

**St. Matthew Lutheran Church
North Tonawanda, NY
December 25th, 2024**



AS WE GATHER

At Christmas, our lives and attention are often occupied not only with the smaller details of the season—the decorations, the gifts, the special menus, the schedule of events—but also with those details of greater importance: family, parents and grandparents, children and grandchildren, as well as those of more distant relationships. Greater than that, as Christians we center our celebration here in God’s presence to hear God’s Word, to attend to what is most important, which alone can give all the other details of life its most solid foundation. That Word puts everything else in its proper perspective, including our place and participation in the kingdom of God. The “big picture” includes God’s amazing creation from the beginning, as well as our part in mankind’s fall into sin and struggle with Satan and death. Then enters God’s great remedy: our salvation from sin and death through the redemption that is in God Himself, in the person of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, our Lord. His incarnation and birth from the virgin Mary was a great miracle—God taking on our human flesh and blood. Greater, however, was His own sacrifice in our flesh, by which He has cast down Satan and his lies and raised up a new creation to new, eternal life

Welcome to all our Members, Guests and Visitors today, if you’re a visitor, please introduce yourself to the pastor after service in the Narthex. We here at St. Matthew pray that you enjoy your time worshiping with us today.

LSB 387 Joy to the World
INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

The Word becomes incarnate and yet remains on high,
and cherubim sing anthems to shepherds from the sky.

Proclaim the Savior's birth:

“To God on high be glory and peace to all the earth!”

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

The infant Christ—the radiance of the glory of God—came to make purification for the sins of the world, to swallow up death forever, and to be the light of life for those who walked in darkness. In praise of God's mighty deliverance, we humble ourselves before Him in repentant prayer.

Lord God, heavenly Father, we bow before You and confess that we indeed have walked in darkness; in the blindness of sin, we have neglected You, lost by our own fault. But we have seen the great light in the gift of Your only Son. Enlighten our hearts, our minds, and our lives by the forgiveness of our sins and the great promises of Your heavenly grace and mercy; for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

God has spoken His promises by the prophets, and now in these last days has spoken to us by His Son. By the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, announce the grace of God to all of you and speak His own absolution: I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the X Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

INTROIT

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given
and the government shall be upon His shoulder,
and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

**Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for He has done marvelous things!
His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for Him.**

The LORD has made known His salvation;* He has revealed His
righteousness in the sight of the nations.

He has remembered His steadfast love and faithfulness to
The house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

**Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises!**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Kyrie

Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.

Gloria in Excelsis

Glory be to God on high.

and on earth peace, goodwill toward men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory. O Lord God, heav'nly King, God the Father Almighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sin of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us. For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord. Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

LSB 388 Go Tell It on the Mountain

SALUTATION & Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

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

Amen.

Old Testament Reading Isaiah 62:10–12

¹⁰Go through, go through the gates; prepare the way for the people; build up, build up the highway; clear it of stones; lift up a signal over the peoples.

¹¹Behold, the LORD has proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say to the daughter of Zion, “Behold, your salvation comes; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.” ¹²And they shall be called The Holy People, The Redeemed of the LORD; and you shall be called Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

***** There Is A Child *****

Epistle Titus 3:4–7

⁴When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the two chapter

Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

¹⁵When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶And they went with

haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

Apostle's Creed

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.

The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy Christian Church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting. Amen.

LSB 380 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing!

Sermon

*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from
me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free
spirit. Amen.*

Offering

Prayer of the Church

Almighty and everlasting God, we give thanks to You for our creation, our life, and all Your gifts. But we especially give Your thanks that, in many and various ways, You spoke Your Word of grace, comfort, and truth, first through Your holy prophets, but now in these last days by Your very own Son, whose coming into our flesh we celebrate this day. By His coming, He has brought us forgiveness and new, eternal life. Help us to live in Him even as He lives in us. Lord, in Your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Cause the joyous message of Your angels—of Your glory and peace to all—to resound in our country and throughout the world. Bless, guard, and guide all in the authority of government in our land. Prosper the preaching of the Gospel by Your church, keeping all pastors and teachers steadfast in Your word of salvation. Lord, in Your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Renew our hearts and those of all Your people in the joy and peace of Your salvation and help us to reflect Your love for all in all that we say and do. Lord, in Your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For all who are in any need in these days, for the lonely and abandoned, for the wayward and the hopeless, for those in trouble or despair, and for the sick and dying, bring Your saving Word of mercy, forgiveness, health, healing, and hope by faith in Your Son, the Savior of the world. Lord, in Your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Grant Your blessing to rest upon our families—husbands, wives, children, grandparents, and other relatives. Bind our hearts together by Your own gifts

of love. Remembering those whom You have called into Your nearer presence, we give You thanks. Keep us in the same saving faith that we may be numbered among those You have redeemed for eternal life in the day of resurrection. Lord, in Your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Graciously receive our prayers, deliver and preserve us; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LSB 379 O Come, All Ye Faithful

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.**

LSB 391 God Loves Me Dearly

Collect of the Day Most merciful God, You gave Your eternal Word to become incarnate of the pure Virgin. Grant Your people grace to put away fleshly lusts, that they may be ready for Your visitation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Benedicamus

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Bless we the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you.

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

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

Amen, amen, amen.

LSB 364 Away In a Manger

My peace I give unto you, It's a peace that the world cannot give
It's a peace that the world cannot understand Peace to know, peace to live
My peace I give unto you

My love I give unto you It's love that the world Cannot give
It's a love that the world cannot understand Love to know, love to live
My love I give unto you

It's a love that the world Cannot understand
My love I give unto you