



# St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

## HOLY COMMUNION

Nativity of Our Lord  
December 24, 2022 • 7 pm

You are welcome here! As a Reconciling in Christ congregation of the ELCA, we believe that the gospel is God's gift to all people, shared unconditionally and without regard to race, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, socio-economic or family status, age, physical or mental abilities, outward appearance, or religious affiliation. We seek racial equality and justice. In this way, we live into the truth written in Ephesians (2:14)—that Christ breaks down the dividing walls between us and makes us one.

### Theme of the Day

On this holy night we rejoice in the mystery of God's saving grace.

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.

Masks are not required for those who are fully vaccinated and boosted. If you are wearing a mask, you may lower it to receive communion.

## Gathering

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

### Prelude

"In dulci jubilo" by P. Manz

"Quem pastores" by P. Manz

"Bethlehem Lullaby" by Janet Witman

Ann Iona Warner, harp

## \*\* Call to Worship

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

**The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

These who dwelt in the land of deep darkness, on them light has shined.

**We have beheld Christ's glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.**

For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

**In him was life, and the life was the light of all the people.**

## \*\* Gathering Song

*O Come, All Ye Faithful (verses 1-3)*

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!

\*\* Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

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 and loving kindness of our savior, Jesus Christ, Word made flesh, born of the Virgin Mary, be with you all.

**And also with you.**

\*\* Please stand as you are able. **Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

**\*\* Song of Praise** (*Ring your bells during the refrain.*)

*Angels We have Heard on High*

ELW 289

1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,  
2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?  
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;

and the moun - tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.  
What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?  
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.

*Refrain*

Glo - ri - a

**\*\* Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

in ex-cel-sis De-o; glo

ri-a in ex-cel-sis De-o.

**\*\* Prayer of the Day**

*Assisting Minister leads the prayer of the day and the assembly responds: Amen.*

**\*\* Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

# Word

*God speaks to us in scripture, preaching and song.*

## First Reading

Isaiah 9:2-7 (p. 625)

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

## Hymn

*What Child Is This*

ELW 296



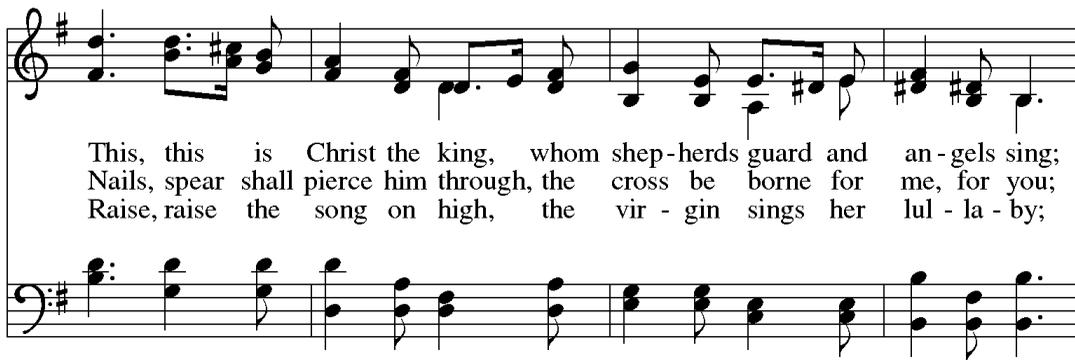
- 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar-y's lap is sleep-ing?
- 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?
- 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas-ant, king, to own him.



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.



\*\* Please stand as you are able. **Items in bold** are to be spoken by the assembly.



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!

**Second Reading**

Titus 2:11-14 (p. 1087)

Word of God. Word of Life.

**Thanks be to God.**

\*\* Please stand as you are able. **Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

**\*\* Gospel Acclamation***Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (Verse 1 & 2)*

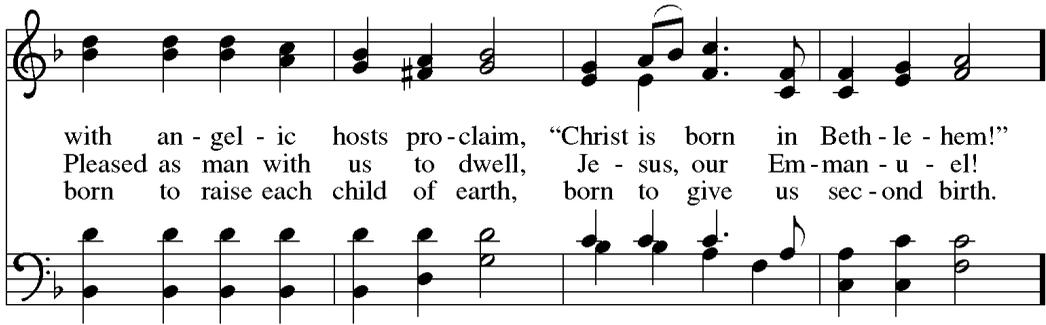
ELW 270

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,

\*\* Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.



