

**SOLOMON'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
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TELLING EVERY  
ONE in JERUSALEM THAT  
the MESSIAH HAD ARRIVED

L U K E 2 : 3 8

*"Solomon's Evangelical Lutheran Church, following the example of Jesus Christ, seeks to live in the confidence and fullness of God's grace; to preach the Good News boldly and truthfully; to support and serve others in faith; to work in harmony with all creation."*

**FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS**  
**DECEMBER 31, 2023**

**December 31, 2023**  
First Sunday of Christmas

*The psalmist calls on the natural world, celestial bodies, fire and earth, creatures, and all humanity, to praise God. The voices of Simeon and 84-year-old Anna join the chorus today, recognizing what God is doing in Jesus. Simeon's song is often sung after communion, for we have seen God's salvation in the assembled community and have held Jesus in our hands in the bread. Then, like the prophet Anna, we tell of Jesus to all who look for the healing of the world.*

**GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,  
the Word made flesh,  
our life and our salvation.

**Amen.**

Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior,  
let us confess our sin.

God of life,  
**you promise good news of great joy for all people,  
and call us to be messengers of your peace.**  
**We confess that too often we hoard our joy,  
our resources, and our security.**  
**We nurture conflict and build barriers.**  
**We neglect the needs of our neighbors  
and ignore the groaning of creation.**  
**Have mercy on us.**  
**Where we are self-centered, open our hearts.**  
**Where we are reluctant, give us courage.**  
**Where we are cynical, restore our trust.**  
**Renew us with your grace  
and give us again the hope of eternal life in you.**  
**Amen.**

Hear the good news:  
We are children of God and heirs of God's promises  
through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.  
In ✠ Jesus we are forgiven and redeemed.  
Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth  
shall know the salvation of God.  
**Amen.**

## GATHERING SONG *What Child Is This* (ELW 296)



- 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar - y's lap is sleep - ing?
- 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?
- 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas - ant, king, to own him.



Whom an - gels greet with an-thems sweet while shep-herds watch are keep - ing?  
Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.  
The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en-throne him.



This, this is Christ the king, whom shep-herds guard and an - gels sing;  
Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;  
Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837–1898

Music: GREENSLEEVES, English ballad, 16th cent.

## 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.**

# CANTICLE OF PRAISE

87

## Let there be praise

F C/E F Dm Dm/F Gm Gm<sup>2</sup> Gm C

Let there be praise, let there be joy in our hearts.

The first system of music is in 4/4 time, featuring a treble and bass clef. The melody is in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are written below the treble staff.

Am Am<sup>7</sup> Dm Dm/F E<sup>b</sup>M<sup>9</sup> E<sup>b</sup> C<sup>sus</sup><sub>2</sub> C

Sing to the Lord, give God the glo - ry. glo - ry.

The second system of music continues the melody and bass line. The lyrics are written below the treble staff.

F C/E F Dm Dm/F Gm Gm<sup>2</sup> Gm C

Let there be praise, let there be joy in our hearts.

The third system of music repeats the first system's melody and bass line. The lyrics are written below the treble staff.

Am Am<sup>7</sup> Dm Dm/F Gm F/A B<sup>b</sup> F/C C<sup>7</sup> F

For - ev - er - more let his love fill the air, and let there be praise.

The fourth system of music concludes the piece with a final chord. The lyrics are written below the treble staff.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.


Almighty God, you wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and yet more wonderfully restored it. In your mercy, let us share the divine life of the one who came to share our humanity, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**


## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

### Go Tell It on the Mountain

*Refrain*



Go tell it on the moun - tain, o-ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;



go tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!

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## GOSPEL: Luke 2:22-40

The holy gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Luke's narrative continues with stories that emphasize Jesus' connection to Judaism. His family is devout in its observance of the law, and Jesus himself is recognized as one who will bring glory to Israel.*

<sup>22</sup>When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, [Joseph and Mary] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord <sup>23</sup>(as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), <sup>24</sup>and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

<sup>25</sup>Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him.

<sup>26</sup>It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. <sup>27</sup>Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law,

<sup>28</sup>Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

<sup>29</sup>“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,  
according to your word;

<sup>30</sup>for my eyes have seen your salvation,

<sup>31</sup>which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

<sup>32</sup>a light for revelation to the Gentiles

and for glory to your people Israel.”

