



*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!*



**Merry Christmas from Adoration Lutheran Church!**

*We are glad you have joined us for this special season in our faith lives, and in our world. How beautiful it is that God chooses to meet us in the flesh of our lived reality. May the grace and hope of Christ's birth sustain you throughout the year, as we remember Luke the storyteller's promise: Salvation now has come to earth.*

## *Worship with Holy Communion* *A Service of Lessons and Carols on Christmas Eve*

Our worship liturgy uses *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* the cranberry red hymnal in your pew.

### **Prelude**

### **Gathering**

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

### **The Promise Foretold: Isaiah 9:2-7**

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

<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 onwards and for evermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

*You are invited to stand in body or spirit.*

**Processional Hymn:**  
**ELW #283**

***O Come, All Ye Faithful***  
***Verses 1, 2, and 3***

### **Confession and Forgiveness**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.*

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.





*Young people are invited forward for a special Christmas message and to receive a small gift. For especially young children, family members are welcome to join them at the front of the sanctuary.*



We light the candle of joy,

**The Christ child births delight into a world of pain.**

We light the candle of love.

**The Spirit unites us as we join in proclaiming good news of great joy.**

We light the Christ candle. Let us pray.

**Holy God, your light illuminates your loving presence with us. It shines amid smiles and despite tears. It shines and we hear angels. It shines and we see a manger. It shines and we remember the story. This light cannot be extinguished.**

You, Emmanuel, are the light, shining now and always, and you call us to bear that light, now and forevermore. **Amen.**

### **Children's Time**

*You are invited to stand in body or spirit.*

**Hymn of Praise:**                    *Hark, The Herald Angels Sing*  
**ELW #270**

### **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**

Let us pray. **God, you have nurtured us for the flourishing of your good creation. You have liberated us for the sake of your holy name. You have called us to be witnesses of your presence in the face of a child.**

O God of Joseph, O God of shepherds, O God of a Mary who “treasured all these words,” teach us to see your grace in the everyday joys and sorrows of life. Lead us to the manger of your fierce, vulnerable love.

**And then send us on the road dazzled and even a bit confounded by what we have seen: all our hopes and all your justice in the face of a baby. Amen**

*Please be seated.*

Mary turns out to be not simply the mother of Jesus but an ideal role model for all followers of Jesus: a servant of God who embodies faith and faithfulness. Her words to the angel are a direct parallel to what Jesus later prays in the garden: "Let it be with me according to your word" (Luke 1:38) = "Not my will but yours be done" (Luke 22:42). In both cases, the ideal response to God is presented as a combination of humble trust and obedient service.

Taken as a whole, Luke 1:26-38 is similar to some Old Testament texts in which there is a divine annunciation of a special birth; Luke story also follows the form of an Old Testament call narrative: called as a prophetic witness through bearing and raising Jesus. —Mark Allan Powell



To maintain the machinery of empire, people must be counted; not to be valued as individuals, but to assess tribute. It is the census. Lists of family members, and decisions about them, must be made. As your life, family, and records are audited, so also is your future decided.

What sacrifice will be required for the glory of Rome? Joseph, as the state-recognized head of the household, can safely allow himself and his family to be among the counted. Luke's story emphasizes vulnerability: a pregnant woman, "no place in the inn," and lower-class shepherds.

## Special Music

*Sandy Young and Zack Young*

### *The Christmas Gospel*

#### **The Promise is Shared: Luke 1:26-38**

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And Gabriel came to her and said, 'Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.' <sup>29</sup>But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.' <sup>31</sup>And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great; and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' <sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?'

<sup>35</sup>The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God.' <sup>36</sup>And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible with God.' <sup>38</sup>Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

#### **Hymn: What Child is This**

*ELW #296, Verse 1*

#### **The Promise Enters the World: Luke 2:1-7**

<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.

*Palestinian shepherds spent much of their time in the fields, under the open sky, fully aware of the glories and the dangers of life in nature. Luke says that the angels announce the arrival of Christ to these people who, despite our sentimentalizing, were in several ways “outsiders.”*



*The Gospel of Luke, written in 85–90 CE, emphasizes the arrival of God’s good news to the poor. Luke’s interest in evangelizing all the world is seen as the shepherds, who although considered lower class and religiously unclean, are the first to tell others about the birth of the Messiah. The activity of the shepherds—coming to Christ, telling others, praising God—is a model for the life of Christians during the day. We are the shepherds, spending our day filled with the Spirit of Christ and spreading the good news of salvation to others.*

**Hymn: *Away in a Manger***

***ELW #277, Verse 1***

**The Promise Shared in Starlight: Luke 2:8-14**

<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 God favors!’

**A Christmas Meditation**

**Hymn: *O Little Town of Bethlehem***

***ELW #279***

**The Promise Revealed: Luke 2:14-20**

<sup>15</sup> When 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.’ <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

**Special Music *Mary Did You Know***

***Ted Lazaris***

*You are invited to stand in body or spirit.*

**Prayers of Intercession**

With wonder and thanksgiving for Christ’s coming into the world, we pray for the church, the life of the earth, and the whole human family.