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!"

**\*\* Gospel**

Luke 2:1-14[15-20] (p. 933)

The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you O Lord.**

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you O Christ.**

**\*\* Gospel Acclamation**

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (Verse 3)*

**Sermon**

The Rev. Mark Walters

\*\* Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

\*\* Hymn of the Day

*Away in the Manger*

ELW 278

1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for his bed,  
2 The cat - tle are low - ing; the ba - by a - wakes,  
3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head;  
but lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes.  
close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.

the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
I love you, Lord Je - sus; look down from the sky  
Bless all the dear chil - dren in your ten - der care

\*\* Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.  
 and stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.  
 and fit us for heav - en, to live with you there.

**\*\* Nicene 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.

\*\* Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

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 People**

*Each portion of the prayer ends with:*

Response:            God of Grace.                            **Hear our prayer!**

## Meal

*Jesus calls all people to sit at the table with him. All are invited, none is excluded.*

**\*\* Sharing of the Peace**

**Offering**

*Each week we give thanks to God for things that God has given us: our selves, our time, and our possessions. A financial donation to the church is never a requirement, but is freely given to support the work of the congregation in the community.*

*For your convenience, St. Stephen's offers the opportunity to give on-line through text message. Type "Funds" to 302-257-6155 to make any donations.*

*The First Noel, arr. Jodi Ann Tolman*

*Ann Iona Warner, harp*

*All Is Calm, Anne Crosby Guadet*

**\*\* Offering Prayer**

*Assisting Minister leads the offering prayer and the assembly responds: **Amen.***

**\*\* Dialogue**

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.**

**\*\* Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

## **\*\* Thanksgiving at the Table**

We give you thanks, Father...now and forever. **Amen.**

## **\*\* Lord's Prayer**

*As we pray the Lord's Prayer together, we invite you to choose which version and language in which to pray. Several versions are printed on the laminated card for you.*

## **Invitation to Communion**

### **Communion**

*As Lutheran Christians we believe the words of Jesus, "This is my body, this is my blood given for you for the forgiveness of sin." If you desire to receive this gift, you are welcome to commune here. All who do not commune may come for a blessing. The ushers will invite the assembly from the front row to the back row to come to the chancel to receive communion from the pastor via the center aisle. Once you receive your communion, please use the side aisles to return to your pew. Please be sure to discard your cups in the trash bin on your way out of the church - please do not leave used communion cups in the pews or pew racks. If you prefer juice, please let the assisting minister know.*

