



ST. JOHN'S

LUTHERAN † CHURCH

501 Chestnut Street
Emmaus, PA 18049
Phone: 610-965-9885
www.stjohnsemmaus.org

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** **5:00 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

GATHERING

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

PRELUDE

Carols for the Season (organ/piano)
“Behold that Star” Evelyn Stewart, soloist

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PASSING OF THE FRIENDSHIP REGISTER

GREETING

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

C **And also with you.**

Carol:

“O Come All Ye Faithful” (verses 1-3)

Hymn 283

“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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P 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.**

The assembly is seated.

"The Virgin Mary had a Baby Boy"

Evelyn Stewart, soloist

THE WORD IN SCRIPTURE AND SONG

During each carol, children will be invited to bring their ornaments up front and place them on the tree.

FIRST READING

Luke 2:1-5

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.

Carol: **"O Little Town of Bethlehem" (verses 1-2)**

Hymn 279

Children are invited to bring up their Mary and Joseph ornaments.

"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 hope and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight."

"For Christ is 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!"

SECOND READING

Luke 2:6-7

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.

Carol: "Away in a Manger" (verses 1-2)

Hymn 277

Children are invited to bring up their Manger ornaments.

" Away in a manger, no crib for his bed
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay."

"The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh."

THIRD READING

Luke 2:8-15

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."

Carol: “Angels We Have Heard On High” (verses 1, 3)

Hymn 289

Children are invited to bring up their Angel ornaments.

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

Refrain –

“Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Gloria in excelsis Deo.”

“Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.”

Refrain.

FOURTH READING

Luke 2:16-20

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.

Carol: “Go Tell it On the Mountain” (verses 1, 3)

Hymn 290

Children are invited to bring up their Shepherd/Sheep ornaments.

Refrain -

“Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev’rywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!”

“While shepherds kept their watching o’er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens there sone a holy light.”

Refrain.

“Down in a lonely manger the humble Christ was born;
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.”

Refrain.

Carol: "Silent Night"

Hymn 281

"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."

The assembly stands.

NICENE CREED

P With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

C **We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,**

**of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P With wonder and thanksgiving for Christ's coming into the world, we pray for the church, the life of the earth, and the whole human family.

Your infinite love is born to us this night. With choirs of angels the church proclaims the good news. Send us out as messengers of the hope that has come to all people. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

You are pleased to dwell with your creatures and the whole earth sings for joy. Renew the splendor of creation from the smallest cell to the widest galaxies. Guide us to be wise stewards of your gifts for the sake of generations to come. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Your authority is over the nations. Break the rod of oppression in every land and free all people from fear. Bring peace where there is war, compassion where there is suffering, and healing where there is disease. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

You cherish those who are most vulnerable. Protect infants and children, and bless those who care for them. Watch over women giving birth, attend the dying, and relieve any who are in pain. Shelter refugee families and those who have no home. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Your lovingkindness embraces everyone in need. Help any for whom this season is lonely or joyless. Comfort those among us, or known to us, who are experiencing distress of body or mind, missing loved ones, or grieving. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

You welcome those who have died into the joyous light of glory. We give thanks for the saints of every time and place who have praised you with lives of faith and humility. Inspire us by their example to love you by serving others. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

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

C Amen.

PEACE

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

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

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 him thanks and praise.

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh
you have opened the eyes of faith
to a new and radiant vision of your glory,
that, beholding the God made visible,
we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see.

P 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 Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**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.**

The assembly is seated.



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

COMMUNION

P Joy to the world, the Lord is come. Let every heart receive your savior.

C Thanks be to God!

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.

*“Coventry Carol”
“Jesu Bambino”*

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

C Amen.

PRAYER

A 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.

C Amen.

SENDING

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

BLESSING

P God bless you and keep you,

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

Amen.

Carol: “Joy to the World”

Hymn 267

“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 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.”

DISMISSAL

A Christ the Savior is born!

Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Liturgical Texts and Music

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