

CAROL: *Angels we have heard on high* (ELW 289)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION:

Reader 4: Let us pray, responsively –

God of glory, by your grace a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests on his shoulders, and in his name, we pray.

Wonderful Counsellor, we pray for wisdom among world leaders, that they may use their power to lift burdens and break the bonds of oppression.

Mighty God, we pray with the church of Jesus Christ our Lord, that you will multiply and increase our joy as we share in the harvest you have gathered.

Everlasting Father, we pray with families, friends and loved ones, that those who now walk in deep darkness may see the great light of your saving love.

Prince of Peace, we pray for an end to violence and warfare, that your authority may continue to grow until there is endless peace in every land.

Lord of hosts, establish your holy realm with justice and righteousness from this time on and forevermore. Amen

LORD'S PRAYER: (ELW p. 208)

GATHERING OF THE GIFTS

OFFERING CAROLS: *O Little Town of Bethlehem* (ELW 279)

In the Bleak Midwinter (ELW 294)

OFFERING PRAYER: Let us pray. Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace.

As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others.

With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

REFLECTION

CAROL: *Silent Night, Holy Night!* (ELW 281)

BLESSING: May God, who has called you out of darkness to be servants of light, grant you the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, and the peace of the Christ Child. Almighty God, the Father, the Son, † and the Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. Amen.

SENDING CAROL: *Good Christian Friends Rejoice!* (ELW 288)

DISMISSAL: Glory to God in the highest! Peace to God's people on earth! As Heralds of God's peace, go forth in joy to love and serve the Lord. Thanks be to God.

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Christmas Eve: Tuesday, December 24th, 2019 - 5:00 pm

Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW)



Pastor: Martin Malina

Honourary Assistant Pastor: Diane Raddatz

Musician: Sharon Wirth

Reader 1: Seth Malina

Reader 2: Earla Roth

Reader 3: Joanna Malina

Reader 4: Brian Wirth

Thank you to all who decorated our worship space. The Christmas tree is donated by the Quast family in memory of all the family members and friends who have passed away during the year. The flowers on the altar are given to the Glory of God by Kylie and Cameron Niman in remembrance of their grandmother Ethel Niman.

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church



PRELUDE & WELCOME

CAROL: *O Come All Ye Faithful* (ELW 283)

INTRODUCTION: "*A Lutheran Christmas Through the Ages*"

Reader 1: How Christmas was experienced, and expressed, for Lutherans has changed over time. Despite often disruptive, even violent, times in history, Lutheran Christians still found ways to celebrate and give thanks for the birth of Jesus.

Reader 2: This Christmas Eve, like Mary who pondered in her heart the great mystery of Christ's birth, we too will consider how it is that we can celebrate God's grace amidst all that is dark in the world.

CAROL: *What Child is This?* (ELW 281)

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES:

Reader 3: In Germany, the long years of waiting for the promised Savior are remembered during the four weeks *before* Christmas. An Advent wreath appears in many homes. This is a circle of greenery in which four red candles are placed. One candle is lighted the First Sunday in Advent; two candles are lighted the Second Sunday in Advent; and so on, until all four candles are shining brightly. (*The candles are lit.*)

Reader 4: We light the Paschal candle to symbolize Christ's presence and God's promise fulfilled. The Light of the world has come into the darkness. At the darkest time of year, every year for centuries, Lutherans have lighted candles to remind us of the words from the first chapter of the Gospel of John: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it ... The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world ... And the word

became flesh and dwelt among us ..." (John 1:5,9,14).

CAROL: Joy to the World (ELW 267)

Reader 1: From the beginning of time the Word has existed. Even the prophets of old have declared God's fulfilled promise: "For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests on his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace to all on whom his favour rests." (Isaiah 9:6) The word of the Lord! **Blessed be the name of the Lord.**

PRAYER: Let us pray. **All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into our world has brightened weary hearts with peace. Call us out of darkness and empower us to proclaim the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

Reader 2: Lutherans aren't just Germans in Western Europe. After the 16th century Reformation, Lutherans spread to all corners of the globe. Today, there are 80 million Lutherans worldwide, in India, North America, Japan, South America, Hong Kong, and Southern Africa. There are even some Lutherans in London, England!

CHOIR: Sussex Carol (English traditional arr. Francis Melville)

Reader 3: Another popular tradition that began in Germany is the Christmas tree. Candles, apples, and paper roses were some of the earliest decorations Lutherans used. One legend tells us that Martin Luther decorated the very first Christmas tree for his children. He explained that the glowing candles on the tree symbolized Christ, the Light of the world.

PROCESSIONAL CAROL: O Christmas Tree (During the carol, you are invited to bring your candle, apple or rose to place on the altar or tree.)

Two systems of musical notation for the carol 'O Christmas Tree'. The first system is in 4/4 time and features a treble and bass clef. The lyrics are: 'O Christ-mas tree, O Christ-mas tree, How love-ly are your branch-es! O Christ-mas Tree, O Christ-mas tree, You are the tree most loved!... O Christ-mas Tree, O Christ-mas tree, Your beau-ty green will teach me.' The second system is in 7/8 time and also features a treble and bass clef. The lyrics are: 'In beau-ty green will al-ways grow Through sum-mer sun and win-ter snow. How of-ten you give us de-light In bright-ly shin-ing Christ-mas light! That hope and love will e-ver be The way to joy and peace for me.'

Musical score for 'Joy to the World' in 3/4 time. It features a treble and bass clef. The lyrics are: 'O Christ-mas Tree, O Christ-mas tree, How love-ly are your branch-es! O Christ-mas Tree, O Christ-mas tree, You are the tree most loved!... O Christ-mas Tree, O Christ-mas tree, Your beau-ty green will teach me.'

Reader 4: No matter the time or circumstance in history, Lutherans have centered their Christmas celebration in the Gospel story of Christ's birth, recorded in the 2nd chapter of Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

CAROL: Away in a manger (ELW 278)

Reader 1: "In 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 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: 'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime (ELW 284)

Reader 2: "In 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 Saviour, 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.' 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 favours!'"

CAROL: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (ELW 270)

Reader 3: "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.' 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." The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**