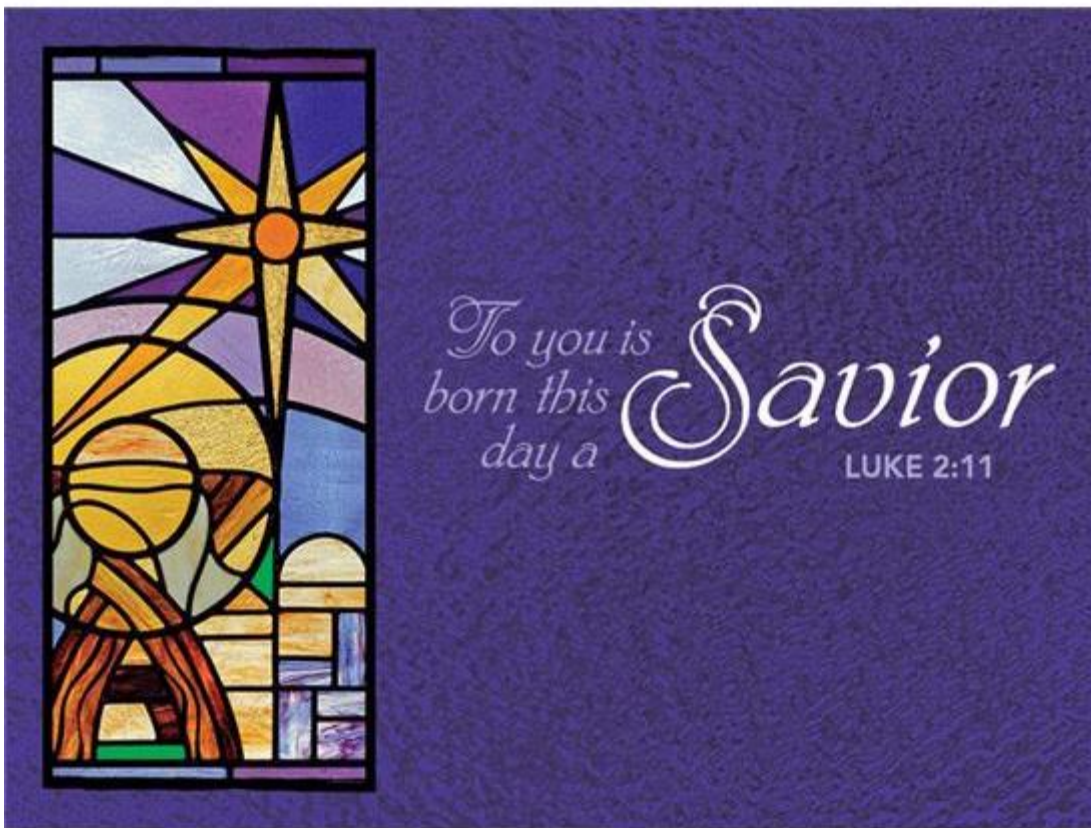


**SOLOMON'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
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*"Solomon's Evangelical Lutheran Church, following the example of Jesus Christ, seeks to live in the confidence and fullness of God's grace; to preach the Good News boldly and truthfully; to support and serve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

**NATIVITY OF OUR LORD / CHRISTMAS EVE**  
**DECEMBER 24, 2020**

**DECEMBER 24, 2020**  
**NATIVITY OF OUR LORD I: CHRISTMAS EVE**

*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. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. 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.*

**PRELUDE**

**GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

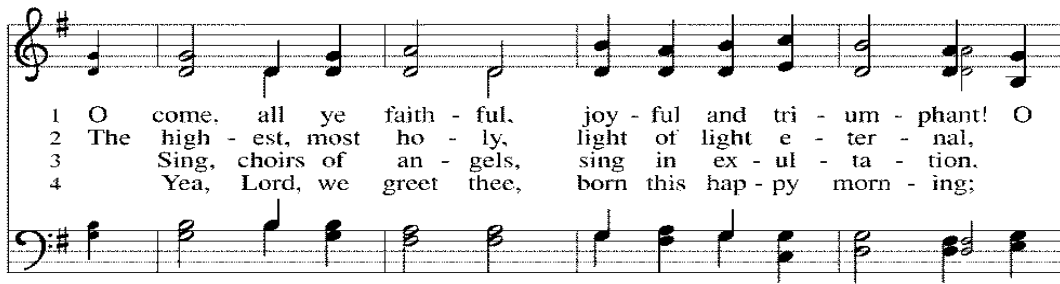
Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God,  
Love from the beginning,  
Word made flesh,  
Breath of heaven.  
**Amen.**

Let us confess our sinfulness before God and one another,  
trusting in God's endless mercy and love.

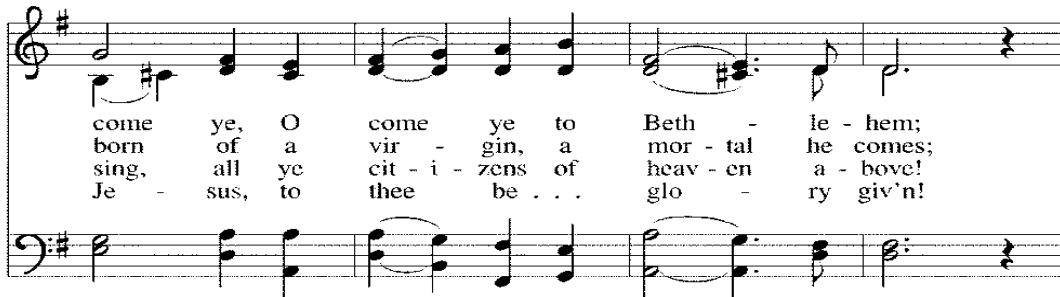
Merciful God,  
**we confess that we are not perfect.**  
**We have said and done things we regret.**  
**We have tried to earn your redeeming grace,**  
**while denying it to others.**  
**We have resisted your call**  
**to be your voice in the world.**  
**Forgive us, loving God.**  
**Give us your righteousness,**  
**the strength to put aside our failures,**  
**and the courage to try again. Amen.**

Dear people of God, hear the good news:  
Christ the Savior is born!  
You are loved and forgiven  
in the name of ✚ Jesus, who has come among us.  
You are freed from proving that you deserve to be loved,  
because God's love is given to you  
as the most precious gift of all.  
Rejoice in this love and share it with the world.  
**Amen.**


## GATHERING SONG *O Come, All Ye Faithful* (ELW 283)



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O  
 2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,  
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion.  
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;  
 born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;  
 sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!  
 Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!



come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:  
 Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!  
 Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:  
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:



*Refrain*  
 Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,  
 O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.  
 O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

## 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.**

## 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.**

### **FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7**

A reading from Isaiah.

*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!*

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

<sup>3</sup>You 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.

<sup>4</sup>For 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.

<sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup>For 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.

<sup>7</sup>His 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.**

## SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14

A reading from Titus.

*The appearance of God's grace in Jesus Christ brings salvation for all humanity. Consequently, in the present we live wisely and justly while also anticipating the hope of our Savior's final appearance.*

<sup>11</sup>The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, <sup>12</sup>training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, <sup>13</sup>while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup>He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.


The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**


## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (*intro*)

### 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!

## **GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-14**

The holy gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.*

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph 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. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And 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 for them in the inn.

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON**

*Christmas Light*

**Pastor Bill**

# HYMN OF THE DAY *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* (ELW 270)

## Hark! The Herald Angels Sing



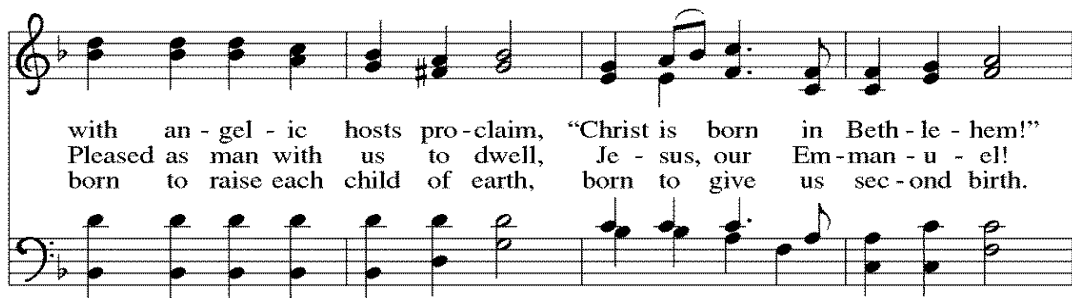
1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king;  
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,  
3 Hail the heav'n - born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righ-teous-ness!



peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled."  
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.  
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;  
Veiled in flesh the God - head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!  
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with an - gel - ic hosts pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"  
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!  
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.