Wonderful Counselor, increase our joy as the church gathers on this holy night to sing of our dear Savior’s birth.

***We pray for those in need:***

Ted and Mardy Lazaris; Jay, Ryder, and Riley Lindahl, grieving the death of Kerry;  
 Susan Wilde;  
 Charlotte Linberry, recovering from surgery;  
 Gary Kerlin, recovering from surgery;  
 Dick Voegeli;  
 Joani Bettin;  
 Family and friends grieving the death of Tammy Vazquez (Nowakowski)  
 Sue Clark, grieving the death of mother-in-law Angie Lange;  
 Betty Wing;  
 Mary Anne Markiewicz;  
 Wally Stasiewski;  
 Doug Hamilton (spouse of Lori Hamilton);  
 Jerry (Bruce Crueger's brother);  
 Bob (friend of Bob & Connie Yersin);  
 Karen (Sandy Ringwall's sister);  
 Joy Braun (friend of Sue Clark);  
 Amy & Family (friends of Kathy Wakefield);  
 Jackie (niece of Jan Rinderle);  
 Eric (Crystal's brother)

***We continue to pray for strength and recovery for:***

Tom Nowakowski;  
 Kathy and John Imp;  
 Marylee Dye;  
 Craig Beyler;  
 Ruth & Bob Bauer;  
 Pat Koch;  
 Jeff & Kelly Faltersack for a continued healthy pregnancy

***We keep in our prayers:***

Dawn (friend of Sandy and Bob Young);  
 Pat (Cousin of Donna Babilus);  
 Bruce (friend of Joyce Weinert);  
 Scott and Debbie (family of Margaret Duris);  
 Keith (Sandy Eigner's brother-in-law);  
 Susan (Darlene Witkowiak's daughter);  
 Jeremy (Tom Nowakowski's nephew);  
 Caroline (Jill Lindberg's daughter);  
 Shelby and the family of Taylor Daniels (friends of Crystal Januchowski)



May the story of salvation live in the hearts of all who sing of its wonders. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Mighty God, you have broken the yoke of sin's burden through the birth of your Son. Comfort those whose burdens distract them from the deeper peace of this holy night and grant them a restful mind. God of peace, **receive our prayer.**

Prince of Peace, as God of the conquered and the oppressed, we have seen you draw near to us in the shadow of empire's might and in the wake of empire's demands to obey, to assimilate, to accept things as they are and will always be. Grant us the courage to hope beyond hope; but also to mourn when our hopes are dashed. Help us to believe the unbelievable but also to grieve what we have lost. God of peace, **receive our prayer.**

Everlasting Father, uphold all who are in sorrow or need of your divine goodness and mercy, especially those we name aloud before you. We remember with thanksgiving all who have died and who now rest in your peaceful light. God of love, **receive our prayer.**

Gracious God, bathe us always in the light of your Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Sharing of the Christmas Peace**

As we celebrate the birth of Christ, may the God of our salvation grant you peace and joy, hope and gladness.

**And also with you.**

*Please share signs of peace with those in your vicinity.*

*You may remain standing in body or spirit.*

*Today we pass baskets to place our tithes in to offer what we can during this season of giving.*

***Meal***

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

**Offertory Hymn:**

***ELW #296***

***What Child is This***

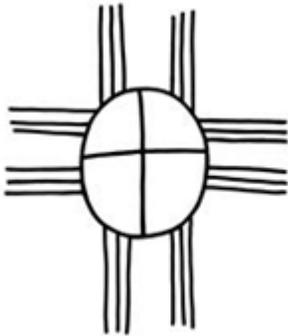
***Verses 2 & 3***



### **ON RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION**

*All are welcome at Christ's  
table, and at Adoration!*

*Jesus himself welcomes all to  
the Lord's Supper. Here at  
Adoration, we practice  
"Open Communion," which  
means we welcome anyone to  
receive bread and wine,  
Christ's body and blood, the  
grace-filled gift of God. Jesus  
loves everyone and  
welcomes everyone to his  
table of grace and peace.  
Children are welcome to come  
forward, either to receive a  
blessing or to receive Holy  
Communion.*



### **Words of Institution**

Remembering Martha and Mary, we join Jesus at this meal.

**Living, he healed the bleeding woman;**

**dying, he cared for his mother;**

**risen, he sent Mary Magdalene in mission.**

With Mary, again we magnify your name: My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, **my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.**

### **Epiklesis (Come, Holy Spirit)**

Mighty God of mercy, as you heard the prayers of Hannah, so now hear us. Send your Spirit on this bread and wine, that sharing the body and blood of Christ we become his body in the world. Send your Spirit on this assembly, that like Elizabeth, we might leap with joy in your presence.

