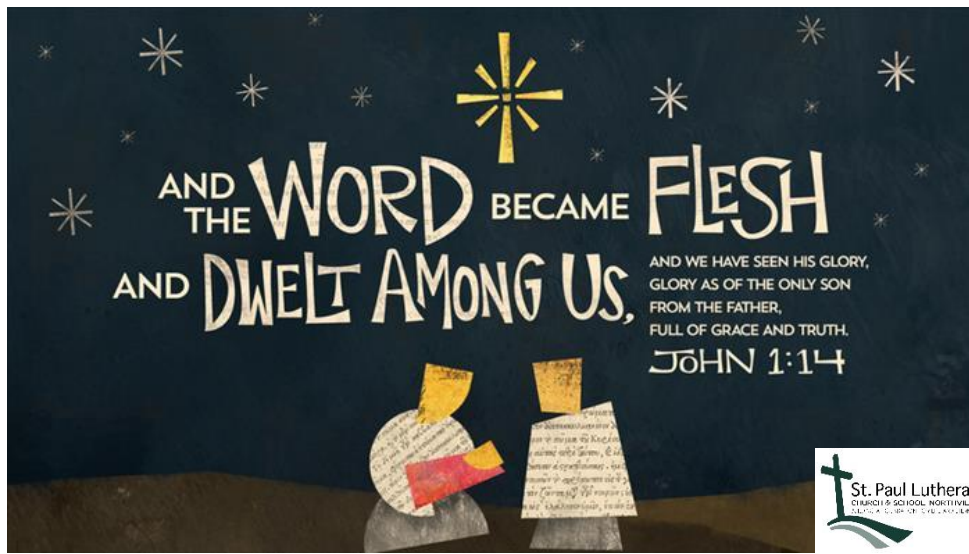
O come, let us a - dore Him, Christ the Lord!

(Please stand)

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Pastor: O God, You make this most holy night shine with the brightness of Your holy light. Grant that we know the mysteries of that light on earth, and that we also come to the fullness of His joys in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**



Distribution of the Light:

*As the ushers pass the light to worshippers along the aisle,
pass it to the person next to you.*

DO NOT TIP a lighted candle.

As the light is being passed, we sing the following:

Silent Night:

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child. Holy Infant, so tender and mild,

Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar, Heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!

Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!

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.

Benediction:

Pastor: The Almighty and Incarnate God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit
bless you now and forever.

People: Amen

All extinguish their candles.

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King;
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3 Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righ-teous-ness!



Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
Late in time be-hold Him come, Off - spring of a vir-gin's womb.
Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with heal - ing in His wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God-head see, Hail the in-car - nate De - i - ty!
Mild He lays His glo - ry by, Born that man no more may die,



With the an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth-le-hem!"
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Je - sus, our Im-man-u - el!
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec-ond birth.



Refrain
Hark! The her-ald an-gels sing, "Glo-ry to the new-born King!"



Altar Flowers

One vase in joyful celebration of our Savior's birth from Dennis and Kathy Verseman.

One vase Wishing a Merry Christmas to our church family from Gretchen and John Hasse.

Please arrange to pick up your flowers after the 12/25/25 10am service.