

Third Sunday of Advent
Our Congregational Christmas Program
December 14, 2025



Lord of Love Lutheran Church (ELCA)
10405 Fort St., Omaha, NE 68134

“Celebrating and sharing God’s Love in a welcoming community of faith, while serving others”

Worship 9:00 a.m.

Bold type indicates Congregational responses.

Prelude “Carol of the Bells” played by Payton Combes..... arr. Bober
“Joy to the World” Handel/Bober

Announcements

Bell Choir: “Emmanuel”Arr. Barbara B. Kinyon

Ringling of the Bell

Greeting

P: 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.

***Confession and Forgiveness**

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Long-expected God,

we confess that we look to ourselves

for the peace and security only you can provide.

We reach for swords and spears,

reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.

We become impatient while waiting

and weary of keeping awake.

Free us from self-reliance,

and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.

Increase our trust in God's timing,

and awaken us to your advent among us,

that we may abound in the hope you have promised.

Amen.

God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness. ✠ You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior.

Amen.

*Kyrie



Lord, have mer - cy__ on your peo - ple. Christ have mer - cy__ on__ us.
Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.__ Chri - ste e - le - i - son.



Shine your light in__ to our dark - ness. Fill__ us__ with your ho - ly love.
Heal all__ con - flicts be - tween na - tions. Teach us__ how to__ live as one.



Be our strength in times of__ trou - ble. Set us free from chains that__ bind.
Show us how to love our__ neigh - bor. Run to those who__ cry for__ help.



Breathe new life in - to our__ spir - its. Pu - ri - fy our__ hearts and minds.
Word made flesh who lives a - mong us; Christ our__ Lord, Em - man - u - el.

*Advent Wreath Litany

Sung to the tune of "Away in the Manger"

L: This week's advent theme is Joy. If you would please join me in singing today's theme verse to the tune of "Away in the Manger, while the first three candles are lit.

**Now Joy joins the chorus, a bright, laughing flame,
For God took on flesh and bore our own name.
In straw and in struggle, in laughter and tears,
God mold us with mercy through all of our years.**

Please be seated.

*Prayers of Intercession

L: In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

A brief silence.

God of power and mercy, we praise you for Jesus and his acts of healing and liberation. Lead us to proclaim the good news from generation to generation, that all may place their hope in you. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

When lands are parched and dry, bring rain and snow; where wilderness is barren, sow seeds of life. Fill the lands with trees that grow, plants that flower, and creatures that thrive, as nature proclaims the wonder of your works. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

When there is injustice or corruption among nations and leaders, root it out. Turn their attention to inequity and the cries of the poor. Instill a deeper sense of compassion and care in all who govern. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

When bodies weaken and hearts grow fearful, speak your blessing. We especially pray for those on our prayer list and those whose names and needs we lift up to you now... In uncertain times, remind us of the promise spoken to our ancestors in faith. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

When people are imprisoned or held captive, break the chains and offer release. Strengthen the work of the church in restorative justice, breaking cycles of poverty, and welcoming the immigrant, we especially pray for Lutheran Family Services work here in Nebraska. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

As we await your coming, we give thanks for the faithful who have lived and died in faith, especially Mary, mother of Jesus and John of the Cross. May their boldness of faith inspire our witness and work. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.
Amen

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

L: Let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated.

Choir Anthem: *"Prepare Ye the Way"*Arr. Jon Novak

Welcome to our Interactive Christmas Program!

Prayer of the Day

L: Let us pray.

Amazing God, long ago, you gathered a group of unlikely outsiders—Mary, Joseph, shepherds, and others to be part of a great miracle: the birth of Jesus, our Savior. Today, you have sought us out and brought us to the manger. You have interrupted our routines with Your Good News. You have gathered this unlikely assortment of folk to become a holy people, a community of faith. We want to respond. Show us how. Help us receive your renewing love and everlasting peace as we recall the gift of presence coming to us in the flesh to bring good news to us all; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Reader 1: John 1:1-4, 9 – 13, 18b

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

The true light, which helps everyone to see, was coming into the world. Jesus was in the world, and Word that shaped the world was in him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. It is Jesus, a child of God, who by being close to the Father's heart, has made God known.

