

WELCOME

PEACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH – DECEMBER 25, 2023

MEET US

Our family is loved by Christ and we love each other. We hold firmly to God's Word of truth, which convicts us of our sin and comforts us with God's forgiveness in Christ. We embrace the rich heritage of hymns and liturgy that has guided the worship of the Church for generations. We are passionate about Christian education, wanting young and old to grow in their knowledge of God's Word. As a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS), we enjoy fellowship with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS).

TODAY'S WORSHIP

Will anyone of us celebrate Christmas this year without presents? The giving of gifts seems intimately connected with the celebration of Christmas. Many believe the tradition stems from the actions of the wisemen who came bringing their gifts in celebration of the birth of their Savior. It's fun to give gifts at Christmas, but Christmas is really about God's gift to us of his Son, our Savior.

Treasure God's Gift for You.

VISITOR INFORMATION

Restrooms are located to the right as you leave the sanctuary and are equipped with child changing tables.

Parent Room is located on the left as you exit the sanctuary doors. This room is equipped with a livestream of the service.

For the hearing impaired, an induction loop is provided. Just switch your hearing aid to "T".

For other special needs or questions, our ushers are here to assist you. Don't hesitate to ask.





Christmas Day

Christmas Day (December 25th) is the day we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. His birth is important, because it means the fulfillment of God's promises concerning the coming of the Messiah. It is also important, because the one who is born is no ordinary human child, but God in the flesh. It is most important though, because the one who is born is our Savior. This child is born to win for us, and for all, eternal salvation. He would do so by living a perfect life in our place, dying an innocent death for our sins, and rising again to life from the dead. God has promised that all who trust in Jesus will be saved. His birth is truly something to celebrate!

DIVINE SERVICE

WE COME BEFORE THE LORD

HYMN

Joy to the World | ELH 138:1

1. 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.

HYMN

O Sing a Song of Bethlehem | Kingsfold
v.1 – Kingsfold, v.2 – Men, v.3 – Women, v.4 – All

1. O sing a song of Bethlehem,
Of shepherds watching there,
And of the news that came to them
From angels in the air;
The light that shone on Bethlehem
Fills all the world today;
Of Jesus' birth and peace on earth
The angels sing always.

3. O sing a song of Galilee,
Of lake and woods and hill,
Of him who walked upon the sea
And bade the waves be still:
For though, like waves on Galilee,
Dark seas of trouble roll,
When faith has heard the Master's word,
Falls peace upon the soul.

2. O sing a song of Nazareth,
Of sunny days of joy,
O sing of fragrant flowers' breath,
And of the sinless boy:
For now the flow'rs of Nazareth
In ev'ry heart may grow;
Now spreads the fame of his dear name
On all the winds that blow.

**4. O sing a song of Calvary,
It's glory and dismay;
Of him who hung upon the tree,
And took our sins away:
For he who died on Calvary
Is risen from the grave,
And Christ, our lord, by heav'n adored,
Is mighty now to save.**

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father, the Creator of Light,
In the name of the Son, the Light of the world,
In the name of the Holy Spirit, the One who enlightens our hearts.

Amen.

CONFESSION OF SIN

We have seen His star in the east
And have come to worship Him.

But we come with tainted lives and empty hands.

O Christ Child in the manger, we are not worthy to bow before You. We have sinned against You in our desires, words, and actions. We do not deserve to be called Your brothers and sisters. Yet we have longed for Your coming and need Your perfect life and innocent death to cover our multitude of sins. Have mercy on us.

HYMN

Joy to the World | ELH 138:3

**3. No more let sins and sorrows 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.**

ABSOLUTION

"Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people. Today, in the city of David a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord." It is in His stead and by His command, that I, a called servant of the Word, forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE

While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks | Tate & Peterson

1. While shepherds watched their flocks by night, all seated on the ground,
An angel of the Lord came down and glory shown around.
Fear not, said he, for mighty dread had seized their troubled minds,
Glad tidings of joy I bring to you and all mankind.

2. To you in David's town this day is born of David's line
The Savior who is Christ, the Lord, and this shall be the sign
The heavenly babe you there shall find to human view displayed
All meantly wrapped in swaddling bands and in a manger laid.

