



December 17, 2023
Third Sunday in Advent



“As we walk through this Season of Advent, may the story told from the hearts and mouths of our young people, strengthen our faith and love so that we are prepared to greet God’s Beloved Child, Jesus the Christ.”

Good Morning and Welcome!

Guests, we are so glad you are here. Please fill out the yellow “Connection Card” in the pew and place in the offering basket or give to the usher or the pastor as you leave. *Sound Assistance and staffed nursery available.*

7740 HIGHWAY 72 W | (256) 721-0041 | MLUTHERAN.ORG

SERVICE OF WORSHIP
Children & Youth Led Worship

** Please stand as you are able*

PRELUDE: "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" (Traditional)
"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (arr. Thomas Helmore)

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTERLUDE: "What Child is This?" (Traditional English)

*BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation.

Amen.

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Everlasting God,

you love justice and you hate wrongdoing. We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that make us reluctant to work against oppression. We are complicit in systems of exploitation. We choose comfort over courage. We are careless with creation's bounty. Look upon us with mercy. Turn our hearts again to you. Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world. Amen.

Hear these words of assurance: God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. God's covenant is eternal, and God's blessing rests upon us all.

Amen.

*LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE

Christensens (8:30) Strands (11:00)

When God's people ... and igniting fierce joy where mourning and heartache prevail.

We wait as people who experience hardship and pain, yet we are called to witness to the persistent joy that sustains our life as God's people.

*HYMN: "Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah"

(verse 3)

WOV 630



3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



Lift your heads and lift high the gate-way for the King of glo - ry.

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954

Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune

Text © 1984 Fortress Press, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

*THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

FIRST READING

Luke 1:26-33

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

*CANTICLE OF MARY

Luke 1:46-55

⁴⁶Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁴⁷**and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,**

⁴⁸for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

⁴⁹**for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.**

⁵⁰His mercy is for those who fear him

from generation to generation.

⁵¹**He has shown strength with his arm;**

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

⁵²He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,

and lifted up the lowly;

⁵³**he has filled the hungry with good things,**

and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel,

in remembrance of his mercy,

⁵⁵**according to the promise he made to our ancestors,**

to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

THE CHILDREN'S SERMON

THE STORY OF CHRISTMAS

Part I: Mary and Joseph

Song: "Mary Had a Baby" (African American Spiritual)

Combined Youth and Children

Part II: The Animals

Song: "The Friendly Beasts" (English Carol)

Combined Youth and Children

Part III: The Angels

Song: "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" (Mendelssohn)

Seraph Choir

Part IV: The Shepherds

Song: "The First Noel" (French Carol)

Cherub Choir

Part V: Conclusion

Song: "Go Tell It on the Mountain" (African American Spiritual)

Seraph Choir

Song: "Joy to the World" (Vs. 1 Youth, vs. 2-4 Congregation)

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

Song Continues on Next Page →



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.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

*THE APOSTLES' CREED

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come 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 PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Merciful God, receive our prayer.

*THE SHARING OF THE PEACE

**The peace of the Lord be with you.
And also with you.**

THE OFFERING: "What Child Is This" (English Ballad) - Jackie Sullivan, Viola

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

God our provider,

by your merciful hand abundance springs up from the earth. Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty. Let them be a sign of your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen

*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 DISTRIBUTION



1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to
 2 They look - ed up and saw . . a star shin - ing
 3 And by the light of that . . same star three . .
 4 This star drew near to the . . north - west, o'er . .
 5 Then en - tered in those wise . . men three, full . .



cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where
 in . . . the east . . be - yond . . them far; and to the
 wise . . men came . . from coun - try far; to seek for a
 Beth - le - hem . . it took . . its rest; and there it
 rev - 'rent - ly . . . up - on . . . their knee, and of - fered



they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's
 earth it gave . . . great light, and . . so it con -
 king was their . . . in - tent, and to fol - low the
 did both stop . . . and stay right . . o - ver the
 there in his . . . pres - ence their . . gold, . . . and

Refrain

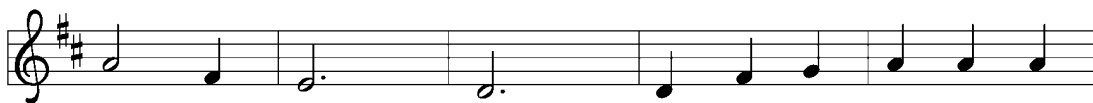
night that was so deep.
 tin-ued both day and night.
 star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -
 place where Je - sus lay.
 myrrh, and frank - in - cense.



el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.



1 I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to
 2 I want to see . . . the bright-ness of God. I want to
 3 I'm look - ing for . . . the com - ing of Christ. I want to



fol - low Je - sus. God set the stars to give
 look at Je - sus. Clear Sun of righ - teous-ness,
 be with Je - sus. When we have run . . . with



light to the world. The star of my life is Je - sus.
 shine on my path, and show me the way to the Fa - ther.
 pa - tience the race, we shall know the joy of Je - sus.

Refrain



In him there is no dark-ness at all. The night and the



day are both a - like. The Lamb is the light of the



cit - y of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

Text: Kathleen Thomerson, b. 1934
 Music: HOUSTON, Kathleen Thomerson
 Text and music © 1970, 1975 Celebration

Refrain



Go tell it on the moun - tain, o-ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;



go tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!



- 1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
- 2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when, lo, a - bove the earth
- 3 Down in a lone - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born;

Refrain



be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless-ed Christ-mas morn.

Text: African American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work Jr., 1872-1925, stanzas, alt.
Music: GO TELL IT, African American spiritual

*THE DISMISSAL

THE POSTLUDE

Thank You to All the Youth Participants and Leaders!

WE REMEMBER IN THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH TODAY

Wendell and Christy
Frances Dobbins
Amber Alt

Chloe Cunningham
Ron and Norma

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 will be in a Christmas Eve bulletin insert.

A NURSERY, staffed by Katrina Strand, is through the double doors in the Narthex leading to the Sunday School classrooms. Newborns, toddlers, and children up to Pre-K are welcome.

ALL ARE INVITED to a reception and coffee in celebration of Bob & Audrey Gustafson's 50th Anniversary in the fellowship hall after the 1st service concludes. There will also be a birthday party for Jesus in the parish hall for all youth and families.

MID-WEEK ADVENT SERVICES of Worship conclude this Wednesday, December 20, at Noon & 7 p.m. Unless otherwise designated, these offerings will go toward Shepherd's Fold. This week's mid-week Advent message is *Go and Be Present While You are On the Go*.

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP ON DECEMBER 24 will be a single 10:00 a.m. Service of Worship with the Lord's Supper (WOV - Setting 5 Bread of Life). The service will be livestreamed.

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP with the Lord's Supper will be at 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. The 5:00 p.m. service will be livestreamed. Whether home or away, we hope you will join as we celebrate Jesus' birth through word, worship, music and prayer.

CHURCH OFFICES will be closed Dec. 25 - 29, and Jan. 1, 2024, to give staff time to rest, take vacation, and enjoy time with their loved ones. The office@mlutheran.org email account and office phone at (256) 721-0041 will be checked on a daily basis for any emergent pastoral care needs.

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP ON DECEMBER 31 will be a single 10:00 a.m. Service of Worship with Lessons and Carols. The service will be livestreamed on mlutheran.org

MLC's ANNUAL CHRISTMAS GIVING MALL runs through December 24. Giving Mall instructions, forms and Gift Cards are located at the "Mission Control Center in the Narthex."

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

Acolyte
Greeters Pitchko Family (8:30)
(11:00)
Ushers Virgil & Susan Burrer (8:30)
Bruce Machamer, Paul Arnold (11:00)
Altar Guild LeeLinda Baggett (8:30)
Debbie Neely (11:00)
Tech / Stream Desk Meredith Kilby (8:30)
Danny Hopkin, Stephen Strand (11:00)
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 17 - Third Sunday In Advent

- 9:45 a.m. - Sunday School - Birthday Party for Jesus - Parish Hall
- 9:45 a.m. - Gustafson 50th Anniversary Celebration - Fellowship Hall
- 9:45 a.m. - Adult Sunday School
- 5:00 p.m. - Jr/Sr Youth Christmas Party at Schroeders

Monday, December 18

- 6:30 p.m. - Women's Book & Social club @ Phil Sandoval's - Madison

Wednesday, December 20

- 12:00 p.m. - Holden Evening Prayer Service of Worship - Fellowship Hall
- 7:00 p.m. - Holden Evening Prayer Service of Worship
- 7:30 p.m. - Messiah Choir (Gr.7-Adult) with Randall Fields (Sanctuary)

Sunday, December 24 - Fourth Sunday In Advent

- 10:00 a.m. - Worship & Livestream: *WOV Bread of Life* with the Lord's Supper
- 11:00 a.m. - Fellowship Coffee (No Sunday School)
- 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, December 25 - 29. January 1, 2024 - Church Offices Closed

LOOKING AHEAD

- December 31 - **Single 10:00 a.m.** Hymns and Carols Service of Worship
- January 7 - Sunday School resumes
- January 10 - Wednesday Evening Activities resume

Attendance:

December 3 Online: - 64 December 10 In-Person: 8:30 a.m. - 75, 11:00 a.m. - 76

Offerings Counted Week of December 10, 2023

Church Ministries	\$3,048.00	German Food Fest	\$150.00
Current Mortgages	\$50.00	Flowers	\$60.00
Owen's House	\$10.00	Christmas Flowers	\$32.00
Ring & Sing	\$250.00	Lunches for Learning	\$129.00
Advent	\$895.00	Music	\$185.00
Comforters (Quilt Auction)	\$365.00	Messiah Mugs	\$20.00
Handmade Market	\$79.00	Wednesday Night Dinner	\$104.00
Kit Ministries	\$50.00		

Give Online!

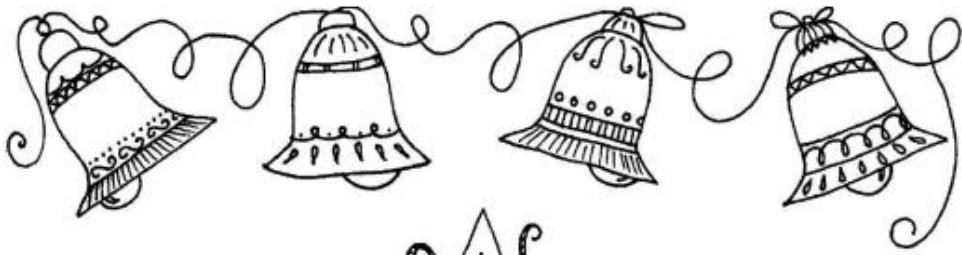


Volunteer Sign Up



Pastor / Staff
Christmas Gift Information





Arise, shine, for your light has come!

Mandy Groce '12

ministry-to-children.com