



Welcome to Worship with Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church, whether you worship with us in-person or online (on Facebook Live or archived at www.holyshepherd.org.) May you know God's grace as we worship.

Know that You Are Welcome! We share in Holy Communion during the context of this morning's service. This is the table of the Lord. Jesus is the host and we are his guests. Jesus welcomes everyone to come and eat and be nourished, fed and forgiven. Come and eat and live!

Offerings are an Act of Worship! Offerings are one way we express both our gratitude for God's wondrous love and our commitment to for work of ministry. To support our work electronically, visit www.holyshepherd.org and utilize Givelify, our online giving platform.

▲ indicates that you are invited to stand as you are able

GATHERING MUSIC

Marc Levine

WORDS OF WELCOME

▲ A WORD FOR THOSE WHO GATHER

L: As we gather at the Christmas manger, let's recognize why it is that we stand so in need of the great news of this season — the news of the Christ-Child's birth. For Jesus comes as the light of the world

P: **But we've focused on the darkness that surrounds and overwhelms us, that frightens and numbs us.**

L: Jesus comes as the light of the world

P: **But we've used artificial lights to try and eliminate the darkness in our lives.**

L: Jesus comes as the light of the world

P: **But we've tried to deny the power of the darkness by pretending that it isn't there.**

L: Forgive us, O God, for these our actions of failure and our failures to act.

P: **Forgive us, O God, for putting our trust in ourselves rather than You.**

L: People of God, hear the good news! God has come to us as a light in the darkness. In the light of Christ we find forgiveness for our past, strength for our present and hope for our future. In and through this One, we have been enabled to live anew. Thanks be to God!

▲ GATHERING SONG GOOD CHRISTIAN FRIENDS, REJOICE Medieval German Latin Carol / ELW #288

**Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today;
ox and ass before him bow,
and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!**

**Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now ye hear of endless bliss:
Jesus Christ was born for this!
He has opened heaven's door,
and we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!**

**Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now ye need not fear the grave;
Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all
to gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!**

A CHRISTMAS LITANY

L: The Christmas news — that Good News of great joy — isn't just for a day.

P: **It is news that has changed our world and changes our lives forever!**

L: All we can do is give thanks, over and over.

P: **For unto us is born, in the city of David, a savior, who is Christ the Lord, Emmanuel, God with us.**

L: He will be the shepherd of our lives.

P: **He will lead us to springs of living water.**

L: He will be our great physician.

P: **He is the One who comes to make us whole.**

L: He will reveal to us our true selves.

P: **He is the One who will make us children of God.**

L: For unto us is born, in the city of David, a savior, who is Christ the Lord, Emmanuel, God with us.

P: **This is news that has changed our world and changes our lives forever!**

L: So let us pray:

P: **Almighty God, it was at Christmas that you took on flesh and became as us — and it was at Christmas that you illuminated our world with the brightness of the true Light. Teach us how best to reflect that light so that all nations and all people might know the wonders of your love. Amen.**

A SONG OF HOPE

THE FIRST NOEL

Traditional English Christmas Carol / ELW #300

***The first Noel the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.***

Refrain: ***Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel.***

***They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night.*** [Refrain]

***And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went.*** [Refrain]

THE LESSON

Luke 2:21-38

When the eighth day came, it was time to circumcise the child, and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit

rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul, too."

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

KIDTALK

Pastor John Valentine

THE SONG OF THE DAY GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

Lyrics & Music Trad. African American Spiritual / ELW #290

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]

***The shepherds feared and trembled
when, lo! above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth.*** [Refrain]

***Down in a lonely manger
the humble Christ was born;
and God sent us salvation
that blessed Christmas morn.*** [Refrain]

THE SERMON

Pastor John Valentine

▲ WORDS TO LIVE BY

based on Philippians 2

As people of God, we find our hope and salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

OFFERTORY

I WONDER AS I WANDER
anon. Appalachian Folk Melody

THE PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

We pray for the Church throughout the world, and all in need, utilizing the prayer refrain: "God, in your mercy, hear our prayer."

▲ THE COMMUNION LITANY

L: Lord Jesus, you came to us as a tiny Baby born in danger and discomfort. You grew into a Man whom the world can never forget. You offered up your body and blood for the sake of our broken lives and our broken world. So come to us now in this bread and this wine. Unite us and strengthen us by your presence and through your Word, that we might be your faithful children in this world.

P: **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.**

L: In the night in which he was betrayed our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people

for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

HOLY COMMUNION

As we share in the gift of Holy Communion, we invite you to come down the center aisle to receive the bread and wine. After consuming the elements, please deposit your empty cup in the basket and return to your seat by the side aisle.

AWAY IN A MANGER

Lyrics Trad. American / Music by W.J. Kirkpatrick / ELW 278

***Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.***

***The cattle are lowing; the poor baby wakes,
But little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.***

***Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care
And fit us for heaven to live with you there.***

WHAT CHILD IS THIS?

Lyrics by W.C. Dix / Music Trad. English / ELW #296

***What child is this, who, laid to rest,
on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud,
the babe, the son of Mary!***

***Why lies he in such mean estate
where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through,
the cross be borne for me, for you;
hail, hail the Word made flesh,
the babe, the son of Mary!***

***So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
come, peasant king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high,***

*the virgin sings her lullaby;
joy, joy, for Christ is born,
the babe, the son of Mary!*

▲ THE BENEDICTION

L: May the humility of the shepherds, the perseverance of the wise men, the joy of the angels, and the peace of the Christ-child be God's gift to you this Christmas time and always.

P: **Amen!**

▲ THE SENDING SONG

HE CAME DOWN

Traditional Cameroonian Carol / ELW #253

*He came down that we may have love;
He came down that we may have love;
He came down that we may have love,
Hallelujah forevermore.*

*He came down that we may have peace;
He came down that we may have peace;
He came down that we may have peace,
Hallelujah forevermore.*

*He came down that we may have joy;
He came down that we may have joy;
He came down that we may have joy,
Hallelujah forevermore.*

*He came down that we may have hope;
He came down that we may have hope;
He came down that we may have hope,
Hallelujah forevermore.*

*He came down that we may have life;
He came down that we may have life;
He came down that we may have life,
Hallelujah forevermore.*

▲ THE CHARGE

L: Go in peace, to love the newborn King by serving your neighbor!

P: **Thanks be to God!**

SENDING MUSIC

Marc Levine

Thank you to this morning's Worship Team for sharing their gifts of music with us today, including:

Bethany Valentine — Vocalist and Soloist

Pastor Pam Schaefer Dawson — Vocalist

Vicar Meagan Kim — Vocalist

Pastor John Valentine — Vocalist

Marc Levine — Pianist

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