

**St. Matthew Lutheran Church  
North Tonawanda, NY  
December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025**



**AS WE GATHER**

The wait is over. The Child Mary carried, the Savior she pondered, has been born for you and for your salvation. On this holy day, you are welcomed to the manger bed of your Redeemer as heaven touches earth and the Word becomes flesh and dwells among us. All through Advent, we have waited with Mary, hearing the promises, bearing the hope, watching for dawn to brighten the horizon. Today, we mirror Mary's joy as the promise is fulfilled. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not—*cannot*—overcome it. Come, let us adore Him—Christ the Lord—born of Mary, cradled in a manger, and given for you.

*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.*

**Christmas Eve**

## LSB 361 O Little Town of Bethlehem

### OPENING SENTENCES

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;  
**those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.**

There were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

**And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear.**

### CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace,  
**we gather on this not-so-silent night to celebrate the birth of the One who brings us peace. Yet, we are not at peace with You, with one another, or with ourselves. Our sinfulness can cause us to be filled with fear. For the sake of Jesus, the Child who was born and the Son who was given to redeem us from all lawlessness, purify us as Your people and make us zealous for good works.**

The angel said to the shepherds, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people.” So, as God’s servant, I say to you, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy.” As a called and ordained servant in Christ’s church and with His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

Let us join our voices with the multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

**“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!”**

*During the hymn, the Advent candles may be lit.*

**Hymn: LSB 357 O Come O Come Emmanuel vv1-4**

## **Introit**

I will tell of the decree:

The LORD said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you."

The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof,  
the world and those who dwell therein.

Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?

And who shall stand in his holy place?

He who has clean hands and a pure heart,

who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear  
deceitfully.

He will receive blessing from the LORD

and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

***Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in  
the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. 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.***

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

Lord Jesus, we praise and thank You for bringing salvation for all people.

Train us as we wait for our blessed hope that will come when You appear again in glory at the end of the age; for You live and rule with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

*Amen.*

### PSALM 96

Sing to the LORD, bless His name;

**tell of His salvation from day to day.**

Oh sing to the LORD a new song;

**sing to the LORD, all the earth!**

Declare His glory among the nations,

**His marvelous works among all the peoples!**

For great is the LORD,

**and greatly to be praised.**

Splendor and majesty are before Him;

**strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.**

Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness;

**tremble before Him, all the earth!**

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;

**let the sea roar, and all that fills it;**

let the field exult, and everything in it!

**Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the LORD, for He comes.**

**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.**

### SALUTATION

The Lord be with you.

*And also with you.*

Let us pray.

O God of God, O Light of Light, Your coming brings life and salvation to humanity. Enable us to properly praise You for how You have revealed Yourself, that we still marvel at the mysterious majesty of eternal God made

flesh—namely, in Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen**

**FIRST READING Isaiah 7:10–14**

<sup>10</sup>Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, <sup>11</sup>“Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” <sup>12</sup>But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.” <sup>13</sup>And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? <sup>14</sup>Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**\*\*\*\*Choir: Still Is the Night \*\*\*\***

**SECOND READING 1 John 4:7–16**

<sup>7</sup>Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup>Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. <sup>9</sup>In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. <sup>10</sup>In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. <sup>11</sup>Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup>No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. <sup>13</sup>By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup>And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup>Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. <sup>16</sup>So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **LSB 368 Angels We Have Heard on High**

### **Luke 2:1–20**

Gospel of Luke the Second chapter

***Glory be to Thee, O Lord.***

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>And all went to be registered, each to his own town. <sup>4</sup>And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, <sup>5</sup>to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. <sup>6</sup>And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. <sup>8</sup>And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. <sup>10</sup>And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. <sup>11</sup>For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup>And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes 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, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!” <sup>15</sup>When 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.” <sup>16</sup>And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. <sup>17</sup>And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. <sup>18</sup>And

all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>And 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***

### **Apostles' 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 life everlasting. Amen.**

### **LSB 370 What Child Is This**

#### **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**

To us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder.

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow! The glory of the Lord has come down to us in Christ. Alleluia!**

O Wonderful Counselor,

**hear our prayers and grant us Your peace and favor.**

O Mighty God,

**give us eyes to see Your glory, ears to hear Your grace, and mouths to voice Your praise.**

O Everlasting Father,

**You sent Your Son into this world to be born of the virgin Mary, suffer under Pontius Pilate, be crucified, die, and be buried before rising to life again on the third day to redeem us from all lawlessness and purify for Yourself a people for Your own possession. We thank and praise You for making us Your people and making Your favor shine on us.**

O Prince of Peace,

**we ask that You give us the peace that surpasses all understanding, that we trust that You have come into our imperfect world to bring the perfect gift of salvation, which You have freely given to us.**

*Silence for personal prayer.*

Into Your hands, O gracious Lord, we place our prayers and praise. We place ourselves and our loved ones into Your care, trusting in Your mercy and coming to You with confidence, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God forever.

**Amen.**



### **LUTHER'S EVENING PRAYER**

**I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.**

### **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.**

### **BENEDICAMUS**

**Let us bless the Lord.  
*Thanks be to God.***

### **CLOSING SENTENCES**

**Like the shepherds who were greeted by the angels, God has revealed the glory of the Lord to us.**

**And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child.**

## **BENEDICTION**

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

**Amen.**

He who is mighty has done great things for me.

**Holy is His name.**

To God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—be all honor and glory in His holy church, forever and ever.

**Amen. Christ has died! Christ is risen! Christ shall come again!**

### ***Closing: O Holy Night v1-then Silent Night***

O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,  
It is the night of our dear Savior's birth.  
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,  
Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth.  
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,  
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.  
Fall on your knees! Oh, hear the angel voices!  
O night divine, O night when Christ was born.  
O night divine, O night, O night divine.

\*\*\*Transition into Silent Night\*\*\*

1 Silent night, holy night,  
All is calm, all is bright  
Round yon virgin mother and child!  
Holy Infant so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace,  
Sleep in heavenly peace.

2 Silent night, holy night,  
Darkness flies, all is light;  
Shepherds hear the angels sing,  
"Alleluia! hail the King!  
Christ the Savior is born,  
Christ the Savior is born."

3 Silent night, holy night,  
Son of God, love's pure light  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,  
With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

4 Silent night, holy night,  
Wondrous star, lend the light;  
With the angels let us sing  
Alleluia to our King;  
Christ the Savior is born,  
Christ the Savior is born.