



ST. JOHN'S

LUTHERAN † CHURCH

501 Chestnut Street
Emmaus, PA 18049
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St. John's is a congregation of the Lehigh Mission District, Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Christmas Eve **December 24, 2022** **10:00 pm**

In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

- MINISTERS The Baptized People of St. John's
- PASTOR The Rev. Jeffrey S. Carstens
- MUSIC MINISTRY DIRECTOR Timothy M. Ginder
- PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR Denise Mill
- PRESCHOOL TEACHER ASSISTANT Mary Racek
- OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR Barbara E. Walck
- BOOKKEEPER Anna Galante
- CUSTODIAN Brian P. Dunton
- PASTOR EMERITUS The Rev. Fred S. Foerster

P = Presiding Minister A = Assisting Minister C = Congregation

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE

“Carols of the Season” – The Williams Duo
“Greensleeves” - “Gesù Bambino”

ANNOUNCEMENTS/WELCOME

The assembly stands.

CAROL

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

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**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***

GREETING

P The grace of our Savior Jesus Christ, Word made flesh, born of Mary, be with you all.
C **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P 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.

C **Amen**

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o’er the plains, and the mountains
in reply, echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain: Glo-ria in excelsis De-o; Glo-ria in excelsis De-o.

Shepherds why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong? What the
gladsome tidings be which inspire your heav’nly song? *Refrain*

Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing; come, adore on
bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn king. *Refrain*

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 9:2-7

After the reading:

A The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

SECOND LESSON

Titus 2:11-14

After the reading:

A The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands.

**It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old.
From angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
“Peace on the earth, goodwill to men, from heaven’s all gracious King.”
The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.**

**Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats o’er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains, they bend on hovering wing,
And ever over its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.**

P The holy gospel according to St. Luke.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL

Luke 2:1-20

God’s greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the “good news of great joy” and proclaim God’s blessing of peace.

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

After the reading:

P The gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

Pastor Jeff Carstens

Silent for reflection.

ANTHEM

“Only a Baby Came”

Sr. Choir

The assembly stands.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P This night the eternal Word of God is born in us. We pray for Christ’s light of life to take flesh in the church, the creation, and all people of God.

We bring to the manger our longing for the visible unity of the church of Jesus Christ, that undivided it proclaim the one whose birth brings good news of glad tidings to all people. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We bring to the manger hope for the well-being of creation, that every valley be exalted and every rough place be made plain so that every living thing may flourish. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We bring to the manger a vision of the reign of the Prince of Peace, that the nations, tribes, and peoples of this world will see and cherish in each other the very image of Christ, whose scepter is mercy and whose judgment is love. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We bring to the manger concern for those who have no place to lay their heads this night and for those who dwell in the shadow of loneliness, despair, illness, or death. We come begging that the child for whom there was no room will open the doors of our hearts to the needs of our neighbors and ourselves. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We bring to the manger all people who, like the holy family, gather with children in the splendor of this most holy night, that the gift of faith be lavished on another generation. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We bring to the manger the hopes and dreams of all the years, that with Mary and Joseph, angels and archangels, saints and martyrs, loved ones of every time and every place, our prayers and praises join in a common song uniting heaven and earth in a single peace. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

After the final petition:

P O God, who shines light into darkness, receive these prayers and the prayers of our hearts through the power of the Spirit, in Jesus' name.

C Amen.

PEACE

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

“Away in a Manger” – Joe Harps

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace saying “Peace be with you” or similar words.

The assembly is seated.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

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 our thanks and praise.**

P Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
the Word made flesh.

On 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.

P All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

P With the confidence of children of God, let us pray.

**C Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen**

COMMUNION

P Joy to the world! The Lord is come. Let every heart receive your Savior.

C Thanks be to God.

The assembly is seated.

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

Communion Music:

**“Is Your Heart Prepared for a King” - Sr. Choir
St. Basil’s Hymn**

THE COMMUNION

All baptized Christians are welcome to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion. We believe and teach that in the Holy Communion the crucified and risen Christ is present, giving his true body and blood as food and drink. This real presence is a mystery.

Those who for reasons of health do not drink wine, commune fully when receiving only the bread. In partaking of either element (bread or wine), the whole Christ is received. Children who have not yet received first communion instruction are welcome at the altar to receive a blessing.

To receive the Sacrament, please follow the directions of an usher to the front of the church via the center aisle. Receive the host from the pastor. Step to the side and take an empty cup from the tray, then receive the wine from the Communion Assistant. Return to your pew via the side aisle, placing your used cup in the waste basket.

Persons who are not able to come to the altar are invited to sit in the first pew on the pulpit side where the Pastor will commune you. Please notify an usher.

During this period of online worship, we invite you to participate in communion in your own home as the Pastor shares communion with you.

After all have communed, the assembly stands.

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

CANDLE LIGHTING

Music for reflection is played while the candles are lit.

“Pastoral on Forrest Green”

The pastor will give light to the ushers.

The ushers will give light to the first worshiper in each pew, who will then pass it on.

A lighted candle is never tilted, but is always held upright.

READING

John 1:1-5, 14

P In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

CAROL

“Silent Night”

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Accompanied by Ted Williams, Guitar

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright round you 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.

PRAYER

A Let us pray. On this day, O God, you gave us Christ the Son to save us. As you sent the one foretold, send us now with good news for all people. Let the gladness of this feast have no end as we share with others the joy that fills us; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

P May Christ, who by his incarnation has filled us with grace and truth, give you peace this Christmas and always. Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

THREE-FOLD AMEN



Extinguish Candles

RECESSIONAL CAROL

“Joy to the World”

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Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth received her king; let eve’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 floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sin and sorry 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.

DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE