

December 24, 2023

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



Good Evening and Welcome

Guests, we are glad you are here.

Please fill out the yellow “Connection Card” in the pew and place in the offering.

Sound Assistance and staffed nursery available.

[Online Guest Form](#)

Messiah Lutheran Church

7740 Hwy 72 West, Madison, AL 35758 | (256)721-0041 | www.lutheran.org

SERVICE OF WORSHIP

LBW Setting 2

** Please stand as you are able*

THE PRELUDE

- “Pastoral Symphony” (Handel) (7:00) Gretchen Perry, Violin
“The Wexford Carol” (Traditional Irish Carol)
“O Come to Us, Emmanuel” (Joseph M. Martin) Thomas Florio, Baritone
“Il est né, le divin Enfant” (Traditional French Carol) Melanie Payne, Organist
“In the Bleak Midwinter” (Gustav Holst/arr. Allen Orion Gibbs)

*THE CHRISTMAS DIALOG

And the angel said to them, “Behold, I bring you good news of great joy.”

“For unto us is born this night a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

O come, let us worship

“Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace to all.”

*HYMN: “O Come, All Ye Faithful”

ELW 283/LBW 45



- 1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,
3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



- come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;
sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!



- come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:
Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:
Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

Song Continues on Next Page →

Refrain

Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,
O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,
ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.
O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711–1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–1880, sts. 1, 3–4; tr. unknown, st. 2
Music: ADESTE FIDELES, attr. John Francis Wade

***LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

Reader: To a people longing for hope ... our Emmanuel, God with us.

Congregation: We live as people in the in-between who celebrate the arrival of the Light that shines in lost and broken places as we wait for the day when we will live in the fullness of God's kingdom.

VOCAL SOLO “We All Bow Down” (L. LeBlanc)

Pr. Bill Schroeder, Tenor

THE FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 9:2-7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined. ³ You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴ For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵ For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶ For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

VOCAL SOLO “The People That Walked in Darkness” (Handel)

Thomas Florio,
Baritone

THE SECOND LESSON

Titus 2:11-14

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹² training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

VOCAL SOLO: "O Holy Night" (Adolphe Adam) Mike Mabry, Tenor; Peggy Mabry, Piano

THE CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Pr. Bill Schroeder

*THE GOSPEL

Luke 2:1-14

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

THE SERMON



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king;
 2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
 3 Hail the heav'n - born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righ - teous - ness!



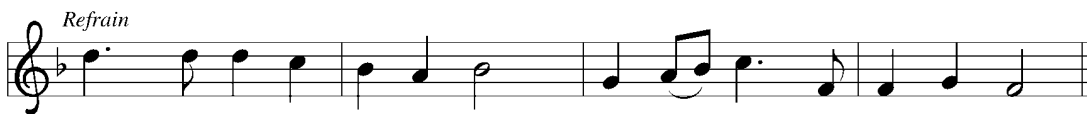
peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled."
 late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
 Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God - head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with an - gel - ic hosts pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!
 born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.



Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.

Music: MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–1847; arr. William H. Cummings, 1831–1915

*THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary, He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father, He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

THE OFFERING

Violin Solo (5:00) “Pastoral Symphony” (Handel)
Choir Anthem (7:00): “On Christmas Night” (Paul Manz)

Gretchen Perry

*THE OFFERTORY: “In the Bleak Midwinter” (Verse 3)

ELW 294



3 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.

Text: Christina Georgina Rossetti, 1830–1894
Music: CRANHAM, Gustav Holst, 1874–1934

*THE OFFERTORY PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank you for coming down into this world and into our lives. Thank you for entering our darkness in order to bring us into your light. Be born in us so we may share your love and your life in all we say and do. Amen

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING and THE PREFACE

**The Lord be with you.
And also with you.**

**Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.**

**Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

*THE SANCTUS

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of
pow'r and might: Heav'n and earth are full of your
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name
of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

*THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

*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

THE AGNUS DEI: "Lamb of God"

The musical score is written on five staves in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The lyrics are: Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

THE DISTRIBUTION

Communion at Messiah is open, voluntary, continuous and served at the railing. If you wish to participate, but not receive elements, keep your hands to your side when the elements pass in front of you and you will receive a blessing. If you are unable to approach the railing please alert an usher and the elements can be brought to you.

