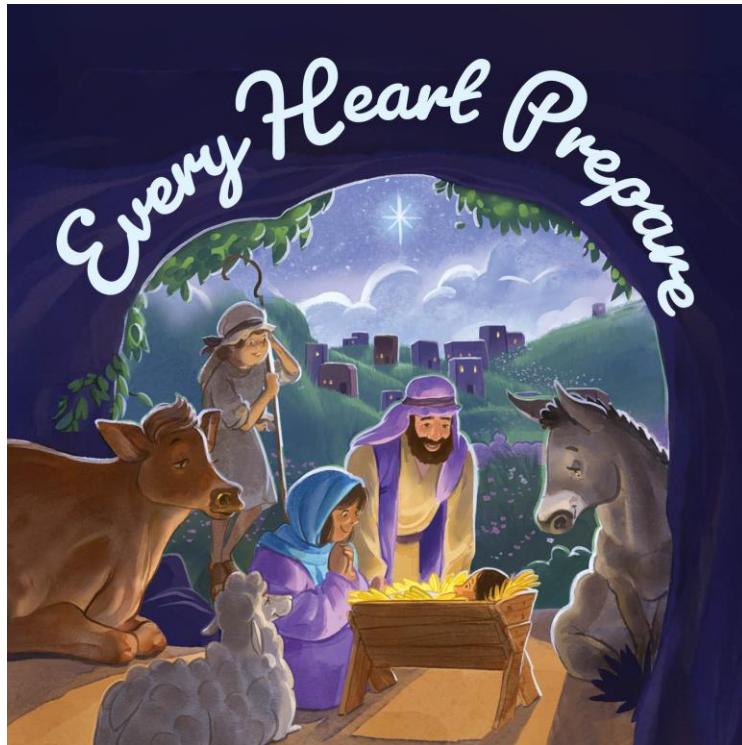




*Bethlehem Lutheran Church—William Penn  
Founded 1860—Lutheran Church Missouri Synod*

**MIDWEEK ADVENT  
EVENING PRAYER  
DECEMBER 17, 2025  
7:00 PM**



Pastor

Rev. Kelly Dean Krieg  
(214) 208-1364

[PastorKrieg@BethlehemWmPenn.org](mailto:PastorKrieg@BethlehemWmPenn.org)

Secretary

Janice Pazderny  
(979) 836-7303

[Office@BethlehemWmPenn.org](mailto:Office@BethlehemWmPenn.org)

Organist

Ann Sommer

Ushers

Caleb Klussmann  
Corey Klussmann  
Don Koester  
Valgene Kohring

Acolyte

Taylor Nowicki

# Midweek Advent Evening Prayer

December 17, 2025 – 7:00 PM

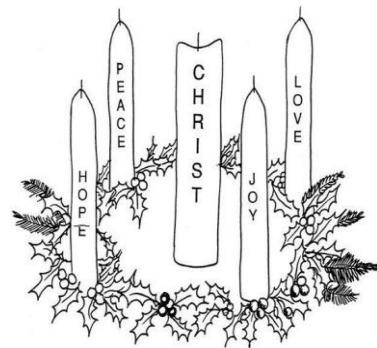
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## EVENING PRAYER

Order of Service: *Lutheran Service Book*, pp 243-252

Pre-Service Music

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*Ringing of the Church Bell*

### ADVENT 3: CRÈCHE

“Prepare!” is often the watchword of the season as the world gets ready for another celebration of Christmas. An integral part of any preparation is decoration. We see decorations everywhere this time of year. The world may not comprehend the real meaning of Christmas, but even secular preparations use many of the same decorations beloved by Christians—an appropriation we shouldn’t mind at all, because these decorations point us to Christ. This year, as we look forward again to the coming of the Messiah, we take a fresh look at how the adornments of the season draw our eyes to Jesus, that we may more richly behold the love, peace, joy, and hope He comes to bring as this beauty is set before us.

