



Covenant Lutheran Church, ELCA



*We celebrate gathering together this
Christmas Eve Worship Service!
As always, all are WELCOME here!
December 24, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.*

The People of Covenant are called to:

Gather, Grow and Go Serve

...With God's Love!

Welcome Thank you for joining us for Worship today!

WORSHIP ORDER – Sunday, December 24, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.

Congregation participation in bold in bulletin

ELW=Evangelical Lutheran Worship Hymn Book,

**=please stand*

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Prelude

Piano

Bell Quartet

Brass Quartet

Good Christian Men, Rejoice!

Call to Worship

Glory to God in the highest! **And hope to every discouraged heart.**

Glory to God in the highest! **And peace to every conflicted soul.**

Glory to God in the highest! **And joy to every downcast spirit.**

Glory to God in the highest! **And love to everyone.**

Let us sing praises to our God.

Let us offer this light against the darkness.

***Gathering Hymn**

Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful vs 1-2

ELW 283

Christmas Dialog

Jesus Christ is the Light of the world!

He is the Light no darkness can overcome.

At darkest night we gather to celebrate the great light of our salvation.

With the heavenly host we sing, “Glory to God in the highest heaven.”

In Christ, God’s Word is made flesh and lives among us.

With the shepherds, we will tell of the wonders we have seen and heard.

*** Hymn**

Go, Tell it on the Mountain vs 1-2

ELW 290

Greeting and Christmas Prayer

May the grace and truth of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray.

A brief silence

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.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.

First Reading

Isaiah 9: 2-7

A reading from Isaiah the ninth chapter.

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined. ³You 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. ⁴For 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. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For 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. ⁷His 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. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*** Hymn**

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing vs 1,3

ELW 270

Second Reading

Titus 2: 11-14

A reading from Titus the second chapter.

¹¹The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He 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. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel**Luke 2: 1-20***The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the second chapter.***Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph 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. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And 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. ⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³And 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!” ¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. The Gospel of the Lord, **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The Prayers

Wonderful Counselor, increase our joy as the church gathers on this holy night to sing of our dear Savior's birth. May the story of salvation live in the hearts of all who sing of its wonders. God of grace, **Hear our prayer.**

Mighty God, you have broken the yoke of sin's burden through the birth of your Son. Comfort those whose burdens distract them from the deeper peace of this holy night and grant them a restful mind. God of peace, **Hear our prayer.**

Everlasting Father, uphold all who are in sorrow or need of your divine goodness and mercy. We remember with thanksgiving all who have died and who now rest in your peaceful light. God of love, **Hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, bathe us always in the light of your Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Announcements

Offering Prayer

God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. **Amen.**

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Liturgy of Holy Communion

Thanksgiving

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 our thanks and praise.

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all. 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. Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory. Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever. **Amen.**

Gathered into one by the power of the Holy Spirit we pray as our Lord taught us:

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Glory to God in the highest! Come to the table of peace.

Communion Hymns

What Child is This

ELW 296

The First Noel vs 1,2

ELW 300

Post Communion Blessing

May the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen**

The Gospel of the Incarnation

The minister lights a large candle from the Christ candle, which symbolizes Christ, the Light of the world of whom John's gospel speaks.

The ushers light their candles from the minister's candle, then light the candle of each worshiper nearest the aisle. The lighted candle is never tilted, but is always held upright when giving light to another.

Reading

John 1: 1-14

A reading from John the first chapter.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴**And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.**

*** Hymn of Light**

Silent Night, Holy Night!

ELW 281

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

Blessing

May the Lord God, who has called you out of darkness to be servants of light, grant you the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, and the peace of the Christ Child. In the name of Almighty God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The candles are extinguished.

***Sending Hymn**

Joy to the World

ELW 267

Dismissal

Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Joy to the World

Organ and Brass Quartet

Announcements:

- ✝ Christmas Services offered **Sunday, Dec 24th 9:30am, 4pm and 7pm.** All are invited to join!
- ✝ The office will be closed **Dec 25th** for the Christmas Holiday- Enjoy, knowing you are loved!
- ✝ **Lunch Bunch- 1st Wed of the Month at 11:30am Jan 3rd** Join at BBJack's in Cottage Grove
- ✝ Safe Surrender information/orientation meeting planned for **Jan 7th afternoon** more to come!
- ✝ Join Book Group **Jan 11th** discussing *The Last Supper Club* Meeting at 1pm in Gateway room
- ✝ Feed the Hungry at St. Marks in Madison, 2nd Friday of each month **Jan 12th 10:30a-1:30p**
- ✝ **Social Action meets January 15th** - work on inclusion here at Covenant and within Stoughton
- ✝ Budget Listening Session Scheduled for **Jan 21st** join to hear the hard work discussed for 2024
- ✝ The American Red Cross reports major blood shortages- Give Blood at Covenant **Jan 22nd**
- ✝ Annual Congregational Meeting planned **Jan 28th** Member voting required and appreciated!
- ✝ Wed Evening Bible Study returning in Jan- Plan to Join weekly at 5pm in the Gateway Room
- ✝ Thank you to our Bell Choir Members: Susan Diebold, Lars Forde, Dianne Johnson, Doug Johnson, Judy Luschen, Marcie Mahuta, Sue Richards, Lisa Stout, Donna Tarpinian, Robin Wendt, Scott Wendt, director Meghan Proper, for offering *Realms of Glory*.
- ✝ Thank you also to the Bass Quartet Members including: Russ Melland, Peter Herman and Doug and Dianne Johnson for offering music tonight.



Care to contribute to our Church and ministries?
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Or visit www.covluth.org and click 'On-line Giving'!



WORSHIP NOTES

Pastor: *Pastor Wendy Moen*; **Assistant Minister:** *Ingrid Thompson*;
Lector: *Philayne Chose*; **Greeters:** *Laura Just, George Craig*; **Communion Worship**
Assistants: *Kathy Andrusz, George Craig, Sue Richards, Christy Unzicker*;
Organist/Pianist: *Meghann Proper*; **Ushers:** *Tom Chose, Karen Hanson-Cook*;
Sound/projection: *John and Jude Surrell*; **Altar Guild:** *Norm and Jean Sime*;
Communion Prep: *Jean and Norm Sime*; **Altar Flowers:** *Given by Gloria Carpenter!*

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