

Service of Holy Communion

First Sunday of Christmas

December 28, 2025

Today's Worship

Today's liturgy takes the shape of Lessons and Carols, but with a unique addition: each of the birth narratives from the gospels of Luke, Matthew, and John are held side-by-side with a reflection written by Martin Luther, translated by Roland H. Bainton, a British-born American Protestant theologian, in 1948.

Today's Leaders

Mady Riedell *altar guild*

Len & Geri Ott *ushers*

Eva Decker, Len & Geri Ott *tellers*

Paul Elsener *organ & piano*

Patrick Silk *vocalist*

Jackie Narkiewicz & Dcn. Bob Lewis *assisting ministers*

The Rev. Zachary Dean *presiding minister*



PRELUDE

GREETING

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

DIALOGUE

The assembly stands.

Come! Look upon the baby Jesus, cradled in the arms of his mother.

Seeing this sight, may our hearts be comforted.

Come! Listen to choirs of angels announcing good news to all people.

Hearing this song, may we too sing: Glory to God in the highest!

Come! Receive this ancient story in your heart, not as history but as a gift.

Opening our hearts to this mystery, may Christ be born in us today.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God,
you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word.
By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.
Amen.

The assembly is seated.

FIRST READING: LUKE 2:1-16

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar 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 in the guest room.

⁸Now in that same 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." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

REFLECTION

HYMN **ELW 292** *Love Has Come*
The assembly stands, then is seated.

SECOND READING: MATTHEW 2:1-4, 7-12

¹ In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, ² asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage." ³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, ⁴ and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸ Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." ⁹ When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

REFLECTION

HYMN **ACS 1060** *Gentle Joseph Heard a Warning*
The assembly stands, then is seated.

THIRD READING: JOHN 1:1-5, 14

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. ¹⁴ 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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

REFLECTION

HYMN **ACS 1093** *In a Deep, Unbounded Darkness*

The assembly stands.

NICENE CREED

**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

Mighty God of mercy, we thank you for the resurrection dawn,
bringing the glory of our risen Lord who makes every day new.

Especially we thank you—
for the sustaining goodness of your creation...
for the new creation in Christ and all gifts of healing and forgiveness...
for the gifts of relationship with others...
for the communion of faith in your church...

Merciful God of might, renew this weary world,
heal the hurts of all your children, and bring about your peace for all.

Especially we pray—
for those who govern nations of the world...
for the people in countries ravaged by strife or warfare...
for all who work for peace and international harmony...
for all who strive to save the earth from carelessness and destruction...
for the church of Jesus Christ in every land...

Almighty God, you have brought us in safety to this new day.
Preserve us with your mighty power,
that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome in adversity.
In all we do, direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

Signs of peace are exchanged. The assembly is seated for announcements.



GATHERING OF GIFTS

*Gifts of bread, wine, music, and money are offered in thanks to God.
Monetary gifts may be made with the QR code.*

On a Still and Starry Night, Sally DeFord

Then, the assembly stands.

Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise God, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise God a - bove, ye
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

PRAYER

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 a 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.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

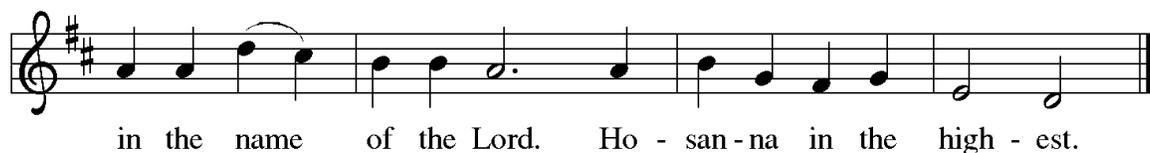
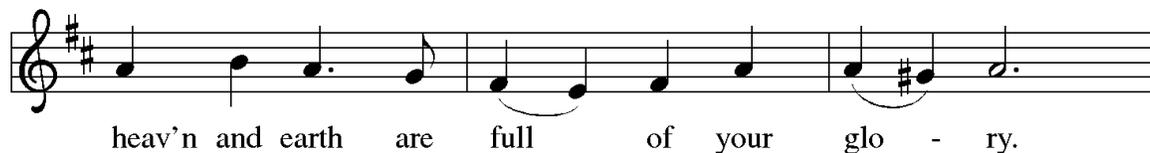
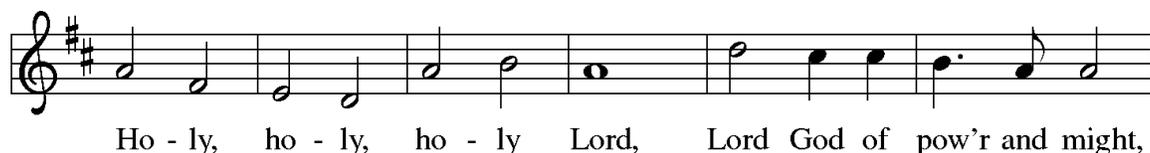
Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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,
who in the night in which he was betrayed...
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks...
Do this for the remembrance of me.
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.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



**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

The assembly is seated and welcomed to God's table.

ELW 487 *What Feast of Love*

ELW 477 *I Received the Living God*

PRAYER

The assembly stands.

Radiant God,
**with our eyes we have seen your salvation,
and in this meal we have feasted on your grace.
May your Word take flesh in us, that we may be your holy people,
revealing your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ,
our Savior and Lord.
Amen.**

BLESSING

May the Word that Mary brought to birth
carry you into new and abundant life.
May the Word that Joseph cradled in his arms
enfold you with love and strength.
May the Word that angels proclaimed in song
bring harmony to our world.
And the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, the † Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.
Amen.

SENDING HYMN **ELW 288** *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Please take this paper with you or place it in the basket at the exit.