Chorus

**Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Christ is born!
Hallelujah, sing Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Christ is born!
All glory be to God on high, and to the earth be peace.
Goodwill, henceforth, from God to man, begin and never cease.**

Chorus 2

**Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Christ is born!
All glory be to God on high, and to the earth be peace,
Goodwill, henceforth, from God to man, begin and never cease.**

“While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks”

Words: N. Tate

Music: Andrew Peterson

Music © 2005 New Spring

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PRAYER

Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your one and only Son in the flesh may set us free from our old bondage under the yoke of sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Evangelical Heritage Version © 2019

OLD TESTAMENT READING Bethlehem Was the Birthplace of the God-Man | Micah 5:2-5a

But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, from you, will go out the one who will be the ruler for me in Israel. His goings forth are from the beginning, from the days of eternity. ³Therefore the LORD will give them up, until the time when the woman who is in labor bears a child. Then the remaining survivors from his brothers will return to the people of Israel. ⁴He will stand and shepherd with the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. They will dwell securely, for at that time he will be great to the ends of the earth. ⁵This one will be their peace.

KINGSFOLD

Mary Did You Know? | Green & Lowry

Mary did you know that your baby boy
Would one day walk on water?
Mary did you know that your baby boy
Would save our sons and daughters?
Did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new?
This child that you delivered will soon deliver you.

Mary did you know that your baby boy
Will give sight to a blind man?
Mary did you know that your baby boy will calm the storm with his hand?
Did you know that your baby boy has walked where angels trod?
When you kiss your little baby
You kiss the face of God.

The blind will see, the deaf will hear
The dead will live again
The lame will leap, the dumb will speak
The praises of the Lamb.

Mary did you know that your baby boy
Is Lord of all creation?
Mary did you know that your baby boy
Would one day rule the nations?
Did you know that your baby boy is heaven's
Perfect Lamb?
That sleeping child you're holding is the great, "I Am."

"Mary Did You Know"

Words: Green

Music: Lowry

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EPISTLE READING

The Son of God was Born of a Women | Galatians 4:4-7

But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son to be born of a woman, so that he would be born under the law, ⁵ in order to redeem those under the law, so that we would be adopted as sons. ⁶ And because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts to shout, "Abba, Father!" ⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son. And if you are a son, then you are also an heir of God through Christ.

HYMN

1. Long time ago in Bethlehem
As the Holy Bible say,
Mary's Boy Child, Jesus Christ,
Was born on Christmas Day.

CHORUS

**Hark now hear the angels sing:
New King born today.
And man will live forevermore.
Because of Christmas Day.**

2. While shepherds watched their flocks by night
Below the brightly shining stars,
They heard a choir from heaven sing.
The music came from afar.

Chorus

3. Now Joseph and his wife Mary
Came to Bethlehem that night.
They found no place to bear her child.
Not a single room was in sight.

4. Bye and bye they found a little nook
In a stable all forlorn.
And in that stable cold and dark
Mary's little Boy Child was born.

SPECIAL CHORUS

**Trumpet sound and angels sing!
Listen to what they say:
That man will live forevermore
Because of Christmas Day.**

Chorus

"Mary's Little Boy Child"

Words & Music: Jester Hairston

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GOSPEL

Christ, the Word, Becomes Flesh | John 1:1-18

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ³Through him everything was made, and without him not one thing was made that has been made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind. ⁵The light is shining in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. ⁶There was a man, sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as an eyewitness to testify about the light so that everyone would believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light. ⁹The real light that shines on everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, yet his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. ¹³They were born, not of blood, or of the desire of the flesh, or of a husband's will, but born of God. ¹⁴The Word became flesh and dwelled among us. We have seen his glory, the glory he has as the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵John testified about him. He cried out, "This was the one I spoke about when I said, 'The one coming after me outranks me because he existed before me.'" ¹⁶For out of his fullness we have all received grace upon grace. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. The only-begotten Son, who is close to the Father's side, has made him known.

HYMN

To You, O God, We Raise | M. Madson

- 1. To You, O God, we raise
Our voices rich with praise
Our Father who in heaven above,
Now freely grants us grace.**
- 2. With angels 'round your throne;
And those who've been called home
Along with prophets priests and kings
We pray Your will be done.**
- 3. O, Christ, true God and man;
The sinner's one true friend
Proclaim to us Your Word is true
And take us all to heaven.**

EXHORDIUM¹

EXHORIDUM HYMN

O Rejoice, Ye Christians Loudly | ELH 163:1-2

1. O rejoice, ye Christians, loudly,
For our joy hath now begun;
Wondrous things our God hath done.
Tell abroad His goodness proudly,
Who our race hath honored thus,
That He deigns to dwell with us.

Refrain

Joy, O joy, beyond all gladness,
Christ hath done away with sadness!
Hence, all sorrow and repining,
For the Sun of Grace is shining!

2. See, my soul, thy Savior chooses
Weakness here and poverty;
In such love He comes to thee.
Nor the manger bed refuses,
All He suffers for thy good
To redeem thee by His blood.