<sup>33</sup>And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him.

<sup>34</sup>Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed <sup>35</sup>so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

<sup>36</sup>There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, <sup>37</sup>then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting

and prayer night and day. <sup>38</sup>At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

<sup>39</sup>When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup>The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

The gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**HYMN OF THE DAY** *Peace Came to Earth* (ELW 285)



1 Peace came to earth at last that cho - sen night  
2 And who could be the same for hav - ing held  
3 You show the Fa - ther none has ev - er seen,  
4 How else could I have known you, O my God!



when an - gels clove the sky with song and light  
the in - fant in their arms, and lat - er felt  
in flesh and blood you bore our griefs and pains,  
How else could I have loved you, O my God!



and God em - bod - ied love and sheathed his might—  
the wound - ed hands and side, all doubts dis - pelled—  
in bread and wine you vis - it us a - gain—  
How else could I em - brace you, O my God!



Who could but gasp: Im - man - u - el!  
Who could but sigh: Im - man - u - el!  
Who could but see: Im - man - u - el!  
Who could but pray: Im - man - u - el!



Who could but sing: Im - man - u - el!  
Who could but shout: Im - man - u - el!  
Who could but thrill: Im - man - u - el!  
Who could but praise: Im - man - u - el!

**CHOIR CANTATA** *Jesus Makes Christmas A Holy Day* By Mike Speck

Please join me as we confirm our faith together in the words of the Apostles' Creed.

## **CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.\*  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## **PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH** *(Please respond.)*

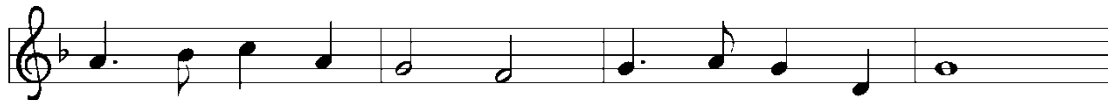
*P: Hear us, O God. C: Your mercy is great.*

## **PEACE**

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

## OFFERTORY (*intro*)

### In the Bleak Midwinter



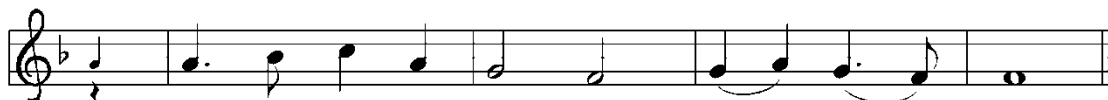
3 What . . . can I give him, poor . . . as I am?



If I were a shep - herd I would bring a lamb;



if I were a wise . . . man I would do my part;



yet what I can I give him— give my heart.

Text: Christina Georgina Rossetti, 1830–1894  
Music: CRANHAM, Gustav Holst, 1874–1934

## OFFERING PRAYER

God of abundance,  
Receive and bless these gifts we have offered.  
Join our hearts with the song of the angels,  
And gather us at your table of celebration.  
Strengthen us to share with all the world  
The abundance of your grace upon grace,  
Poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.  
**Amen.**

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.**



## **PREFACE**

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.  
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:

### **HOLY, HOLY, HOLY** – *Sung to the Tune of Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of heav'n and earth adored.  
O how blest is he who comes in the holy name of God.  
Joyful, all you nations rise; join the triumph of the skies;  
With angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

## **THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

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.

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

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

**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**

Glory to God in the highest!  
Come to the table of peace.

## **COMMUNION**

*Continuous - Please continue down center aisle at the direction of the usher. After you receive the bread, you may take a cup of red wine or white grape juice from the tray. Please place your empty communion cup in the basket. Gluten free wafers are available, ask the Pastor when you come forward. Notify the Head Usher if you would appreciate receiving Communion at your seat rather than walking up to the altar, the Pastor and Communion Assistant will be happy to bring Communion to you.*

## **COMMUNION CAROLS**

*We will sing 1<sup>st</sup> verse of familiar carols*

## **COMMUNION BLESSING**

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

## POST COMMUNION CANTICLE

### We Rejoice in the Grace of God

The musical score is written on five staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are: We re-joice in the grace of God poured up - on our lives; lov - ing - kind - ness has come to us be - cause of Je - sus Christ. We re - joice in the grace of God, our hearts o - ver - flow. What a joy to know the grace of God!