**Send your Spirit on the church, that like Anna, we tell others of your mercy.**

Send your Spirit into our hearts, that like Mary and the women at the tomb, we might be filled with hope and expectation.

With Mary, once more we magnify your name:

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, **my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.**

All praise to you, powerful God of peace.

**We adore you, our God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**

You mother and feed and comfort us, today, tomorrow, and forever. **Amen**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Remember us, O Christ, and teach us to pray:

**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**

We come forward to share in Holy Communion today. You may choose to receive a wafer and a poured cup of wine or juice or a pre-sealed packet containing both a wafer and juice. Gluten-free wafers available by indicating your need to the server.

Consecrated Goldfish crackers are available for children.

All are welcome to come forth and receive a blessing.

Please place used cups in the baskets on the end of the front pews.



Into our brokenness, the life and light of the world descends, not to terrify or shame it, but to create it anew. From the beginning this Word was active in creation, speaking obliquely to every culture and era, until the particular time of incarnation. God risks vulnerability in order to reach out to the wounded, and places in creation's trust the caretaking of a fragile grace. We use a litany based

on Eugene Peterson's paraphrase, *The Message*, as we spread the light from the manger throughout our worship space.

### Invitation to Communion

Children of God: Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God, who has come to save you.

*Please be seated.*

### Communion

#### Hymns During Communion

*The First Noel*

*ELW #300*

*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

*ELW #282*

*You are invited to stand in body or spirit.*

### Post-Communion Blessing

#### Prayer After Communion

Let us pray. **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**

### *Sending*

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

#### Candle Lighting Litany (From John 1)

The Word was first, the Word present to God, God present to the Word. The Word was God, in readiness for God from day one. Everything was created through him; nothing—not one thing!—came into being without him.

**What came into existence was Life! And the Life was Light to live by.**

**The Life-Light blazed out of the darkness;**

**the darkness couldn't put it out.**

**The Life-Light was the real thing:**

Every person entering Life God brings into Light.

The Word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighborhood.

**We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son. Generous inside and out, true from start to finish.**

*Please receive candle light from a worship assistant, dipping unlit candles into lit ones as the Christ-light spreads through the sanctuary.*

#### Candle Lighting Hymn: *Silent Night, Holy Night!*

*ELW #281*



*An ecology of praise, as Ellen Davis writes, is at the heart of Psalm 98, where creation's praise comes forth in Joy to the Created World! God is to be glorified in every aspect of creation, and God's glory is magnified as each creature—human, animal, cultivated field, or uninhabited mountain—does, becomes the thing for which it was made. Christmas Praise is, then, properly understood as an expression of shared commitment to the created world.*



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,

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,

Ho - ly In - fant so ten - der and mild, sleep in  
 heav'n - ly host sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the  
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus,

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

### Blessing

God bless you and keep you, † Jesus grant you grace and truth,  
 and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts,  
 now and forever. **Amen**

### Christmas Proclamation (Based on Psalm 98)

Sing to God something brand new!

**For God has done wonderful things!**

God has not forgotten to love us all!

**Even the ends of the earth have heard!**

Make a joyful noise! Break forth in song!

**With strings and horns, sing praise to the Holy One!**

With the roaring sea and everything in it!

**With all the land and everything in it!**

The floods clap their hands. **The hills sing for joy.**

Thank God! God is coming to set everything right:

**Justice for everyone, everything equitable.**

Sing to God something brand new!

**For God has done wonderful things!**

**Sending Hymn: Joy to the World**

**ELW #267**

**Today's Lay Leaders**

**Lector:** Bill Wakefield

**Communion Assistants:**

Tom & Jeanette  
Nowakowski and Sandy  
Ringwall

**Ushers:** Bill & Kathy  
Wakefield

**Altar Guild:** Deanna Posig

**Music & Worship**

**Coordinator:**

Barb Regent

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***Altar flowers provided by  
Sharon Anderson***

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*\* Advent Candle Lighting Litany  
adapted from "2020 Advent" by  
Maren C. Tirabassi,*

*giftsinopenhands.wordpress.com*

*\*Prayer of the Day and additional  
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*\*John 1 excerpts adapted from The  
Message, written by Eugene  
Peterson.*

*\*Psalm 98 litany by Richard  
Bruxvoort Colligan, Worldmaking  
Psalms.*

**Dismissal**

Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude**

***Adoration Lutheran Church***

*A Congregation of the*

*Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

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Barbara Regent, Worship Coordinator

Crystal A. Januchowski, Office Manager



**Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.**

\* If you have a need that falls outside of these days/hours,  
please send an email or call the main number. \*

Adoration is a Reconciling in Christ congregation, open and affirming to people of  
"all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions" or  
"LGBTQIA+." We strive that this can be a safe church space, especially for those  
who have been harmed by religion.



*Adoration Lutheran Church, Greenfield Wisconsin*



*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.*