



ST. MICHAEL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Our mission is to celebrate and share God's love in Jesus Christ



Christmas Eve 2025

4:30 PM

Service of Holy Communion with Nativity & Candle Lighting

WELCOME TO ST. MICHAEL'S!

If you are visiting with us for the first time, please share in all that is ours in Christ! We invite you to consider making St. Michael's your church home. Please ask us about our participation in God's mission in the world. By God's grace we celebrate and share Christ.

Our worship service is streamed live to St. Michael's Facebook and YouTube pages. Please keep conversation to a minimum in the sanctuary, you may be picked up by our sound system. If you prefer not to be seen on camera please speak to an usher and they will seat you outside of the video frame. Thank you for your understanding.

DIGITAL SIGN IN

You are welcome to sign in to worship digitally. Please use the QR Code that can be found here in the bulletin or the iPad located in the narthex.



IMPORTANT LITURGY NOTES:

Our liturgy includes Holy Communion. Everyone is welcome at Christ's table. Communion will be distributed continuously under the direction of the usher. Take an empty cup to receive from a pouring chalice Please assist our younger communicants. Children and Adults who do not yet receive Holy Communion are welcome to receive a blessing. Please let the Pastor know if you require a gluten free host.

Candle Lighting is a tradition on Christmas Eve at St. Michael's. LED Candles are available for our younger children and those with unsteady hands. Remember not to tilt lighted candles. Also, please do not handle the pew torches. They contain hot liquid.

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INTRODUCTION

This celebratory worship is particularly designed to share the Christmas message with our families with children. The proclamation tonight will be focused on Luke's Christmas Gospel. Families with younger children are encouraged to use tonight's proclamation as a resource for further conversation about the meaning of Christmas when at home.

Everyone is invited to find opportunities to proclaim Jesus and to respond to God's love for us through service, fellowship, worship and learning. Remember the season of Christmas begins on December 25 and is twelve days long (ending on January 5). Use this time to celebrate together as much as possible.

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. 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.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

Allen Carr

GATHERING

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

The assembly is invited to stand.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✙ one God, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty Savior, Prince of Peace. **Amen.**

Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Reconciling God, **we yearn for your presence to transform our grief, pain, and despair. We confess that we have not always prepared room in our hearts for your love; we have not always recognized your presence among us; we have not always embraced your message of peace. We cry out, weary with the burden of violence, oppression, and fear. We confess our failure to make room for those seeking refuge; our participation in violent systems that harm your innocent ones; our reluctance to embody your good news. Be born in us today and teach us to sing the joyful song of**

your salvation. Amen.

God's grace upon grace flows over you. ✚ Christ's presence redeems the whole creation. Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad. **Amen.**

Carol:

"O, Come, All Ye Faithful"

ELW 283

**1 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:**

**2 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***

REFRAIN:

**O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!**

**3 Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God
in the highest: *Refrain***



GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is born! **Alleluia! Christ is born!**

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.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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. **Amen.**

The assembly is seated.

WORD

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

READING 1: Isaiah 9:2–7

This poem promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth of a royal child with a name full of promise. While Judah's king will practice justice and righteousness, the real basis for faith lies in God's passion for the people: The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this!

A reading from Isaiah.

²The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness —
on them light has shined.

³You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors

and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

A NATIVITY FOR ALL AGES

The traditional retelling of the Christmas story as a pageant is reimagined with members from the gathered worshipping assembly of all ages. Listen to our narrators and reflect on how we are all impacted by our relationship with this story, the story of our saviors' birth year after year.

