



**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE
WITH CAROLS AND HOLY COMMUNION
December 24, 2023**

Peace Lutheran Church

2540 Applegate Street
Philomath, OR 97370
(541) 929-5504

We welcome you in the name of the Lord Jesus. We are honored with your presence. If you do not have a church home, you are invited to join us regularly. Please introduce yourself to Pastor Jeremy Lucke or one of the Ushers as you leave today and sign the guest book in the entryway. We continue to observe the guidelines for health safety. If you have any questions, please see an usher. Everyone is welcome.

The ringing of the bell and the lighting of the Christ candle mark the beginning of our service and a time for quiet meditation, prayer and inward reflection as we begin our worship.

Children are welcome at our worship services. If you prefer, Peace Lutheran has a playroom equipped for children three years old and younger. The room is unstaffed and can be accessed in the fellowship hall where the service is also being live streamed for your convenience and enjoyment.

Holy Communion is celebrated every first and third Sunday and will follow the order of service in the bulletin. If you are a baptized Christian and share our faith in Jesus as Savior and have been instructed in the meaning and use of the Lord's Supper, you are invited to partake. We have pre-wrapped communion wine or juice and wafers. We also have gluten-free wafers available. If you desire a gluten-free wafer, ask the server. May the body and blood of Jesus, present in the bread and wine, be a blessing to you.

There are times during the service when you will be asked to stand if you are able. Please feel free to remain seated if standing is difficult.

Offering. Peace Lutheran Church understands and teaches that Offerings are voluntary and to be from the heart. Whether we give or do not give does not determine our salvation. Whether we give much or little does not determine our standing before God. Sharing an Offering is an opportunity to quietly practice generosity with our neighbors. Offerings may be placed in the plates by the doors as we exit the sanctuary.

Serving You	
Pastor	Pastor Jeremy Lucke
Music Director	Colleen Schulze
Choir Director	Diane Crocker
Supt. Of Sunday School	Brandy Stokes & Karyn Stanley
Admin Assistant	Daniel Dusek
Parish Nurse	Kathy Durling
Webmaster	Jim Holroyd
Audio-Visual	Johnathon Holroyd, George Abele, Nicholas Abele, Merv Munster, Callie Santora, Caleb Santora, Joyce Long, Oscar Gutbrod, Sam Worth, Rick Durling, Jim Holroyd, Nora Stanley, Debbi Weiler, Daniel Dusek, Rick Durling
Praise Team	Rick Durling, Patrick Kamins, Karyn Stanley, Nora Stanley, Diane Crocker, Kaia Lucke, Sarah Grassel, Caleb Santora

Today - Sunday, December 24, 2023 (evening)	
Musician	Colleen Schulze
Reader	Rob Schulze

PRELUDE

AS WE GATHER..... One of the charming tradition of days gone by, still observed by some families, is the designation of a Christmas room in the house. In older homes, that room often was a parlor or dining room. The Christmas room was closed off to the family by the parents for days or even weeks before Christmas Eve and was beautified by a parent, grandparent, or other designated adult with decorations and greens and, most centrally, a Christmas tree, which frequently had ornaments on it. The room was set aside to remind all in the house to make room in their lives for the coming of Jesus. In his well loved paraphrase of Psalm 98, Isaac Watts writes, "Joy to the World, the Lord is Come! Let earth receive her King; Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room." Tonight, the room in our hearts is filled with the joyful assurance that Christ has come to fill the world and our lives with His love.

WELCOME

SPECIAL SONG

"Breath of Heaven"

By Karyn & Nora Stanley

CHRISTMAS EVE CAROL CELEBRATION

Leader: *We hear again the Good News from the Gospel according to St. Luke, chapter 2. Following each section of the reading, we hear and sing songs of Christmas joy, echoing the sounds of the angels on that first Christmas night.*

Reader: In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. Luke 2:1-5

Leader: *Although "O Little Town of Bethlehem" is an American carol, written by the Reverend Phillips Brooks of Pennsylvania in 1865, it was inspired by his visiting the actual town where Jesus was born in what we call the Holy Land. On this holy evening, we all go in heart and mind to that little town that became so special in God's plan of salvation.*

CAROL

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893; Tune: Lewis H. Redner, 1831-1908

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.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend on 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;
Oh, come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Immanuel!

