

**† THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT †**  
**December 14, 2025**

<b>Sunday School Christmas Pageant 9:00 a.m.</b> <b>“O Christmas Tree”</b>
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**PRELUDE**

Prepare the Royal Highway

John Behnke

**INVOCATION and OPENING VERSICLES** (*Congregation rising*)

**P** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** **Amen.**

**P** For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given;

**C** **and the government shall be upon His shoulder,**

**P** and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor,

**C** **Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."** (*Isaiah 9:6*)

**P** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

**C** **and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.** (*John 1:14*)

**P** Glory to God in the highest,

**C** **and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!** (*Luke 2:14*)

**PROCESSIONAL HYMN**

**O Little Town of Bethlehem**

**O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!**

**Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;**

**yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.**

**The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**

**How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv'n!**

**So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heav'n.**

**No ear my hear His coming; but in this world of sin,**

**where meek souls will receive Him, still the dear Christ enters in.**

**O holy Child of Bethlehem descend to us, we pray;**

**cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.**

**We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;**

**O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Immanuel!**

## **OPENING PRAYER**

**L** Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we gather together to celebrate the birth of Your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Open our hearts as we prepare to welcome the newborn King. Fill us with Your hope, peace, joy and love as Your praises are lifted this morning. In Your Most Holy Name we pray.

**C** **Amen.**

*(Everyone is seated)*

## **CHERUB CHOIR**

Ten Little Angels/Go Tell It On the Mountain

## **PAGEANT PROLOGUE: Facts About Christmas Trees**

### **SCENE 1: The Christmas Tree Contest**

At the book club meeting with Mrs. Palmer, Hazel, Maggie and Mr. Atwood

#### **HYMN**

**O Come, Little Children, v. 1**

O come, little children, O come, one and all,  
to Bethlehem haste, to the manger so small.  
God's Son for a gift has been sent you this night  
to be your Redeemer, your joy and delight.

### **SCENE 2: The First Ornament**

Rowan and Mrs. Palmer

#### **HYMN**

**O Come, Little Children, v. 2**

He's born in a stable for you and for me;  
draw near by the bright gleaming starlight to see,  
in swaddling clothes lying so meek and so mild,  
the message of angels, the heavenly Child.

### **SCENE 3: In a Rush**

Hazel, Mrs. Palmer and Mr. Atwood

#### **HYMN**

**O Come, Little Children, v. 3**

See Mary and Joseph, with joy in their eyes,  
are tenderly watching the bed where He lies.  
The shepherds are kneeling with hearts full of love,  
while angels sing loud hallelujahs above.

## **SCENE 4: Christmas Spirit?**

Holly, Mrs. Palmer and Mr. Atwood

### **HYMN**

### **O Come, Little Children, v. 4**

Kneel down and adore Him with shepherds today;  
lift up hearts and hands now and praise Him as they.  
Rejoice that a Savior from sin has been giv'n,  
and join with the song of the angels in heav'n.

## **SCENE 5: Christmas Spirit!**

Maggie and Mr. Atwood

### **LIVING NATIVITY**

The Christmas Story from the Gospel of Luke

### **HYMN**

### **O Christmas Tree**

O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, how lovely are your branches; *(repeat)*  
Not only green when summer glows, but in the winter when it snows.  
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, how lovely are your branches.

O Christmas Tree, O Christmas tree, we learn from all your beauty; *(repeat)*  
Your branches filled with Christmas cheer give hope and strength throughout  
the year. O Christmas Tree, O Christmas tree, we learn from all your beauty.

O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, you bring us joy and gladness; *(repeat)*  
Your branches sparkle in the night and fill the world with Christmas light.  
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, you bring us joy and gladness.

## **SCENE 6: Lighting the Christmas Tree**

Mrs. Palmer, Hazel and Mr. Atwood

### **CHERUB/YOUTH CHOIR**

### **Come On, Ring Those Bells**

Come on, ring those bells; light the Christmas tree.  
Jesus is the King, born for you and me.  
Come on, ring those bells; everybody say:  
Jesus, we remember it's Your birthday!

**HYMN** (*congregation rising*)

**Joy to the World**

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;  
let ev'ry heart prepare Him room and heav'n and nature sing...**

**No more let sins and sorrows grow nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make His blessings flow far as the curse is found...**

**He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove  
the glories of His righteousness and wonders of His love...**

*(younger children exit to Friendship Room during the hymn)*

### **PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**

**P** God of grace,

**C** hear our prayer.

### **COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **OFFERING/VOLUNTARY**

The Holly and the Ivy

Ann Buys

### **THE LORD'S PRAYER** (*Congregation rising*)

**P** Taught by our Lord, and trusting His promises, we are bold to pray:

**C** **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.**

### **BENEDICTION**

**P** The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be  
gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

**C** **Amen.**

### **RECESSIONAL HYMN**

**Go Tell It On the Mountain**

**Refrain:** **Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev'rywhere;  
Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!**

**While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,  
Behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. Refrain**



## Service of Holy Communion 10:45 a.m.

### PRELUDE

Prepare the Royal Highway

John Behnke

### OPENING HYMN (*Congregation rising*)

LSB Hymn 343

Prepare the Royal Highway

### INVOCATION and CONFESSION

P In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P Let us gather under the wings of God's mercy.