Hymn: "This Little Light of Mine"ELW 677 v. 1 & 3

1 This lit - tle light of mine, I'm goin' - a let it shine;
 2 Ev - 'ry - where I go, I'm goin' - a let it shine;
 3 Je - sus gave it to me, I'm goin' - a let it shine;

oh,

this lit - tle light of mine, I'm goin' - a let it shine;
 ev - 'ry - where I go, I'm goin' - a let it shine;
 Je - sus gave it to me, I'm goin' - a let it shine;

oh,

this lit - tle light of mine, I'm goin' - a let it shine,
 ev - 'ry - where I go, I'm goin' - a let it shine,
 Je - sus gave it to me, I'm goin' - a let it shine,

oh,



Reader 2: Luke 1:26 – 38

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, the messenger of God, Gabriel, was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to an unmarried woman engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The young woman's name was Mary. And Gabriel said to her, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But Mary was much perplexed by his words and wondered what sort of greeting this might be. Gabriel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. 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. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary asked, "How can this be, since I am unmarried?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. 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. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the messenger of God departed from her.

Hymn: "Here I Am"ELW 574 v. 1& 3



1 "I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my peo - ple cry.
 2 "I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my peo - ple's pain.
 3 "I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.



All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.
 I have wept for love of them. They turn a - way.
 I will set a feast for them. My hand will save.



I, who made the stars of night, I will make their dark-ness bright.
 I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love a - lone.
 Fin-est bread I will pro-vide till their hearts be sat - is - fied.



Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?"
 I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?"
 I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?"

Refrain



Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you



call-ing in the night. I will go, Lord, if you

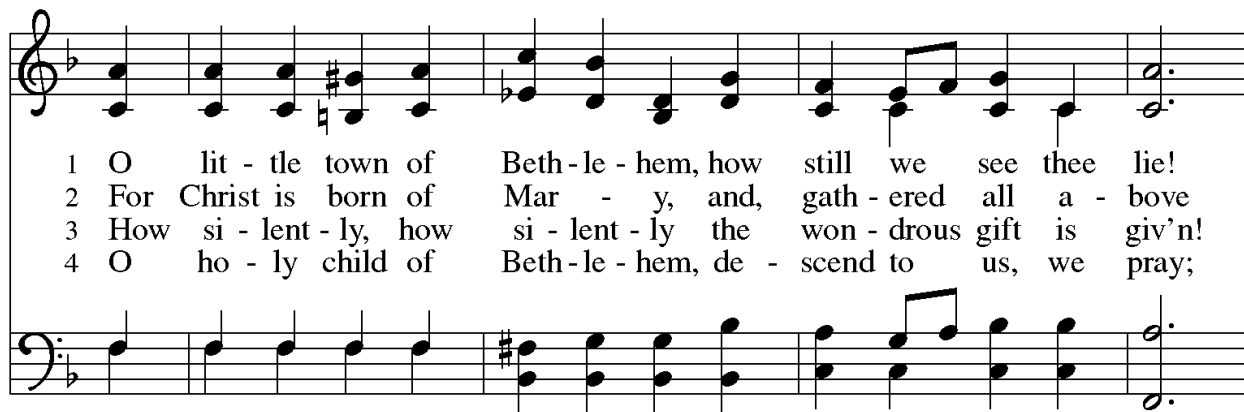


lead me. I will hold your peo - ple in my heart.