*Refrain*  
Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king!"

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

## **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 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.**



## **THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD**

O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever. **Amen.**

## **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.**

# Silent Night, Holy Night!

## *Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!*

*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.

## **A PRAYER AT CHRISTMAS**

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.**

## **BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

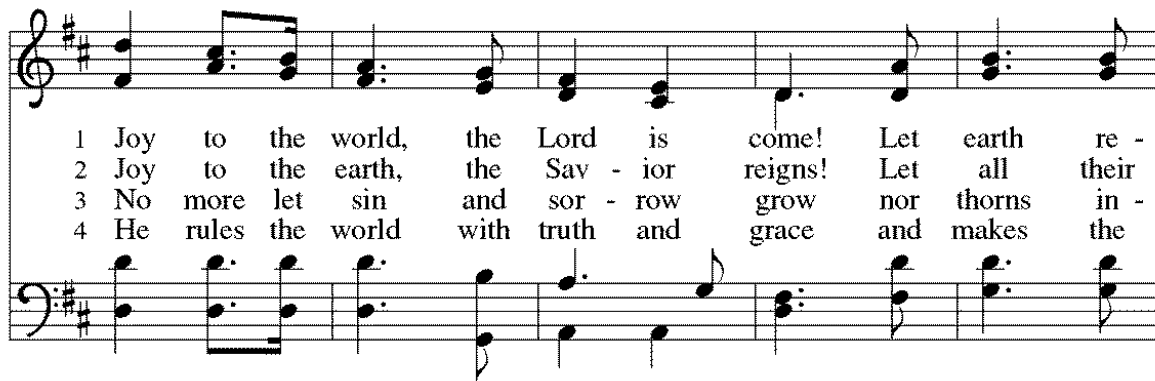
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**Amen.**

SENDING SONG *Joy to the World* (ELW 267)

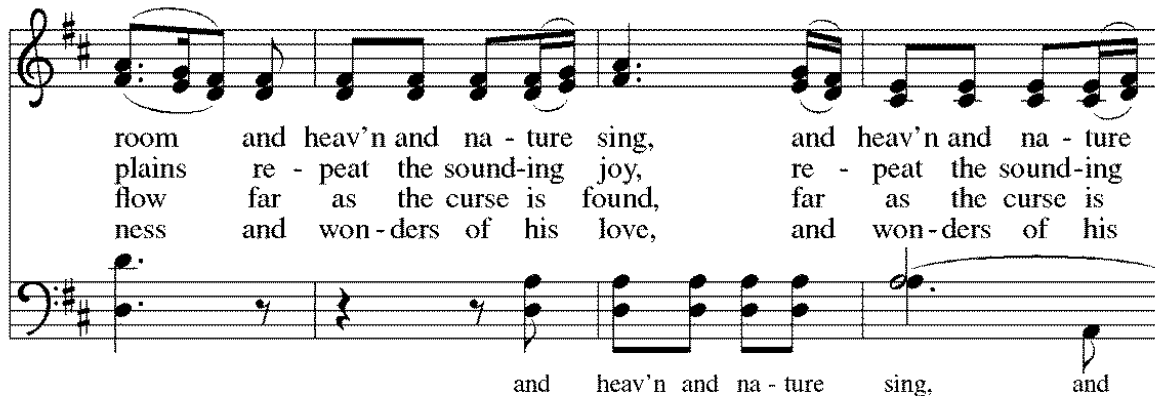
Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -  
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their  
3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -  
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him  
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings  
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture  
plains re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing  
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his  
and heav'n and na - ture sing, and



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.  
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.  
heav'n and na - ture sing,

## DISMISSAL

Christ is born!  
Go tell it on the mountain and everywhere.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE

From sundaysandseasons.com.  
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### SERVING TODAY

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Acolyte ..... Rebekah Aldrich, Sarah Aldrich, Sam Nienstedt, Aaron Shreiner  
Head Usher ..... Bonney Coldsmith  
Usher/Greeter ..... Bonney Coldsmith  
Lector ..... Wayne Dale

*Stewardship Thought - December 24, 2020* (Nativity of the Lord, Proper 1, Year B)  
**Luke 2:19** - But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

*It's easy to get caught up in our treasured aspects of Christmas and still miss out on the wonder and awe of the story that changed the world. This year listen to the story with fresh ears and see new possibilities. Steward these mysteries as Mary did, by treasuring them and pondering what they mean for you.*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**The chancel flowers** this evening are placed to the glory of God in memory of Mr. and Mrs. J. Austin Hess given by Susie, Sally & Randy and their families.