Reading 2

Reader: And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. Luke 2:6-7

Leader: *The carol “infant Holy, Infant Lowly” is a translation of a Polish Christmas song that appeared in its original language in a song collection in 1838. As with many traditional folk songs, the text author and musical composer are not known. An adaptation in the American version we sing is the repetition of the last phrase of each stanza: “Christ the child is Lord of all!” and “Christ the child was born for you!” –both lines are certainly worthy of being repeated!*

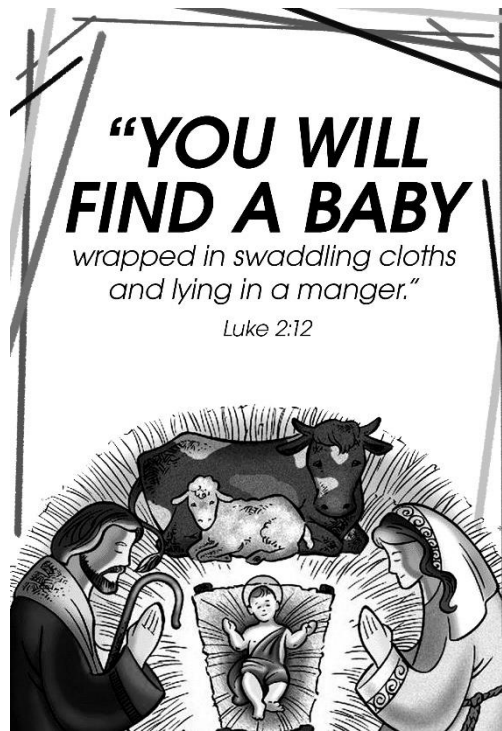
CAROL

“Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”

Text: Polish carol; tr. Edith M.G. Reed, 1885-1933, alt. Tune: Polish carol

Infant holy, infant lowly,
For his bed a cattle stall;
Oxen lowing, little knowing
Christ the child is Lord of all.
Swiftly winging, angels singing,
Bells are ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ the child is Lord of all!
Christ the child is Lord of all!

Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping
Vigil till the morning new
Saw the glory, heard the story,
Tidings of a Gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,
Praises voicing, greet the morrow:
Christ the child was born for you!
Christ the child was born for you!



Reading 3

Reader: And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” Luke 2:8-12

Leader: *Although “Away in a Manger” may sound like an “Old World” carol, its first Lutheran Church appearance was in a Lutheran Sunday School hymnal in Philadelphia published in the year 1885. Reminding us that there was no room in the inn and that our Savior was humbly born, the text was not translated into German until 1934. Now sung around the world, the text concludes in the third stanza with a prayer that has been memorized by countless generations of children.*

CAROL

Text: American 1885; Tune American 19th cent.

“Away in a Manger”

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

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.

Reading 4

Reader: And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!” When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherd said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. *Luke 2:13-16*

Leader: *Echoing the song of the angels is a joy for God’s people—especially on Christmas Eve. A traditional French carol gives us the opportunity to sing “Glory to God in the highest” in Latin, as “Gloria in excelsis Deo.” The words and the melody of this Christmas carol, both from France, bring a bright excitement to our celebration as we bring to our God limitless praise.*

CAROL

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

Text: French carol; tr. "Crown of Jesus" 1862. Tune: French carol

Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And the mountains in reply,
Echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo;
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav’nly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo;
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Reading 5

Reader: And when (the shepherds) saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. *Luke 2:17-20*

Leader: *Although our Christmas hymns come from as far back as the fourth century, a sizeable number of the songs we love to sing are from the nineteenth century, primarily from Great Britain and the United States. Reverend Edmund Sears, who served congregations in the Boston area in the mid-1800s, wrote the text of "It Came upon the Midnight Clear" in 1849 and sent it to a popular magazine called The Christian Register. It was published the following year, and about forty years later the text by Sears was linked to a melody by Richard Willis, a musical editor who lived in New York City. We are invited to hear the good news the angels announced and are inspired to share this message with others.*



CAROL

“It Came upon the Midnight Clear”

Edmund Hamilton Sears & Richard Storrs Willis; © Words: Public Domain Music: Public Domain

It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold:
“Peace on the earth, good will to all,
From heav’n’s all gracious king.”
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.