C **Gracious God, we acknowledge that we are sinners, and we confess our sins – those known to us that burden our hearts, and those unknown to us but seen by You. We know that before You nothing remains hidden. Free us from the weight of sin, and work in us those things that are pleasing in Your sight; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for us, and for His sake forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

### LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

P As we light our Advent wreath, we remember the One who comes – Jesus, the light of the world.

C **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

*(Two blue candles and the pink candle are lit)*

### ADVENT CANTICLE

(LSB Hymn 357, v. 6)

O come, Thou Dayspring from on high, and cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray:

C **Lord Jesus Christ, hear the fervent prayers of Your people and lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

### OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 35:1-10

<sup>1</sup>The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus <sup>2</sup>it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and

shouting. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. <sup>3</sup>Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees. <sup>4</sup>Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." <sup>5</sup>Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be opened; <sup>6</sup>then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert; <sup>7</sup>the burning sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp; the grass shall become reeds and rushes. <sup>8</sup>A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. <sup>9</sup>No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. <sup>10</sup>And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

**C Thanks be to God.**

## **EPISTLE**

James 5:7-10

<sup>7</sup>Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. <sup>8</sup>You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. <sup>9</sup>Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! <sup>10</sup>As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

**C Thanks be to God.**

## **GOSPEL** (*Congregation rising*)

Matthew 11:2-11

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 11th chapter.

**C Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>2</sup>When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup>and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" <sup>4</sup>Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup>the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. <sup>6</sup>And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." <sup>7</sup>As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>8</sup>What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. <sup>9</sup>What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup>This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.'

<sup>11</sup>Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C Praise to You, O Christ.**

**HYMN OF THE DAY** On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry **LSB Hymn 344**

**MESSAGE** Rev. Morris Mayer

**APOSTLES' CREED** (*Congregation rising*)

**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.**

**PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**

A God of grace,

**C hear our prayer.**

**COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**OFFERING/VOLUNTARY** Freu dich sehr Lee Dengler

**† HOLY COMMUNION †**

**PREFACE** (*Congregation rising*)

P The Lord be with you.

**C And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts.

**C We lift them up to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God. You comforted Your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom You will also make all things new in the day when He comes to judge the world in righteousness. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

**C Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might: Heaven and earth are full of Your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**



## THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C **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.**

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION and SIGN OF PEACE

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said: "Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me." In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

## **AGNUS DEI** (*Sung to the hymn "On Jordan's Bank"*)

Lord Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, who takes the sin of the world away, have mercy on us, grant us peace, and fill us with Your love and grace.

**DISTRIBUTION HYMN**      Comfort, Comfort Ye My People      **LSB Hymn 347**  
*As you come forward, you will receive the bread in your hand (please ask for "gluten-free" if desired); then take the wine in the individual cup from the tray. White grape juice is available in the center of the tray. After drinking, place empty cups in the second tray.*

## **POST-COMMUNION PRAYER** (*Congregation rising*)

A God for whom we wait, in this meal You have given us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known Your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of Your name; through Jesus Christ, Your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

## **BENEDICTION**

P The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

C **Amen.**

## **CLOSING HYMN**

Hark the Glad Sound

**LSB Hymn 349**

**DISMISSAL**

P     Go in peace to serve the Lord.  
C     **Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

Chesterfield

Edward Broughton

\* \* \* \* \*

**COMMUNION STATEMENT**

Village Lutheran Church welcomes to Holy Communion those baptized Christians who: †Know Jesus Christ as their Savior (*John 20:31*); †Recognize that the body and blood of Christ are truly present in the bread and wine (*1 Cor. 11:29*); †Are able to examine themselves and repent of their sins (*1 Cor. 11:28*); and †Look to God’s Holy Spirit for help in living the Christian life (*Col. 1:10*). Persons not receiving Communion may come forward to receive a blessing.

***Participants in the Services:***

Rev. Mark Budenholzer, Associate Pastor/Director of Youth & Family Ministry  
Rev. Morris Mayer, Pastoral Assistant  
Deborah Reiss, Minister of Music

	9:00	10:45
<b>Lector</b>	Pageant	Ralph Schoene
<b>Asst. Minister</b>		Ralph Schoene
<b>Altar Care</b>		Morris Mayer
<b>Usher Team</b>	Volunteers	Charlie Eisenberg
<b>Sexton</b>	Kaitlyn Clark	

**Stewardship Reflection**

*(Fiscal Year July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026)*

Offering received last week: \$6,003  
Offering needed weekly to meet budget: \$5,770  
Offering received to date: \$119,940  
Offering needed to date: \$132,710

## **News and Notes:**

**The Christmas trees** by the altar are known as the Tree of Darkness and the Tree of Light. The dark tree has no lights and is decorated with apples as a reminder of the sin that drove Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. The lit tree has roses, a symbol of the Messiah, as a reminder that Jesus is the Light of the World who came to remove the curse of sin and usher in the kingdom of God.