Text: Steve Cook and Vicki Cook

Music: WE REJOICE IN THE GRACE, Steve Cook and Vicki Cook

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## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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.  
**Amen.**

## BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord's face shine on you  
with grace and mercy.  
The Lord look upon you with favor  
and ✝ give you peace.  
**Amen.**

## SENDING SONG *The Bells of Christmas: Det kimer nu til julefest* (ELW 298)



*Det ki - mer nu til ju - le - fest, det ki - mer*  
1 The bells of Christ - mas chime once more; the heav'n - ly  
2 This world, though wide and far out - spread, could scarce - ly  
3 Now let us go with qui - et mind, the swad - dled  
4 Oh, join with me, in glad - ness sing, to keep our



*for den høj - e gæst, som steg til la - ve*  
guest is at the door. He comes to earth - ly  
find for you a bed. Your cra - dle was a  
babe with shep - herds find, to gaze on him who  
Christ - mas with our king, un - til our song, from



*hyt - ter ned med nyt - års - ga - ver: fryd og fred.*  
dwell - ings still with new year gifts of peace, good will.  
man - ger stall, no pearl nor silk nor king - ly hall.  
glad - dens them, the love - liest flow'r of Jes - se's stem.  
lov - ing souls, like rush - ing might - y wa - ter rolls!

### SENDING IN SERVICE

Christ the Savior is born!  
Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.  
**Thanks be to God.**

### EXTINGUISHING THE CANDLE/SILENT PRAYER

### POSTLUDE

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## SERVING TODAY

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Organist .....	Doug Mummert
Head Usher .....	Janice McEntire
Acolyte .....	Wayne Dale
Lector.....	
Securing Offering .....	Janice McEntire & Ron Coldsmith
Communion Set-Up.....	Peggi & Wayne Norman
Communion Clean-Up .....	Peggi & Wayne Norman
Communion Bread .....	Peggi Norman
Communion Assist .....	Peggi Norman & Ilona Laney
Attendance last Sunday.....	54

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**The altar flowers** this morning are placed to the Glory of God in honor of Doug & Zoe for all they have done for Solomon's Church.

**Welcome Visitors!** We welcome you to our worship service. We hope your visit with us will be a time of blessing. If you have any concerns, please talk to the Head Usher. We invite you to worship with us again!

**Prayer requests for the following:** *Tim Tweedy, Missy Moreui, Becky Ensinger, Ron Bunting, Rose Wishard, Bobby Seilhamer, Sam Mull, Lilly Chiado, Bernie Harris, Phyllis Brehm, Catherine Plummer, Bonnie Hudson, Marty Wenger, Virginia Detwiler, Callie Mummert, Matthew, Lexi and Brooke Bowen, Jim & Carole Darr, Beth Floyd, Sarge and Barb Weaver, Tina Smith, Patricia Yetter, Nancy Marshall, Darrell Veilleux, Linda Wepking, Bill and Jane Brindle, Esther Gift, Jean Jackson, Marjorie McMullin, Joe Mock, Ina Shreiner, Genny Grant, Frances Kramer, Linda Russ, Carol Locke, Betty Amt, Ukrainian Nation, Peace for the World.* If anyone has a prayer request, please call Janice McEntire. **Please Be Aware: If you would like to remain listed on the next month's list, or if you would like to have your name removed from the list before the end of the month, please call the office.**

### **Weekly Calendar Reminders:**

January 4 - Finance 6PM

**If you are not taking your altar flowers home,** please let Kathy Bowen know to whom or to where you would like them donated. Thanks.

**If you are in need of pastoral care**, please notify Pastor Mike Allwein at 717-357-3814. **Sunday Morning Bible Study** - Pastor Mike 's Bible study is held every Sunday, beginning at 9:00am. We conclude at 9:50, in order to prepare for worship. We look at one of the Scripture texts for the following Sunday. If you cannot join us every week, please join us when you are able! The Bible is our Book of Faith!

**Copies of today's sermon can be found in the office room at the rear of the worship space.** Pick one up before service if this will be helpful in hearing the sermon; or, pick one up to take home if you wish to use it reflect on throughout this upcoming week.

**There are still copies of Pastor Mike's book of "*Musings*."** If you have not yet gotten one, please pick one up from the Sunday School room before leaving church this morning.