Ushers will prompt your row to proceed forward via the center aisle. Kneel or stand at the farthest right position which is open at the rail. People before you will be on your right, people after you will be on your left. After you have received the sacraments, and when you are ready, place the communion cup in the vessel as you return to your seat via the outside aisle.



- 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar - y's lap is sleep - ing?
- 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?
- 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas - ant, king, to own him.



Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
 Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.
 The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.



This, this is Christ the king, whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
 Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
 Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



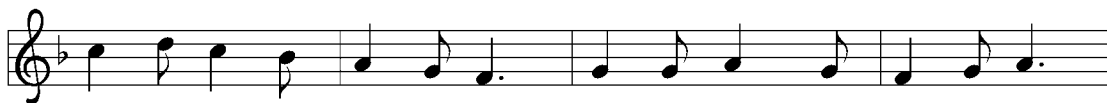
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837–1898

Music: GREENSLEEVES, English ballad, 16th cent.



- 1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
 2 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
 3 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;



give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;
 now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!
 now ye need not fear the grave; Je - sus Christ was born to save!



ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.
 He has o - pened heav - en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.
 Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.



Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!
 Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!
 Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,
 2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and Lord of all,
 3 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re - deem - ing love;
 4 Not in that poor low - ly sta - ble, with the ox - en stand - ing by,



where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a man - ger for his bed:
 and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall;
 for that child so dear and gen - tle is our Lord in heav'n a - bove;
 we shall see him; but in heav - en, set at God's right hand on high;



Mar - y was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.
 with the poor and meek and low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
 and he leads his chil - dren on to the place where he is gone.
 there his chil - dren gath - er round, bright like stars, with glo - ry crowned.

Text: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818–1895
 Music: IRBY, Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805–1876

THE LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

As you share the candle flame with those next to you, remember to always keep the lit candle upright and let the person with the unlit candle tip their candle into yours. Please be observant that your candle is held far enough away from clothing, hair, paper, etc.

Battery operated candles are available for youngsters. Just see the usher.



Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,
 1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,



ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.
 all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
 at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,



Hold - er Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher
 Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
 heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your



Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh.
 peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792–1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820–1885
 Music: STILLE NACHT, Franz Gruber, 1787–1863

*THE CANDLELIGHT PRAYER

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

(safely extinguish your candles at this time)

THE BENEDICTION

*HYMN: "Joy to the World"

ELW 267/LBW 39

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,

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748
 Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792-1872

DISMISSAL

THE POSTLUDE: "Fanfare on 'The Sussex Carol'" (Don Michael Dicie)

WE REMEMBER IN THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH TODAY

Please refer to the names lifted during the Prayers of the Church

THE FLOWERS today are given to the glory of God by members and friends of MLC to honor and remember loved ones as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord. Names of those honored and remembered are listed in this bulletin.

A NURSERY, staffed by Katrina Strand, is through the double doors in the narthex leading to the Sunday School classrooms.

MESSIAH'S CHURCH OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED THIS WEEK to allow staff to enjoy vacation, rest, and spend time with their loved ones. If you need emergent pastoral care, please email the church office at office@mlutheran.org or leave a message at (256) 721-0041 as messages will be checked daily. Pastor Kris will be on vacation to January 14, 2024.

THIS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31 there will be a single 10:00 a.m. Service of Worship of Lessons and Carols. Fellowship coffee will follow the service.

PLEASE CHECK YOUR MEMBER MAILBOXES and retrieve your 2024 Weekly Offering Booklets. Thank you.

KIT MINISTRY ITEM - Dark Towels 27 x 52

FOOD PANTRY Mac & Cheese

Pastor Kristine Schroeder
Music & Choir Director Randall Fields
Organist/Accompanist Melanie Payne
Director of Outreach Ministries Claire Strand
Communication & Tech Director Meredith Kilby
Office Managers Bobbey Huwaldt
Meredith Kilby
Nursery Attendant Katrina Strand