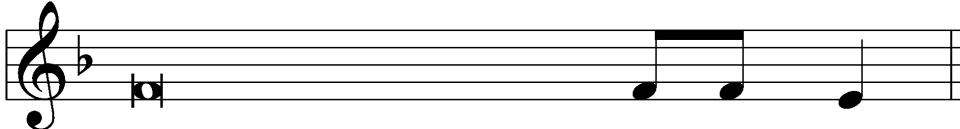
Tonight, we focus on the crèche—those miniature models of the nativity scene that abound each December. Unlike lights and evergreens, the symbols that aided our meditation these last two weeks, the crèche is distinctly Christian. In it, we behold Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, the Magi, the angels, the stable animals, and, at the center, baby Jesus. Some places introduce the characters in chronological order; others put them all out at once. Either way, the crèche represents a crucial, historical event: God taking on human form and human nature so that He could take our place and redeem us from all sin. We behold it with fresh eyes this evening.



## † SERVICE OF LIGHT †

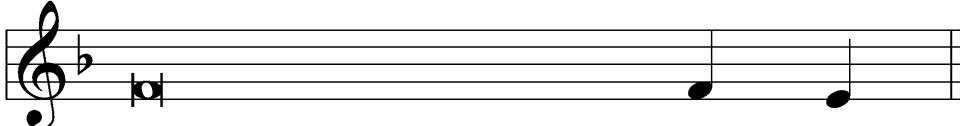
*Stand*

**P** Jesus Christ is the Light of the world,



**C** the light no darkness can o - ver - come.

**P** Stay with us, Lord, for it is evening,



**C** and the day is almost o - ver.

**P** Let Your light scatter the darkness



**C** and il - lu - mine Your Church.

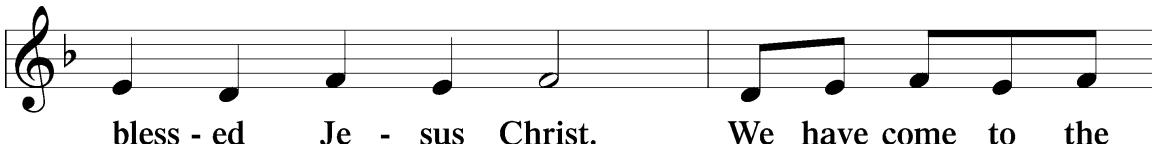
### PHOS HILARON

*LSB 244*

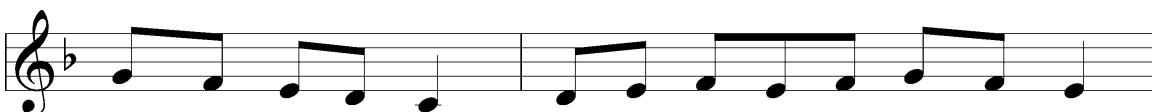
**P** Joyous light of glory:



**C** of the im - mor - tal Fa - ther; heav - en - ly, ho - ly,



bless - ed Je - sus Christ. We have come to the



set - ting of the sun, and we look to the eve - ning light.



We sing to God, the Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Spir - it:

You are wor - thy of be - ing praised with pure voic - es for -  
 ev - er. O Son of God, O Giv - er of life:  
 the u - ni - verse pro - claims Your glo - ry.

THANKSGIVING FOR LIGHT

LSB 245

**P** Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of the universe, who led Your people Israel by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Enlighten our darkness by the light of Your Christ; may His Word be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path; for You are merciful, and You love Your whole creation and we, Your creatures, glorify You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

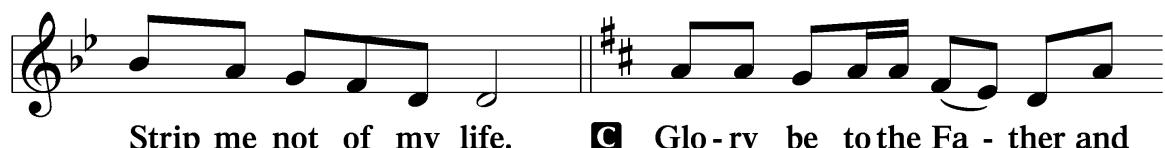
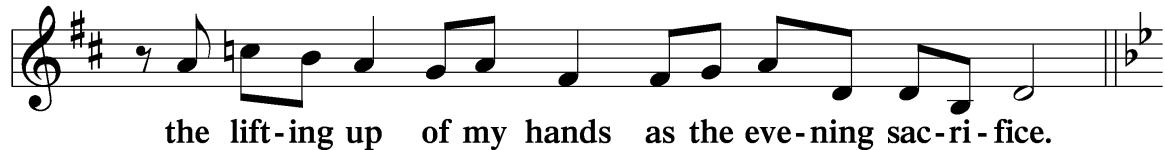
*Sit*