Part I

Pastor calls for the prophets to come forward and the congregation sings

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

**O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!**

Pastor calls for the Star, Mary, and Joseph to come forward and the congregation sings:

“Away in a Manger”

**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.**

Part II

Pastor calls for the Animals (except for the sheep) to come forward and the congregation sings:

“The Friendly Beasts”

**“I,” said the donkey, shaggy and brown,
“I carried his mother uphill and down,
I carried his mother to Bethlehem town; I,”
said the donkey shaggy and brown.**

**“I,” said the cow, all white and red,
“I gave him my manger for his bed,
I gave him hay to pillow his head; I,”
said the cow, all white and red.**

Pastor calls for the trees to come forward and the congregation sings:

“It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”

**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,
good will to men from heaven’s all gracious King.” The world in solemn stillness lay,
to hear the angels sing.**

Part III

Pastor calls for the Angels to come forward and the congregation sings:

“Hark the Herald Angels Sing”

**Hark the herald angels sing, glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful, all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies.
With angelic host proclaim, Christ is born in Bethlehem.
Hark the herald angels sing, glory to the newborn King!**

Pastor calls for the Shepherds and the Sheep to come forward and the congregation sings:

“O Come All Ye Faithful”

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.
O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

Part IV

Pastor calls for the Wise Ones to come forward and the congregation sings:

“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

**Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today;
on and ass before him bow,
and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!
Christ is born today!**

The assembly is invited to stand.

Carol:

“Joy to the World”

ELW 267

- | | |
|--|---|
| 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. | 3 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. |
| 2 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. | 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. |

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Empowered by the news of Christ's birth, let us pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need. responding with, "Your mercy is great." *A brief silence.*

Gathering God, you bring your people from every corner of the earth together before the manger that you have made a throne. Unite the church in love as we rejoice in the news of your coming. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Creating God, you brought forth the earth and all that is in it. Join our voices with the roaring seas, the exulting fields, and the trees of the forest singing for joy on this holy night. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Transforming God, the world trembles amid violence and war. Empower our hands, feet, and hearts with your Spirit to shatter the rod of the oppressor and turn swords into plowshares, especially in Palestine, Israel, Sudan, Myanmar, Congo, Ukraine, Yemen, and Syria. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Shepherding God, you lead us to your love in the face of our neighbor. Send us into the world to find your Word made flesh in one another, especially those who are sick or struggling especially...those we name aloud...and those we hold in our heart. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Nurturing God, you dwell with us in humble places. Sustain housing and clothing ministries in this community, that all find shelter and warmth. We pray especially for youth seeking safety and care. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Abiding God, you remain at the side of all the departed. Grant all who mourn hope in the resurrection and peace in Christ Jesus. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

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

The assembly is seated.

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Coventry Carol"

Rebekah Bruesehoff & Pastor Chris

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

Offering is being gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. You are invited to place your offering in one of the offering plates located in the rear of the Sanctuary or send your offering to the church office through the mail or by having your bank mail a check directly. You can also contribute using any of the electronic giving options found on our church website.

The assembly is invited to stand.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS

Carol:

“What Child Is This”

ELW 296

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| 1 | What child is this, who, laid to rest,
on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud,
the babe, the son of Mary! | 2 | So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high,
the virgin sings her lullaby;
joy, joy, for Christ is born,
the babe, the son of Mary! |
|---|--|---|--|

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray: God of glory, great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior.

Amen.

DIALOGUE

Shepherds quaked and angels sang when love came down.

O come, let us adore him.

His mother opened her heart to the glories revealed.

O come, let us adore him.

God's gift to us is revealed in bread broken and wine poured.

O come, let us adore him.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

In 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.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

God is now in flesh appearing. Come to the feast of joy!

The assembly is seated.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

All who are guided by faith to receive the Lord's Supper are welcome at Christ's table. We give thanks as we receive the real presence of our resurrected Lord in, with, and under the bread and the wine. Communion will be distributed continuously under the direction of the usher. Take an empty cup to receive from a pouring chalice. Please let the pastor know if you require a gluten free host. When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say "The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you." and each person may respond, "Amen". Worshipers who are not yet communing are invited to come forward for a blessing.

MUSIC:

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

"The First Noel"

Allen Carr, soprano saxophone

The assembly is invited to stand.

TABLE BLESSING

The Body and Blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in Christ's Grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Incarnate God, you are among us at this table. May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence. Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us.

Amen.

SENDING

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

CANDLE LIGHTING

Pastor will light a candle from the altar and then light the ushers' candles. Together they will share this light with the rest of the gathered assembly. They will give light to worshipers nearest the aisle, who will pass it on to the others in that pew. Tilt unlit candles to lit candles. Please keep lit candles upright.