We ask that you please **silence your cell phones** during the worship service.

**Prayer requests** for the following persons: *Doug & Zoe Mummert, Jerry and Peggy Tyson, Sue Ressler, Eva Stahl, David McEntire, Clayton Schwartz and the Quincy Village Residents, Amos Egolf, Dee Dee Fox, Jody Swartz, Quentin, Linda Small Naus, Lee Locke, Barbara Socks, Denise Bowen, Jack Hess, Sylvia Wenger, Patsy Wagner, Anne English, Millie Kulkusky, Jackson, Bonnie Hudson.* If anyone has a prayer request, please call Janice McEntire. **Note:** At the beginning of each month, the Prayer Request List will start anew. 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.

*The Christmas Poinsettias in  
Memory and Honor of Family and Friends  
have been donated by:*

*Pastor Bill & Kristy Nienstedt  
In honor of Rev. David & Joan Likeness*

*LaRue McKenzie  
In memory of Marvin, Steve, & Scott McKenzie  
In memory of Thomas Eichorn*

*Dot Hunter  
In memory of my loving husband Jay  
In honor of our children Lisa & Steve Haas, and Lori & Tom Lindenberger*

*Carole & Clif Rau  
In memory of family & friends*

*Bernie & Edna Harris  
In honor of our children & grandsons*

*Given by The Aldrich Family*

*Ron, Bonney, Kevin & Brian  
In memory of Bill & Louise Coldsmith  
In memory of Jack & Bea White*

*Connie Bikle  
In memory of my husband Ferd Bikle*

*Rich & Janice McEntire  
In memory of our parents  
In honor of our family*

*Ilona & Jerry Laney  
In honor of Audrey & Clark*

*Sam & Beck Mull  
In memory of our parents  
In honor of our children & grandchildren*

*Glenn & Susie Henicle  
In memory of Mr. & Mrs. J. Austin Hess  
In memory of Mary Armstrong*

*Wayne & Marjorie Dale  
In memory of our sisters Lois, Anna Karen & Joann  
In honor of our children & grandchildren*

*Karin & Willy Huber  
In memory of William & Liesel Huber  
In memory of Friedrich & Grete Haas*

*Kathy Bowen  
In memory of Jim Bowen  
In honor of Connie Bikle*

# We are never alone

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The room was spare and dimly lit. We sat on folding chairs in a circle—young Honduran women and some of us from the ELCA. We had come to Honduras to observe the work of AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities). This is the ELCA's strategy to help youth who have been forced to flee their home countries because of violence, abuse, extortion by gangs and extreme poverty. *Amparo* is the Spanish word for shelter or refuge.

In this case, AMMPARO partnered with the Lutheran World Federation and the Mennonites to resettle returned migrants—those who had tried to seek asylum in the United States but had failed or had been denied and deported back to Honduras.

One by one they told us their stories of fear and desperation. Not a one undertook the long and dangerous trek north on a whim. They told us about the abuse they had suffered, about family members who had been killed by gangs, about the inability to make a living because of the extortion by organized crime. They talked about the bitter sadness of leaving home and family, and the uncertainty of the future.

I remember one young woman in particular. She was pregnant when she tried to migrate to the United States. She had the baby somewhere along the way. She was far from home, mostly alone and desperately wanted her mother to be with her. None of this is what she had hoped for when she was growing up. Circumstances beyond her control had forced her into this new and strange existence. She and her baby were now back in Honduras—but not at home. Home was too dangerous.

Remember last Christmas? Remember all of the preparations, the travel to be with family? Remember the holy beauty of the Christmas Eve liturgy and receiving Christ's grace and forgiveness at his table? The shopping and Christmas caroling? The in-person gatherings? All that has changed.