† PSALMODY †

PSALM 141

LSB 245

**C** Let my prayer rise be - fore You as in - cense,  
 the lift - ing up of my hands as the eve-ning sac - ri - fice.  
**I** O Lord, I call to You; come to me quick - ly; hear my voice  
 when I cry to You. **C** Let my prayer rise be - fore You as in-cense,



**P** Let us pray.

Let the incense of our repentant prayer ascend before You, O Lord, and let Your loving-kindness descend on us that, with purified minds, we may sing Your praises with the Church on earth and the whole heavenly host and may glorify You forever.

**C** Amen.

## OFFICE HYMN

*Savior of the Nations, Come*

LSB 332



1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come, Vir - gin's Son, make  
2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, By the Spir - it  
3 Here a maid was found with child, Yet re - mained a  
4 Then stepped forth the Lord of all From His pure and



here Your home! Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth,  
of our God, Was the Word of God made flesh—  
vir - gin mild. In her womb this truth was shown:  
king - ly hall; God of God, yet ful - ly man,



That the Lord chose such a birth.  
Wom - an's off - spring, pure and fresh.  
God was there up - on His throne.  
His he - ro - ic course be - gan.

5 God the Father was His source,  
Back to God He ran His course.  
Into hell His road went down,  
Back then to His throne and crown.

6 For You are the Father's Son  
Who in flesh the vict'ry won.  
By Your mighty pow'r make whole  
All our ills of flesh and soul.

7 From the manger newborn light  
Shines in glory through the night.  
Darkness there no more resides;  
In this light faith now abides.

△8 Glory to the Father sing,  
Glory to the Son, our king,  
Glory to the Spirit be  
Now and through eternity.

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## † READINGS †

### FIRST READING

*1 John 1:1-4*

**P** A reading from First John, the first chapter.

<sup>1</sup>That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—<sup>2</sup>the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us—<sup>3</sup>that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup>And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

**P** O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C** Thanks be to God.

### SECOND READING

*Matthew 1:18-25*

**P** A reading from Matthew, the first chapter.

<sup>18</sup>Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. <sup>20</sup>But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” <sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

<sup>23</sup>“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel” (which means, God with us). <sup>24</sup>When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, <sup>25</sup>but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called His name Jesus.

**P** O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## HYMN OF THE DAY

*Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

LSB 338



1 Come, Thou long - ex - pect-ed Je-sus, Born to set Thy peo-ple free;  
 2 Born Thy peo - ple to de - liv - er; Born a child and yet a king!



From our fears and sins re-lease us; Let us find our rest in Thee.  
 Born to reign in us for - ev - er, Now Thy gra - cious king - dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con-so - la-tion, Hope of all the earth Thou art,  
 By Thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it Rule in all our hearts a - lone;



Dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na-tion, Joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.  
 By Thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it Raise us to Thy glo - ri - ous throne.

Text and tune: Public domain

SERMON  
*Créche*  
 Matthew 1:18-25

*Stand*



† CANTICLE †

MAGNIFICAT

LSB 248

*Refrain*

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior. My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior.

1 For He has re - garded  
 2 For the Mighty One has done great things to me,  
 3 He has shown strength with His arm;  
 4 He has filled the hungry with good things,  
 5 Glo - ry be to the Father and to the Son

1 the lowliness of His hand-maiden.  
 2 and holy is His name;  
 3 He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
 4 and the rich He has sent empty away.  
 5 and to the Holy Spirit;

1 For behold, from this day fear Him  
 2 and His mercy is on those who fear Him  
 3 He has cast down the mighty from their thrones  
 4 He has helped His servant Israel in remembrance of His mercy  
 5 as it was in the beginning,

1 all generations will call me blessed.  
 2 from generation to generation. *Refrain*  
 3 and has exalted the lowly.  
 4 as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever.  
 5 is now, and will be forever. Amen. *Refrain*