**Winter Worship** – Please note the changes to our worship schedule:

- ❖ The final Saturday evening service before the winter will be December 20 at 5:30 p.m.
- ❖ On **December 28** there is one combined service at **10:00 a.m.**
- ❖ The winter schedule begins in January with services on Sundays only at 9:00 & 10:45 a.m.

**COFFEE HOUR VOLUNTEERS** are needed for December through the spring. Please sign up on the bulletin board in the MPR.

**SOUP KITCHEN** – Prepare food in aluminum trays (available at the Reception desk) and drop-off in the parking lot from 12:00-1:00. Please go to our church web site to sign up and indicate what food you will prepare. The next date is **Wednesday, December 17**. Contact Katie Bukofzer at [etakwhit@aol.com](mailto:etakwhit@aol.com).

**Service of 9 Lessons & Carols** – You are cordially invited to this traditional church and school service led by choirs of The Chapel School on **Wednesday, December 17, at 7:00 p.m.** Hear the promise of salvation from Genesis to John, with musical reflections on each reading and the theme “You are the Light of the World.”

**Christmas Eve Eucharist** – We will introduce a new worship opportunity with Holy Communion for Christmas. A brief spoken communion liturgy will begin after the 8:00 p.m. service, **at 9:20 p.m.** If you would like to partake, please gather in the front pews and join us for quiet reflection and the sacrament.

**“Strengthening God’s House” Capital Campaign Pledges** – As the saying goes, “It takes a Village...” If you are in a position to offer financial support, please prayerfully consider what you might give and make a pledge today. Thank you for helping to sustain our ministry.

**Wednesday Bible Study** – On December 17 we will complete John chapter 10, as Jesus speaks in the temple courts during the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah).

**Music Ministry:** Rehearsals this week will be as follows:

- ❖ High School Choir – Sunday, Dec. 21, at 10:15 a.m.
- ❖ Village Bells – Wednesday, Dec. 17, at 5:00 p.m.
- ❖ Youth Choir – OFF Thurs., Dec. 18
- ❖ Chancel Choir – Thurs., Dec. 18, at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 21, at 8:40 a.m.

**Youth News:** Voyagers (Grades 3-6) meet on Thursday, Dec. 18 at 6:00 p.m.; Lifers (Grades 7-8) Confirmation class on Sunday, Dec. 21; Crusaders (Grades 9-12) Donuts & Discussion on Sunday, Dec. 21

- ❖ **Christmas Parties** – On December 18, Voyagers will hold a gift exchange. Please bring a pair of wrapped Christmas socks, mittens, hat or scarf, and a dessert to share. Lifers will also have a Christmas party.

**Prayer Line:** We pray for the sick and those experiencing any kind of difficulty: Adele Acosta, Marcela Acosta, Victor Acosta, Giovana Boniello, Davenport Family (William, Jordan, Joshua, Sonya, Wayne), Amani Fahr, Michelle Ghioris, Aurora Rose Gitter, Ruth Gitter, Anita Gould, Brandi Grissmeyer, Logan Grissmeyer, Anita Kebschull, Sue Kobylack, Michaela Kroppel, Christy Krum, Freddie Lando, Michelle Liscoe, Robert & Susan & Rosalind Magilton, Douglas Miller, Rome Martello, Cole Martello, Aaliyah Pedrosa, Elizabeth Pedrosa, Joshua Pedrosa, Jose Pedrosa, Paola Pedrosa, Torrey Pietarinen, John Scaramuzzo, Peter Williams

**Bereavement Prayer Line:** We pray for those who are grieving the loss of a loved one.

- † **Dave Condon**, husband of Deacon Joan Condon, passed away on December 9, 2025
- † **Phoebe Carey**, a young wife and mother of two small children, and a family friend of Jean Hanson, passed away on December 6

### **SUMMARY OF CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY**

The September 2025 congregational survey provided a clear picture of Village Lutheran Church's character, challenges, and hopes for the future. Respondents described VLC as a long-established yet dynamic community rooted in Scripture, worship, and music, with a welcoming and family-like spirit. Members seek to strengthen youth and family engagement, expand the church's community presence, and deepen ties with The Chapel School. Financial sustainability and clear communication are also key goals. The congregation envisions a compassionate, grounded pastor—an inspiring communicator and thoughtful leader—able to connect across generations, guide growth, and foster unity in faith and purpose.

### **Village Lutheran Church and The Chapel School**

172 White Plains Road, Bronxville, NY 10708

914-337-0207 + [www.VLC-NY.ORG](http://www.VLC-NY.ORG)

**Connect Card** – Scan QR code to contact us via digital link

