



# St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church

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## The Nativity of Our Lord

*December 24, 2025*

**Welcome!** Arise, shine, for your light has come. Those walking in the darkness have seen a great light. Isaiah shares these words of hope with us. We know what it means to live in the darkness. But we don't live without hope. Tonight we celebrate that hope, given birth in Jesus the Christ. For to us a child is born. In Him is life and the life is the light of men.

**A special welcome to all our visitors!** We are delighted you are with us for worship this morning. Please introduce yourself to Pastor Jon and fill out a green visitor card (in the pewback). The order of service is printed in this bulletin starting on page 2. A cryroom is available at the back left of the sanctuary for families with young children if there is a need.

**Communion Note:** We believe that our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but his very body and blood to eat and drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with him and with one another. Our Lord invites to his table those who trust his words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as he forgives and loves us. Because unworthy reception of the sacrament can be harmful, those who are not yet instructed, are uncertain or doubtful, or hold to a different confession should speak to the pastor before participating.

*Welcome to our Christmas Eve service!*

*\*Please be sure to bring a candle as you come into the sanctuary.*



ISAIAH 9:6  
WONDERFUL  
COUNSELOR.  
MIGHTY  
GOD.  
EVERLASTING  
FATHER.  
PRINCE  
OF PEACE



**Prelude:** "Noel" – L. D'Aquin

**Special Music:** O Holy Night (5:00 pm) Stephen deDufour

*(Please stand and face the processional cross in the rear as we begin our worship with the responses in your bulletin)*

### Invitation to Worship

P: Beloved in Christ, we are gathered together on this Eve of Christmas to prepare our hearts for the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ; to meditate upon the mystery of that Incarnation by which our nature is redeemed, and to receive with joy the message of our salvation.

**C: Drop down, O heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness. Let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation.**  
*(Isaiah 45:8)*

P: Let us pray: Almighty God, You have given Your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon Him, and to be born of a virgin. Grant that we, who have been born again and made Your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by Your Holy Spirit; through our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom with You and the same Spirit be honor and glory, now and forever.

**C: Amen**

**Processional Hymn:** 379 O Come, All Ye Faithful

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.

Highest, most holy, Light of Light eternal,  
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;  
Son of the Father Now in flesh appearing! *Ref*

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

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n!  
Word of the Father Now in flesh appearing! *Ref*



**Confession and Absolution:** *(read responsively as indicated)*

P: O God, You search us out and know us, and all that we are is open to You.  
We confess to You our sins and our need for a Savior.

**C: In Your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.**

P: When we make no room for Christ, and fail to welcome Him into our lives,

**C: In Your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.**

P: When we sanitize Your birthplace and erase from memory  
the poor and displaced,

**C: In Your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.**

P: When we sing sweet sentiments over Christ's birth, and fail to rejoice over  
His everyday presence,

**C: In Your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.**

P: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you, and for His  
sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ,  
and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the  
Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen**

**Gloria in Excelsis** 349 Hark the Glad Sound (v 1-2)

Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes,  
The Savior promised long;  
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne  
And ev'ry voice a song.

He comes the pris'ners to release,  
In Satan's bondage held.  
The gates of brass before Him burst,  
The iron fetters yield.

### Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Let us pray.

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

**C: Amen.**

*(please be seated)*

**Old Testament Reading:** Isaiah 9:2-7

- <sup>2</sup> The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;  
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.
- <sup>3</sup> You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest,  
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.
- <sup>4</sup> For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder,  
the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.
- <sup>5</sup> For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult  
and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire.
- <sup>6</sup> For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;  
and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- <sup>7</sup> Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end,  
on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.  
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

L: This is the Word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

**Special Music:** “Wake from Your Sleep” by Dan Schutte St. Peter Choir

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

<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, <sup>12</sup> training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, <sup>13</sup> waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, <sup>14</sup> who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

L: This is the Word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

*(please stand)*

**Gradual Hymn:** 359 Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming (v 1-2)

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming From tender stem hath sprung!  
Of Jesse's lineage coming As prophets long have sung,  
It came, a flow'ret bright,  
Amid the cold of winter, When half-spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas 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.