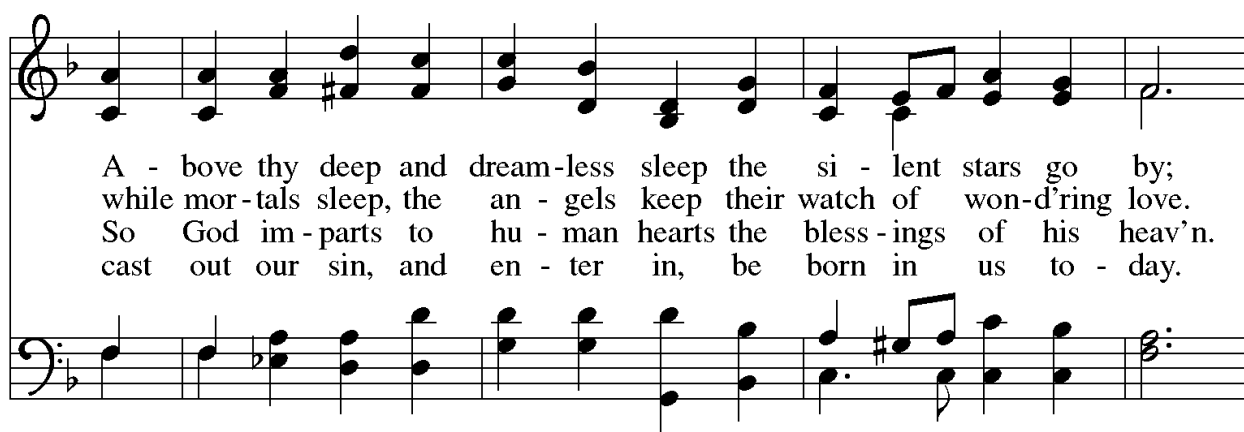
Reader 1: Narration

Hymn: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"ELW 279 v. 1 & 2

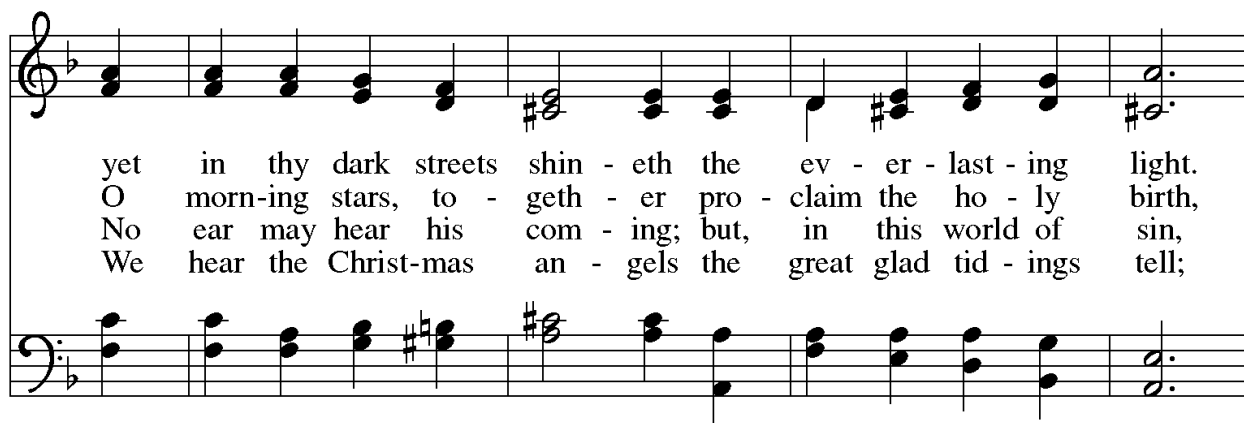
MARY, JOSEPH AND BABY ENTER SANCTUARY AND TAKE SEATS IN CHANCEL.



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
 2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, and, gath - ered all a - bove
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is giv'n!
 4 O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by;
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - d'ring love.
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heav'n.
 cast out our sin, and en - ter in, be born in us to - day.



yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light.
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
 No ear may hear his com - ing; but, in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;