The pandemic hasn't forced us from our homes but into our homes, sheltering in place, isolated. Not together, but physically distanced. Not gathered with family and friends, but forced apart because of the threat of infection. Forced by circumstances beyond our control into this strange existence. Oh, there will be Christmas carols piped into grocery stores and other essential services, but they will be painful reminders of how life used to be.

We are reminded of the experience of the exiles in Babylon: "By the rivers of Babylon—there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion. On the willows there we hung up our harps. For there our captives asked us for songs, and our tormentors asked for mirth, saying, 'Sing us one of the songs of Zion!' How could we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land" (Psalm 137)?

I told the young Honduran woman about another young woman who was forced to leave home because of a government decree. She, too, was pregnant and made a long and difficult journey. She, too, was far from home and without her mother when the baby came. She had to find shelter wherever she could. This wasn't what she had hoped for when she was growing up. Circumstances beyond her control had forced her into this new existence.

That young woman was Mary and the child was Jesus. Precisely in our distress, in our dislocation, the Lord shows up. Emmanuel—God with us—makes his home in the very places we find foreign or isolating. The young Honduran woman, and all of us, can find hope because of the birth of Mary's child. There is no God-forsaken place and we are never alone—not in hospital rooms, or sheltering in place, or Zoom calls or on dangerous roads.

Many of us will not be physically home for Christmas, but we are truly home in Christ.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

As seen in the December 2020 issue of *Living Lutheran*.



DECEMBER 24-25, 2020  
CHRISTMAS EVE,  
CHRISTMAS DAY



*Jesus is born for those in need.*

## CHRISTMAS BIBLE READINGS

Take time to read and reflect on these Bible passages as part of your Christmas celebration.

Thursday	Luke 2:1-20 Isaiah 9:2-7	The birth of Jesus The reign of the coming king
Friday	Psalm 96 John 1:1-14	Sing a new song The Word became flesh

## SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

But the angel said to [the shepherds], “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.” Luke 2:10-11 (NRSV)

## PRAYERS AND BLESSING

### **A Prayer for Christmas:**

Amazing God, for good news given to peasants, to shepherds, and to us, we give you thanks and praise through Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.

### **Mealtime Prayer:**

With this gift of food we remember you are to be praised for all you do for us through Jesus Christ, born in a manger in Bethlehem. Amen. (Psalm 96:4)

### **A Blessing to Give:**

May the God who comes to save you, bless you with joy. (Titus 2:11)

## CARING CONVERSATIONS

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

- **Tell or think about a time when you surprised someone.**
- **Tell or think about a time when someone surprised you.**
- **How does Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem amaze you?**

## **HYMN OF THE WEEK**

*Silent Night*



## **DEVOTIONS**

*Read: Luke 2:1-20.*

The shepherds in the fields have a startling encounter with God, bringing them good news of Jesus’ birth. In that time and place, shepherds were described as “sinners.” Their work in the fields kept them from observing the Sabbath. They were unclean and seen as liars, thieves, and generally unsavory. With this social stigma, they are likely people who had themselves given up on God. More than outcasts, they had simply walked away from hope in the mercy of God. In Luke 2, God does not give up on the shepherds—or us—as God reaches out to them in the fields. God didn’t wait for them to show up at the temple or the synagogue. God doesn’t have to wait for us to show up at “church,” either. The startling news of Jesus’ birth is that it is for those who need God most. When have you felt like giving up on God? How does this birth story help you hear good news?

*Pray:* Loving God, help us to hear the good news of Jesus’ birth for all the world, especially when we feel far from you; in the name of Jesus, the Savior, Messiah, and Lord, amen.

## **SERVICE**

There are those around us in need of seeing God’s love in action. Is there a local soup kitchen or shelter where you can volunteer time or donate items this week for those in need of seeing the good news of Jesus birth in action?

## **RITUALS AND TRADITIONS**

Make your Christmas Day into a celebration of Jesus’ birthday. Use some Christmas pastries or a cake to help celebrate. Place a white candle in its center and on Christmas Day, light the candle, sing “Happy Birthday” to Jesus, and then take time to complete this sentence: Say: The birth of Jesus is special to me because \_\_\_\_\_. Then sing some Christmas carols.