*Sit*

## OFFERING

*Please fill out a pew attendance card and place it in the offering plate.*

*Stand*

## † PRAYER †

**P** In peace let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For Matthew and Jon, for all pastors in Christ, for all servants of the Church, and for all the people, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For Donald, for all public servants, for the government and those who protect us, that they may be upheld and strengthened in every good deed, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For those who work to bring peace, justice, health, and protection in this and every place, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For those who bring offerings, those who do good works in this congregation, those who toil, those who sing, and all the people here present who await from the Lord great and abundant mercy, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

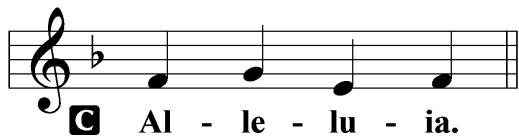
**P** For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and need, let us pray to the Lord:

**C** Lord, have mercy.

**P** For the faithful who have gone before us and are with Christ, let us give thanks to the Lord:



**P** Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

*Silence for individual prayer may follow.*

**P** Rejoicing in the fellowship of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ, our Lord:



#### COLLECT FOR PEACE

**P** O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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.

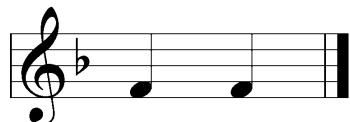
## BENEDICAMUS

LSB 252

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

## BENEDICTION

LSB 252

**P** The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the  $\text{+}$  Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.**C** A - men.*Sit*

## CLOSING HYMN

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

LSB 357; v.v. 1,5

1 O come, O come, Em - man - - u - el, And ran - som  
 5 O come, Thou Key of Da - - vid, come, And o - pen

cap - tive wide our Is heav'n - ly home; That mourns in Make safe the lone - ly way that

ex - ile here Un - til the Son of God mis - ap - pear.  
 leads on high, And close the path to mis - er - y.

*Refrain*

Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - - u - el

Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!



Fourth Sunday in Advent – December 21<sup>st</sup>    Sunday School at 9:00 AM  
Worship Service at 10:15 AM

Christmas Eve Children's Program – December 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM

Christmas Day Worship Service – December 25<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM

New Year's Eve Worship Service – December 31<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 PM

**THOSE DESIRING TO COMMUNE,  
PLEASE STAY SEATED AS THE USHERS DISMISS.**



In Light of 1 Cor. 11:23-26, Bethlehem Lutheran Church maintains the historical practice of “closed” communion in the belief that the Sacrament requires faith in Christ’s words that His body and blood are truly present. Furthermore, participation in the Sacrament is a sign of our unity in the faith with all those who join us at the altar. *For that reason, we ask that those visitors desiring to commune be members in good standing of a congregation of the LCMS and speak to the pastor or an elder before the beginning of the service.* Our denial of admission to those who are members of another confession is not a judgment upon their faith but a recognition that we hold to different confessions concerning God, salvation, and the Sacrament itself. Such individuals are invited to speak with the pastor following the service.

#### CONFESSiON AND ABSOLUTION

*Stand*

*The sign of the cross  $\text{\texttildelow}$  may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.*

**P** In the name of the Father and of the  $\text{\texttildelow}$  Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**C** Amen.

**P** Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

**P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,  
**C** **who made heaven and earth.**

**P** I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,  
**C** and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

*Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.*

**P** O almighty God, merciful Father,  
**C** I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.

**P** Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the  Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

## SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

### PREFACE

*LSB 194*

**P** The Lord be with you.  
**C** And with thy spirit.

**P** Lift up your hearts.  
**C** We lift them up unto the Lord.

**P** Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God.  
**C** It is meet and right so to do.

**P** It is truly meet, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory. 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 Sabaoth;  
heav'n and earth are full of Thy glory.  
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is He, blessed is He, blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

**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.

**P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**C** Amen.

**C** O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have  
mercy upon us.  
O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have  
mercy upon us.  
O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, grant  
us Thy peace. Amen.

*Sit*

*Stand*

**C** Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel.

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.

**P** O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,  
**C** and His mercy endureth forever.

**P** Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

**P** The Lord be with you.  
**C** And with thy spirit.

**P** Bless we the Lord.  
**C** Thanks be to God.

**P** 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  $\text{\tfrac{a}{c}}$  give you peace.  
**C** Amen, amen, amen.