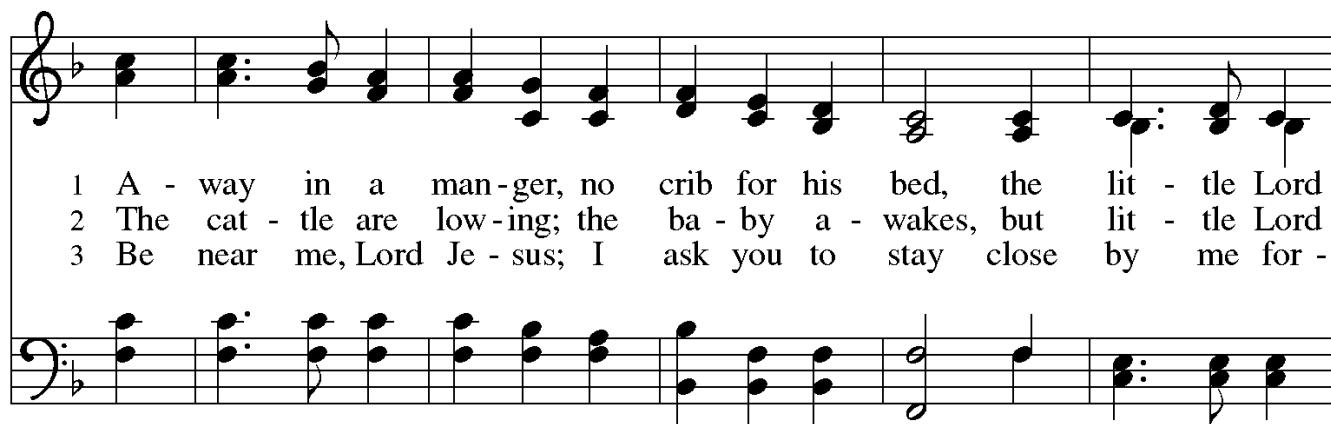


The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
 and prais - es sing to God the king, and peace to all the earth!
 where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.
 oh, come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Im - man - u - el!

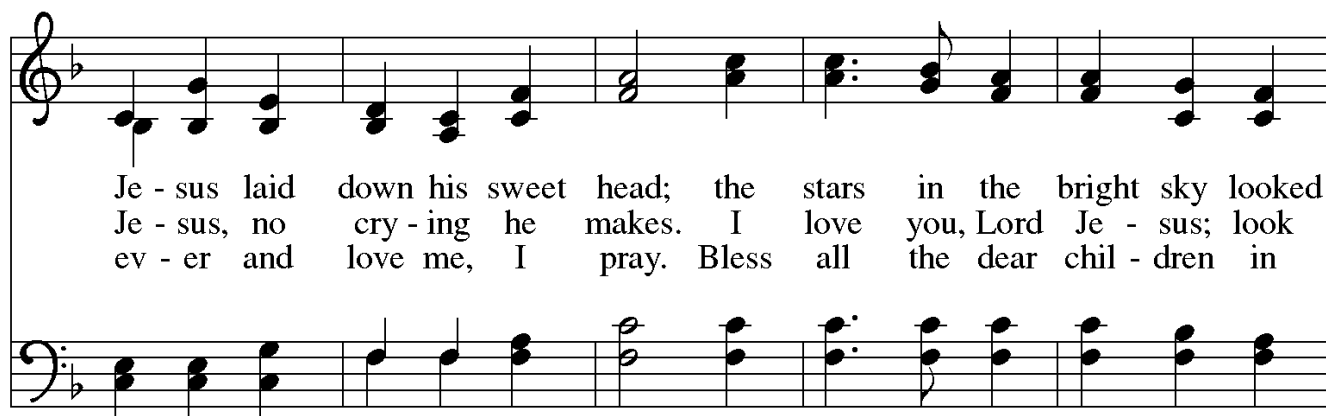
Reader 2: Narration

Hymn: "Away in a Manger"ELW 277 v. 1 & 2

**THE FULL COSTUMED ANGEL AND STAR TAKE THEIR PLACE "IN THE SKY."*



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



Je - sus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked
Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes. I love you, Lord Je - sus; look
ev - er and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil - dren in