Carol:

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

ELW 281

Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,
1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,
ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.
all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,

Hol - der Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher
Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your

Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh,
peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792-1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820-1885 Music: Franz Gruber, 1787-1863.

BLESSING

The triune God, glorious Mystery, holy Incarnate One, abiding Comforter, ✠ bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy.

Amen.

SENDING CAROL:

"Go Tell It on the Mountain"

ELW 290

Refrain

Go tell it on the mountain,
 over the hills and ev'rywhere;
 go tell it on the mountain
 that Jesus Christ is born!

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

DISMISSAL

Glory to God in the highest!

And peace to God's people on earth!

Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

Elijah Bruesehoff, trumpet

A Word of Thanks

Many have given of their time and talent to make this sacred celebration of our Savior's birth special. Our appreciation goes out to those who coordinated and assisted in decorating the sanctuary and narthex. Thanks to all who shared in the many tasks involved in getting ready and to those who shared their gifts in worship leadership and music. Special thanks to our musicians, Elijah Bruesehoff, Rebekah Bruesehoff, and Allen Carr.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Our Sanctuary is adorned with forty Poinsettia plants to help us celebrate the birth of Christ. It has been a long standing tradition at St. Michael's that our poinsettia plants are sponsored by donors in honor or memory of loved ones and friends. We give thanks for the generosity shown to help make our worship space festive and beautiful. After the 10:00 PM worship service, Christmas Eve we welcome you to pick up your poinsettia. Remaining plants may be adopted.

- ◆ Kathleen Abrams in honor of friends and family.
- ◆ Trudy & Allen Carr in honor of The Nicene Creed.
- ◆ Jim & Vicki Clemson in honor of our grandchildren, Bennett and Brooklyn.
- ◆ Kelly Daly & Ray Kratz in memory of William Allyn Daly, William & Dorothy Daly, Allyn & MaryAnn Burgstahler, John & Florence Katz, Jack Kratz & Donna Chase; in honor of Madelynn & Nate DeBacker, Isla & Bodie Westerfer, Bill & Donna Daly, The Congregation of St. Michael's, and Military members spending the holiday deployed.
- ◆ Leon & Linda David in honor of our Grandchildren.
- ◆ Terri Erickson in memory of Verene Schoenmann.
- ◆ Larry & Marie Ferguson in honor of their grandchildren, Parker and CJ.
- ◆ Gary & Laura Fogg in memory of Family & Friends.
- ◆ Lauren & Nancy Gromen in memory of Clare Colestock.
- ◆ Erlinda Hair in memory of Francisco & Guadalupe Silverio.
- ◆ Linda Kassekert in memory of Loved Ones.
- ◆ William Kraenbring in memory of Alfred & Bertha Kraenbring.
- ◆ Kay & Wayne McConnell in memory of all our Loved Ones; in honor of Jimmy McConnell's 30th birthday.
- ◆ Catherine & Richard Michel in memory of our son, Ricky; in honor of our grandchildren and great-grandchildren.
- ◆ Ruth Morgenroth in memory of Thel Naltemeier, Carl & Stella Sundstrom.

- ♦ Mary Beth Neilson in memory of my beloved Uncle Harley E. Shepherd and loved ones; in honor of Anna Charlotte Howard.
- ♦ Lillian & Bruce Ogden in memory of Kathryn & Bruce Odgen, Anna & Frederick Schoenfeld; in honor of Kyle, Kelsey, Maddie, Owen, Mya, Ryley, and Reid-- our grandchildren.
- ♦ Dennis Purves in memory of William & Jessie Purves.
- ♦ Harry Schute, Jr. & Hadeel Mohyoldeen in memory of Harry & Lucille Schute.
- ♦ Paul Schrenk in memory of my beloved husband, David Vreeland; my mother, Dolores Winter-Schrenk; my grandmother, Elsie Winter; and my aunts & uncles.
- ♦ Bev Stropes in honor of Vicki Stropes and Jeff Grossman.
- ♦ John Winkelman in memory of Linda Winkelman.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.