Refrain

SERMON

Treasure God's Gift for You | Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the undeserved gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

WE GIVE THANKS

HYMN

Creed | Kingsfold

1. I believe in God the Father, Maker of the heav'n and earth,
An in Jesus Christ, our Savior, God's own Son of human birth.
Virgin-born, the Lord incarnate, whom the Spirit did conceive;
Suffered under Pontius Pilate — he's the God whom I believe.

¹ The Exordium is an "introduction" for the festival day. This is a tradition of Norwegian Lutherans that dates to the 16th century.

**2. Crucified, was dead and buried; down to hell in victory;
From the dead He rose the third day; up
To heav'n triumphantly.
There at God's right hand He's ruling, by His will the world is led.
He will come to judge the nations; both the living and the dead.**

**3. I believe in God the Spirit; in His Church, His chosen band.
They are joined in sweet communion, holy in His sight they stand.
I believe in sins forgiven, I believe I'll rise again;
I believe in life eternal, Amen! Amen! Amen!**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH – CHRISTMAS

On this holy day, dear Father, we rejoice to hear the good news of great joy that a Savior has been born for us. For fulfilling Your prophecies and in the fullness of time sending Your Son to be our Savior, we give You our heartfelt thanks and praise.

Unto us a child is born! Unto us a Son is given!

What a great mystery of our faith this is: that God has become fully human for our salvation! Even though He is the all-powerful Lord of all, He is wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger.

Help us always believe that this precious child was born as our substitute to be our Savior.

In the midst of our joy, we grieve for the many people in our world who do not know that Jesus has come to bring them forgiveness and healing. As the shepherds spread abroad the good news of the birth of the Savior born for all the world, may we also make use of the unique opportunities this holiday presents to tell others of what we have seen and heard concerning the child.

Grant that the true peace between God and fallen mankind may comfort all people.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow

As the angels sang out their praise, move us also to sing out our praise to You, today and every day, as the joy of Christmas remains in our hearts.

Glory to God in the highest! Amen.

OFFERING & FRIENDSHIP REGISTER

WE RECEIVE THE SACRAMENT

*Visitors, please speak with one of our pastors before receiving the Sacrament with us.
We welcome members of the ELS and WELS to join us at the Lord's Table.*

EXHORTATION

Dear communicant members of Peace and those of our fellowship, in order that you may receive this holy Sacrament worthily, it is good that you consider what you must now believe and do. From the words of Christ, "This is My body, which is given for you; this is My blood, which is shed for you," you should believe that Jesus Christ is Himself present with His body and blood, as the words declare.

From Christ's words "for the remission of sins" you should believe that Jesus Christ truly gives you His body and blood to confirm unto you the forgiveness of all your sins.

And finally, you should do as Christ commands you when He says "Take, eat; drink of it, all of you," and "this do in remembrance of Me."

If you believe these words of Christ, and do as He therein has commanded, then you have rightly examined yourselves and may worthily eat Christ's body and drink His blood for the forgiveness of all your sins. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER HYMN

Dear Father in Heaven | A. Harstad

**1. Dear Father in heaven, your holy domain,
Here also, among us, make holy your Name.
Expand your Grace Kingdom across this globe's face,
Till all hear of Jesus and your boundless grace.**

**2. As your will is done there at heaven's high throne,
Unfold your good will here in our world below.
Our daily bread give us. Forgive us our sins,
As we forgive others when guilty they've been.**

**3. And into temptation do not lead us, LORD.
Escape from all evil provide through your Word.
For yours is the Kingdom, the power, the fame
Forever and ever, dear Father. Amen.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples saying: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me." In the same way also He took the cup after supper, gave thanks, and gave it to them saying: "Drink of it all of you; this cup is the New Testament in My blood, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins. This do as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

DISTRIBUTION

DISTRIBUTION MUSIC

Music by Kingsfold

WE GIVE THANKS

PRAYER

We thank you, Lord God Almighty, that You have refreshed us with these Your salutary gifts; and we beseech You of Your mercy, to strengthen us through the same in faith toward You, and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord.

Amen.

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

Amen.

HYMN

Joy to the World | ELH 138:4

**4. 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.**

WE THANK THOSE WHO SERVE

Kingsfold

Mike Madson | Guitar & Harmonica

Dr. Eric Harstad | Bass Guitar

Prof. Adie Harstad | Guitar

Rachel Kerkow | Vocalist

Ushers

Job & Thomas Wosmek

Communion Assistants

Eric Woller & Brian Devos