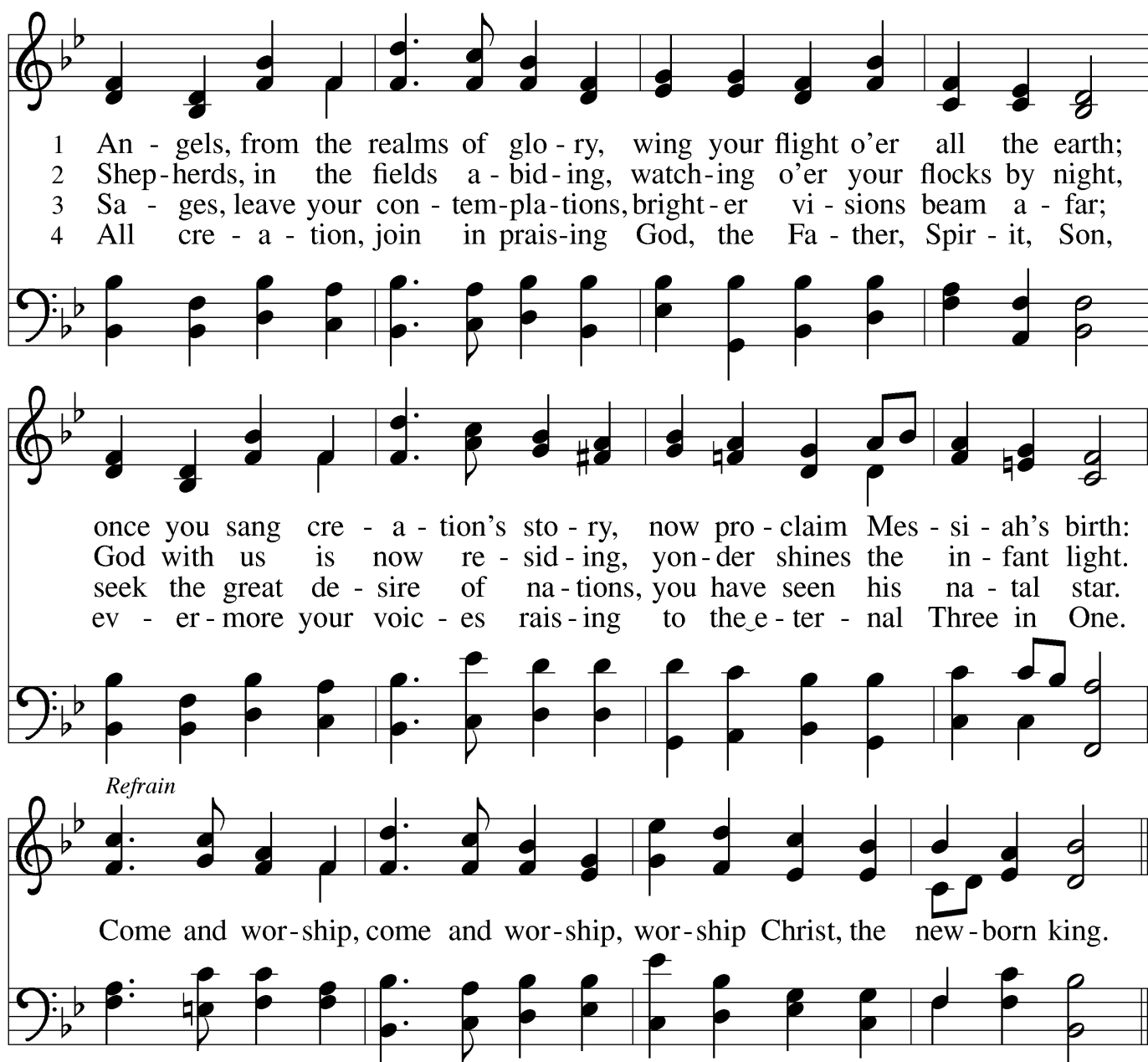


down where he lay, the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
down from the sky and stay by my cra - dle till morn-ing is nigh.
your ten - der care and fit us for heav-en, to live with you there.

Reader 2: Luke 2:10-13 Now, it was night time and in the fields nearby, shepherds were watching their flocks. Then an angel stood before the shepherds and the glory of the Lord shone around all of them. And the shepherds were terrified. But the angel of the Lord said to them: 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. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." Immediately after the angel stopped speaking, there were suddenly many angels praising God and saying "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors."