**Gospel Reading:** Luke 2:1-20

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

**C: Glory be to You, O Lord.**

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup> This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup> And all went to be registered, each to his own town. <sup>4</sup> And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, <sup>5</sup> to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. <sup>6</sup> And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. <sup>7</sup> And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

<sup>8</sup> And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. <sup>10</sup> And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. <sup>11</sup> For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths 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,  
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

<sup>15</sup> When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” <sup>16</sup> And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. <sup>17</sup> And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. <sup>18</sup> And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

P: .... This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise be to You, O Christ.**

*(please be seated)*

**Sermon Hymn:** 384 Of the Father's Love Begotten (v 1-3)

Of the Father's love begotten Ere the worlds 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.

Oh, that birth forever blessed, When the virgin, full of grace,  
By the Holy Ghost conceiving, Bore the Savior of our race,  
And the babe, the world's Redeemer, First revealed His sacred face  
Evermore and evermore.

This is He whom seers in old time Chanted of with one accord,  
Whom the voices of the prophets Promised in their faithful word.  
Now He shines, the long-expected; Let creation praise its Lord  
Evermore and evermore.

**Christmas Sermon**

**Gathering of the Offering and Offertory**

**Instrumental Offertory:** "In Dulci Jubilo" - J.G. Walther

*(please stand)*

**Order of Holy Communion**

Preface

P: The shepherds believed the angelic announcement and went to  
find their Savior.

**C: We have also heard the Good News and seek our Lord.**

P: They found their Savior, the long-promised Messiah, in a stable's manger.

**C: And we shall receive Him under bread and wine.**

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

**C: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

**Great Thanksgiving**

P: Thanks and praise be to you, our Father, almighty Creator, merciful Lord,  
God of promise and fulfillment. Of old Your faithful people waited for  
the day of Your visitation, manifest at last when the time had fully come  
and You sent forth Jesus Christ, your Son. Having seen His glory, we  
now wait for the day of consummation, when He will come again as both  
Judge and King. And so, with the church on earth and the hosts of  
heaven, we praise Your name and join their unending hymn singing:

*Sanctus (sung to tune of Hark the Herald Angels Sing)*

Holy, holy, holy Lord! God of host by all adored!  
Heav'n and earth cannot contain All the glory of your name!  
Hail, hosanna, God most high! Blest is he who now draws nigh  
In the name of God the King! Hallelujahs glad we sing:  
Hail, hosanna! Praises due Be forever, Lord, to you!

Lord's Prayer

P: Now in the words of our Lord we are bold to pray

**C: Our Father who art in heaven...**

Words of Institution

P: Our Lord Jesus Christ on the night he was betrayed...

*(please be seated)*

The Distribution and Distribution Hymns:

368 Angels We Have Heard on High

361 O Little Town of Bethlehem

358 From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

*(please stand)*





## Sharing of the Christmas Light and Greeting



Please observe these precautions for our safety.

1. Do not tip a lighted candle when sharing the light.
2. After extinguishing the candle, allow the wax to harden before setting it down.
3. Parents please give close supervision to your children.

As the candlelight, which represents the good news that a Savior has been born, is passed from one to another, those giving light will say, "The Light of Christ" and the person receiving the light in turn responds, "Thanks be to God." Each person then shares the light with his/her neighbor until every worshiper's candle has been lit.

## Gospel of the Incarnation: John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life, and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

<sup>9</sup>The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.



## 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!

\* \* \* *The Christmas Prayers* \* \* \*

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

*(Please extinguish your candle)*

## Benediction

### Recessional Hymn: 387 Joy to the World

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 heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ  
While fields and floods, 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.

## Postlude