**\*\* Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.**

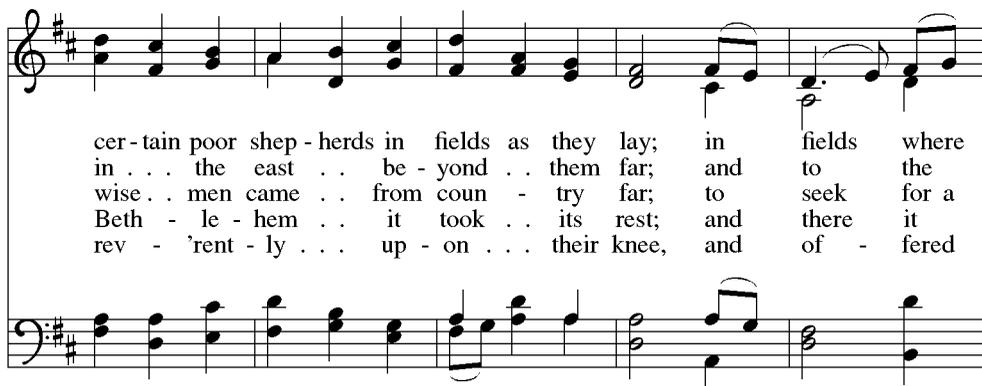
# Communion Hymn

## *The First Noel*

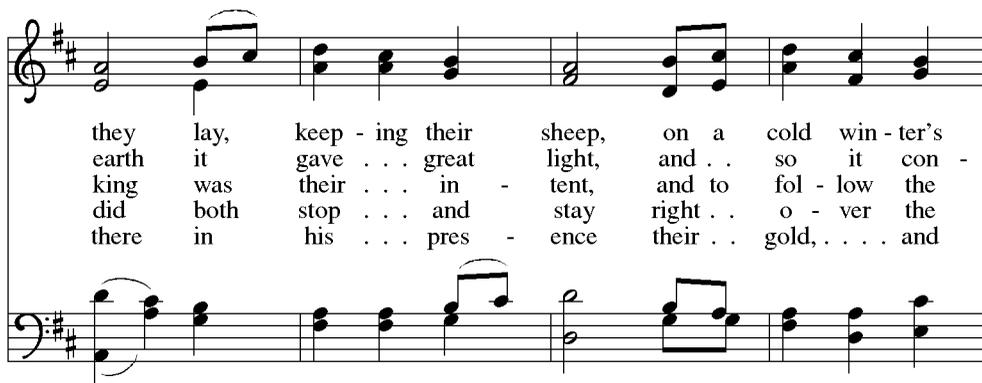
ELW 300



1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to  
2 They look - ed up and saw . . a star shin - ing  
3 And by the light of that . . same star three . .  
4 This star drew near to the . . north - west, o'er . .  
5 Then en - tered in those wise . . men three, full . .



cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where  
in . . . the east . . be - yond . . them far; and to the  
wise . . men came . . from coun - try far; to seek for a  
Beth - le - hem . . it took . . its rest; and there it  
rev - 'rent - ly . . . up - on . . . their knee, and of - fered



they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's  
earth it gave . . . great light, and . . so it con -  
king was their . . . in - tent, and to fol - low the  
did both stop . . . and stay right . . o - ver the  
there in his . . . pres - ence their . . gold, . . . and

\*\* Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

*Refrain*

night that was so deep.  
tin-ued both day and night.  
star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -  
place where Je - sus lay.  
myrrh, and frank - in - cense.

el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

## Communion Blessing

### Post Communion Prayer

Together, let us pray.

We thank you, wondrous God, for Jesus,  
God with us, in these gifts of bread and wine.  
As we have shared this feast of love,  
strengthen us to share your love with all the world.  
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

### The Sharing of Light

*We are invited to pass the light of Christ. The first verse will be played followed by the congregation singing together. Service assistants will go down the aisle to pass the candle flame. Tilt your candle to receive the flame from your neighbor. Candles may be extinguished after the blessing.*

\*\* Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

\*\* Hymn

*Silent Night, Holy Night!*

ELW 281

*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.

\*\* Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

# Sending

*We are sent into the world to serve.*

## \*\* Blessing

### Sending Hymn

*Joy to the World*

ELW 267

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

\*\* Please stand as you are able. Items in bold are to be spoken by the assembly.

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**

Go in peace. Rejoice in Christ our Savior.

Thanks be to God.

### **Postlude**

“Joy to the World” by D. Cherwien

*Chancel flowers are given by Sharon & Dave Potter  
in celebration of their 21st anniversary*

Enjoy today's service? Visit our Facebook page and invite a friend, comment, or leave a review. Please text the word “welcome” to 855-965-5200 to be added to our email list. May God go with you today and everyday.

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## Participants in Today's Service

**Pastor:**

The Rev. Mark Walters

**Musician:**

Steve Schmidt

**Assisting Minister/Lector:**

Michele Torchia

**Usher:**

Bob Linderman

**Altar Guild:**

Carol Landry

**Camera:**

Mike Lehm

**Ministers:**

The people of St. Stephen's

**Pastor F. Mark Walters**(lvtheos@gmail.com 410-739-5365)

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

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## *Christmas Flowers*

*Mr. & Mrs. Jerome O. Herlihy:* In memory of Thomas & Pearl Herlihy

*Carol & Chuck Landry:* To the Glory of God

*Ingrid LaPorte & Family:* In honor of Mr. & Mrs. John Munson and Mr. & Mrs. Edward LaPorte

*Bob & Sue Linderman:* In memory of our parents, Bob's late wife, Ann, and Sue's late husband, Charles Krick.

*David & Sharon Potter:* The People of St. Stephens, our church family and to the Glory of God.

*John Rodammer:* In honor and memory of Wilmar & Leona Rodammer

*Karleen Strayer:* In memory of Delores & Edsel Carlson and Gerald Strayer and to the Glory of God

*Jurgen Scheide:* In memory of Dr. Ingrid Scheide-Fischer

*Betty & Bill Sperati:* In honor of our children: Jacob (Christa), Joshua (Gloriana) and Becky and our grandchildren: Aurora, Lydia, Roland, Lillith, Douglas and Francis. In memory of our parents Carleton & Eloise Sperati and Horace & Betty Short and sister Mary Short.

*The People of St. Stephen's:* In memory of Errol Hartmann

*Michele Torchia:* In memory of my mom, Lee Torchia

*Karen, Joy and Kathy Weber:* In memory of Al Weber and Elaine Jackson

*Betsy Zimny:* In memory of my parents, my brother and my sister and in honor of my two daughters, Libby and Sarah, and my granddaughters, Leah, Abigail and Sarah