Hymn: "Angels, from the Realms of Glory"..... ELW 275 v.1 2

***ALL OTHER "ANGELS" COME TO SURROUND THE BABY JESUS.**



1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
 2 Shep-herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,
 3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;
 4 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God, the Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son,

once you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
 God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - fant light.
 seek the great de - sire of na - tions, you have seen his na - tal star.
 ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing to the e - ter - nal Three in One.

Refrain

Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born king.

Reader 1: Narration

Hymn: "Go Tell It on the Mountain".....ELW 290 v. 1 & 2

***ALL "SHEPHERDS" MOVE TO FRONT DURING SINGING.**

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!

1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when, lo, a - bove the earth
3 Down in a lone - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born;

Refrain

be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
rang out the an - gel cho-rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless-ed Christ-mas morn.

Reader 1: Narration

Hymn: “Do You Hear What I Hear?”v. 1 & 2

***ALL “ANIMALS” MOVE TO FRONT DURING SINGING**

Said the night wind to the little lamb,
Do you see what I see?
Way up in the sky, little lamb,
Do you see what I see?
A star, a star, dancing in the night
With a tail as big as a kite
With a tail as big as a kite

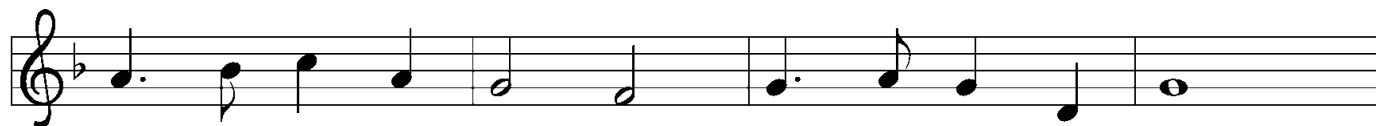
Said the little lamb to the shepherd boy,
Do you hear what I hear?
Ringing through the sky, shepherd boy,
Do you hear what I hear?
A song, a song, high above the trees
With a voice as big as the sea
With a voice as big as the sea

Reader 2: Narration

Offering

Gifts may be placed in the offering plate located in the back of the sanctuary or given electronically at www.lord-of-love.org.

**ALL "WISEMEN" BRING THE OFFERINGS FORWARD TO THE MANGER.*



What . . . can I give him, poor . . . as I am?



If I were a shep - herd I would bring a lamb;



if I were a wise . . . man I would do my part;



yet what I can I give him— give my heart.

Offertory Prayer

L: Let us pray.

God of Light, our world is a very dark place. Therefore, we offer the gifts of ourselves, our time and our resources, trusting you will use them to set the world aglow with your loving presence, made known to us through Christ. May our offerings continue to shine brightly before others so they may see our good works and glorify you. We ask this in the name of Christ. Amen.

L: This is the Good News today, and why we celebrate Christmas, because Christmas is the story that reminds us that God loved us so much, that he became one of us, to show us how to live in relationship with God and with each other. Now with joy in our hearts, let's stand and sing all the verses of "Joy to the World."

***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

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**

L: Filled with the Christmas story, go in peace to serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Postlude “Rock the Halls”..... arr. Olson
played by Lorelei Rich

Please stay in place until a new Lord of Love Nativity picture can be taken, and a special thank you to all who participated!

Special thanks to those who helped make this Christmas Program happen:

Program Directors: Claudia Rowen and Pastor Becky Sells

Sound, Choir and Bell Director: Jon Novak

Organist: Carol Novak

Soloist: Chris Rich

Technical Directors: Chris and Renae Rich

Liturgist: Claudia Rowen

Reader 1: Lorelei Rich

Reader 2: Payton Combes

This Little Light of Mine

Text: African American spiritual

Music: THIS JOY, African American spiritual: arr. Horace Clarence Boyer, b. 1935

Arr. © Horace Clarence Boyer, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Here I Am

Text: Daniel L. Schutte, b. 1946

Music: HERE I AM, LORD, Daniel L. Schutte

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Do You Hear What I Hear

Text: Noël Regney and Music: Gloria Shayne, 1962 by Regent Music

Arr. By Lorie Line. ©2006, Jewel Music Publishing

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Everlasting Light Liturgy

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