For lo! The days are hast’ning on,
By prophets seen of old,
When with the ever-circling years
Shall come the time foretold,
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendors fling,
And all the world give back the song
Which now the angels sing.

SERMON

Pastor Jeremy Lucke

[Part 1](#)

[Part 2](#)

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Mary Did You Know?”

By Karyn & Nora Stanley, Kaia Lucke, and Sarah Grassel

CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Leader: *Let us pray for God’s great mercy, asking that He would hear our petition and grant them according to His gracious will.*

Leader: *As we recall the first Christmas, Lord, we thank You for the gift of Jesus Christ. Give us faith to never forget the magnitude and importance of His sacrifice for us in coming to earth to be our Savior, our Brother, and our Friend. Lord, in Your mercy,*

People: hear our prayer.

Leader: *As we remember Mary and Joseph, we thank You for the gift of family. Give us hearts to fully appreciate the gifts we receive through them and seek to be those who cherish and nourish our family associations. Lord, in Your mercy,*

People: hear our prayer.

Leader: *As we echo the song of the angels, we thank You for the gifts of poetry and music and for all of the writers and composers who have enriched our celebration with their devotion and creativity. Give us eagerness to ever seek to bring You all that is the best and most beautiful in our worship. Lord, in Your mercy,*

People: hear our prayer.

Leader: *As we think of the shepherds to whom the angel brought the greatest news, we thank You for those who serve in the various vocations of life, including those whose daily work often goes unnoticed. We commend to Your special care, Lord, those in the military, our first responders and medical personnel, and all whose labor on our behalf is specially challenging or hazardous. Lord, in Your mercy,*

People: hear our prayer.

Leader: *As we consider those who were at the inn surrounding Mary and Joseph and the baby Jesus, we pray for all situations and conditions of people, especially those on our hearts at this time (moment of silence). Be with them and bless them according to their needs, Lord, and give us opportunities to be of comfort and assistance in Your name. Lord, in Your mercy,*

People: hear our prayer.

Leader: *As we pray, gracious God, we remember our dear ones who have completed their earthly lives and now are in Your eternal keeping. As the brightness of the light of Christ shines on them, may we follow their footsteps in ways of peace and love throughout our lives as we live to Your glory. Lord, in Your mercy,*

People: hear our prayer.

Leader: *These and any other things You would have us ask of You, heavenly Father, grant to us for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.*

People: Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION MUSIC

PART 1

PART 2

Reading 6

Leader: *Luke writes that Mary “treasured up all these things in her heart.” That phrase “all these things” includes her personal experience of that first Christmas night with the angels and the shepherds and the promise of God coming true. God has kept His covenant with His people, and we are blessed by it. With renewing faith, growing hop, and expanding love on this most holy night, we sing.*



CLOSING CAROL

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

Words by: Joseph Mohr, Music by: Franz Xaver Gruber, John Freeman Young; Music: Public Domain, Words: Public Domain

(Individual candles will be lit during the singing, and extinguished after the Benediction. Those with lit candles remain still as those without lit candles bend their candles to receive the light.)

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heav'nly hosts.....sing, Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from your holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth,
Jesus Lord, at your birth.

CLOSING PRAYER

Leader: *Let us pray. O Lord Jesus Christ, who by Your coming among us united earth and heaven, fill us with peace and good will. Grant that we always have room for You in our lives and days, and grant that we be joyfully joined with the heavenly host in praising Your graciousness and Your glory this evening and always; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, world with out end.*

People: Amen.

POSTLUDE



JOYFUL:
Merry
AND
Blessed



MERRY

Christmas