Acolytes Jasper Williams (5:00)
Greyson Pitchko (7:00)
Ushers Peter Woods, Mark Zesinger (5:00)
Matthew DeMarsh, Bruce Machamer (7:00)
Lector Lee Smith (5:00)
Jutta DeMarsh (7:00)
Assistants: Mike Mabry, Pr. Bill Schroeder (5:00)
Laura Peterson, Pr. Bill Schroeder (7:00)
Altar Guild Leelinda Bagget, Janet Smith (5:00)
Jutta DeMarsh (7:00)
Stream Team M.Kilby, Stephen Strand (5:00)
Flower Guild Beverly Berry, Jean Stuart
Gary & Linda Heideman

Pastor Kris Schroeder

Email: pastor.kris@mlutheran.org

Pastor Cell Phone: 480-338-6519

Pastor's Office Hours are M-TH

MLC staff will never directly solicit you to purchase gift-cards or withdraw money for

"sensitive matters". If in doubt call the church office.

****CHURCH CALENDAR****

Sunday, December 24 - Christmas Eve

5:00 p.m. - Service of Worship: *Candlelight Service* w/the Lord's Supper

7:00 p.m. - Service of Worship: *Candlelight Service* w/the Lord's Supper

Monday, Dec. 25 - Monday, Jan. 1

Church Office Closed Limited staffing

December 31, 2023 - Lessons & Carols

10:00 a.m. - *Service of Worship: *Lessons & Carols*

11:00 a.m. - Fellowship Coffee

No Sunday School

**These services are live streamed on mlutheran.org*

LOOKING AHEAD

January 7, 2024 - Epiphany, Sunday School resumes

January 10, 2024 - Wednesday Night Dinners, Choirs resume

February 3, 2024 - Talent Show

ONLINE GIVING

Scan the QR code to give
to MLC today.



*Merry Christmas and New Year's Blessings
from MLC Staff and Church Congregation Council*

Holy-day Giving 2023

Thank you for being the hands and feet of Christ this holiday season! Your prayers for Advent hope led the world through the darkness! You also ...

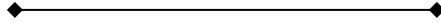
- ♥ helped provide 100 turkey dinners to local families in need
- ♥ provided warm clothing, socks, scarves, coats, and blankets for clients at the Downtown Rescue Mission
- ♥ cheered 21 children from the Salvation Army Angel program on Christmas morning with gifts of toys, bikes, clothing, and a handmade blanket
- ♥ sent honey buns, snack cakes, and soap to inmates at Limestone Correctional Facility for their Christmas goodie bags
- ♥ provided warm clothing, coats, and sundries to women and children at Owen's House
- ♥ collected 8 lbs of pop tabs for Ronald McDonald House in Birmingham (1 lb= 1,430 tabs)
- ♥ donated \$250 to the Madison Library from the Ring and Sing concert
- ♥ fed school children in Honduras by purchasing handmade "warm and woolys" and tree ornaments
- ♥ shared excess greeting cards, calendars, and notepads with residents at Madison Village
- ♥ answered the urgent call to fill empty food shelves at the local pantry
- ♥ brought beauty to the sanctuary and honor to loved ones with purchases of poinsettias
- ♥ gave generously to Shepherds Fold post-prison transition program
- ♥ funded numerous missions through Messiah's giving mall
- ♥ and supplied precious resources, such as bees, goats, chicks, seeds and gardening tools worldwide through the ELCA's Good Gifts program.

If you would like more information about Messiah's missions and ministries that take place throughout the year, please visit www.mlutheran.org/outreach, email Dana Burton, Congregation Council Rep for Outreach at outreach_rep@mlutheran.org, or Claire Strand, Director of Outreach Ministries at claire@mlutheran.org.

You do not need to be a member of Messiah to help us in these missions and we warmly welcome all.

Christmas Flowers

*The following households have given flowers to beautify our sanctuary.
They are given to the glory of God and in remembrance and honor of loved ones.*



Rick & LeeLinda Baggett to the glory of God;

John & Mary Burke in honor of all families;

Jeff, Valerie, Hannah, and Nora Christensen in memory of Bob Christensen;

Bonnie Flowers in memory of Jim Nelson;

Chris Fossum in memory of Jim Fossum;

Bob & Audrey Gustafson in celebration of 50 years of marriage
today on Christmas Eve.

Mike and Judy Kidd in memory of Jon and Dean;

The Pitchko Family to the glory of God;

Joanne Weber in honor of my children and in memory of my parents;

Linda and Paul Zutter in memory of loved ones.