**Immediately following worship today, we will enjoy a family dinner in the Fellowship Hall.** This will be a time to be together on the final day of 2023, a time to give thanks for the many gifts bestowed upon this congregation this past year!

**It has been an honor to serve as Director of Music for the last 30 years.** Without a doubt, I am grateful for this time at Solomon's, and the opportunity to serve. This has been a blessing, and I will always look back on my time here with fond memories. The time spent working with the amazing musicians of Solomon's, has been some of the most rewarding and fulfilling of my ministry. Doug

**Thank you, Doug!** Because today is Doug Mummert's final Sunday leading the music for our worship services, there will be a basket in the Sunday School room for cards and well wishes, in appreciation for his many years of dedication to Solomon's worship life.

**No Choir Practice on Thursday (1/4/24),** we will start the new year on Thursday, January 11, 2024 at 7PM. All singers welcome!

**The 2024 Chart for Altar flowers is in the office to the left when entering the front door of the sanctuary.** The cost of the two vases will be \$50.00 per week. You will continue to provide Kimberly with the information for the bulletin prior to the week before the Sunday you choose. Include the cost of \$50.00 with the bulletin information.

**Power Pack Meals:** The need for nutritious food for New Franklin Elementary School students in need starting in September. Please consider donating individual serving size fruit and vegetable cups, individual packages of mac-n-cheese, Chef Boyardee, 8 oz bottles of water, juice boxes, and yahoo chocolate drink. Monetary donations are accepted as well, please write "power pack meals" in the memo of your check.

**DECEMBER 31, 2023**  
**FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS**



*Praise God for salvation and all of creation.*

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS**

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Luke 2:22-40</b>	<b>Jesus presented in the temple</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Isaiah 61:10—63:3</b>	<b>Rejoice in the Lord</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Galatians 4:4-7</b>	<b>Adoption as God's children</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Psalms 24</b>	<b>Entrance into the temple</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Romans 8:18-25</b>	<b>Future glory</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>Job 12:7-10</b>	<b>If you want to learn</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Psalms 148</b>	<b>All creation praises God</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Mark 1:4-11</b>	<b>The baptism of Jesus</b>

**SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK**

*Let them [all parts of creation] praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven. Psalm 148:13 (NRSV)*

**PRAYERS AND BLESSING**

**A Prayer for the Week:**

Creator God, help us to see how deep and wide your saving work for all creation is, a love that is seen most clearly through Jesus, the one born in Bethlehem. Amen.

**Mealtime Prayer:**

Dear God, with sheep and cattle and all creation, we thank you for feeding us each day with food from the earth and with your saving grace through Jesus. Amen.

**A Blessing to Give:**

May God give you and all creation peace through Jesus.

**CARING CONVERSATIONS**

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What does creation care mean to you?
- How do you show praise to God for all that God has created?

## HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Away in a Manger*



## DEVOTIONS

*Read:* Psalm 148.

Psalm 148 states that creation belongs to God, and God has promised creation a future forever (v.6). Jesus being born in Bethlehem places creation front and center as part of the saving work of God. From angels to sun and moon to shining stars, from earth to sea monsters, from fire and hail to stormy winds, the list goes on and on to include all of creation as the recipients of God's saving work. God's saving grace is not just for humans. The Apostle Paul names this when he writes in Romans 8:21, "*creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay.*" What God has done in bringing us a Savior far exceeds all that we can imagine, even having all of creation join us in praise to God. When we look through the verses in many Christmas hymns, we are reminded that creation is often part of the Christmas message.

*Discuss:* How does Psalm 148 help you think anew about God's saving work in Christ?

*Pray:* **O God, our creator and redeemer, we thank you for your love that extends to all of creation through Jesus Christ, born to us in Bethlehem. Amen.**

## SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, in what way can you show care for God's creation?

## RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

When Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple, Simeon and Anna, prophets who had waited all their lives for Jesus, recognized him as the Promised One. Luke 2:29-32 is known as the *Nunc Dimittis*, Latin for "now let depart." This is Simeon's song of praise making it clear that God acted in a way that gives peace for all people. The words of Simeon's song are often used for evening worship. Write a list of words that give you peace. *Pray:* **Loving God, we thank you for Simeon, Anna, and all those throughout history who have lifted-up Jesus as the hope and peace for all the world. Amen.**