



Covenant Lutheran Church, ELCA



*We celebrate gathering together this
Christmas Eve for Worship Service!
As always, all are WELCOME here!
December 24, 2023 at 9:30 a.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 – 9:30 a.m.

Congregation participation in bold in bulletin

ELW=Evangelical Lutheran Worship Hymn Book,

**=please stand*

This Christmas Eve morning at Covenant Worship will be a mix of Christmas Carols and Taizé music. Taizé is a style of quiet and contemplative prayer service containing prayers both spoken and sung, scripture, and periods of silence. During the silences, you may choose to pray, contemplate scripture, or simply clear your head. A Taizé service provides the opportunity to draw nearer to the Holy Spirit - opening yourself to how the Spirit may be active in your life. We will also enjoy some of our favorite Christmas Carols to begin the celebration of our Lord's birth.

GATHERING

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

Welcome

***Gathering Hymn**

O Holy Night

Christmas Prayer

Loving God, on this Christmas Day, We praise the new born child, Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We open our eyes to see the mystery of faith. We claim the promise of Emmanuel "God with us." We remember that our Savior was born in a manger And walked as a humble suffering savior. Lord, help us to share the love of God With everyone we encounter, To feed the hungry, cloth the naked, And stand against injustice and oppression. We pray for the ending of war And rumors of war. We pray for peace upon the Earth. We thank you for our families and friends And for the many blessings we have received. We rejoice today with the best gifts Of hope, peace, joy And the love of God in Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

--By Rev. Lia Icaza Willetts

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.**

Music

Wait for the Lord

Psalm

Psalm 98

Sing a new song to the Lord who has worked wonders; whose right hand and holy arm have brought salvation.

The Lord has made known salvation; has shown justice to the nations; has remembered truth and love for the house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Should to the Lord, all the earth. ring out your joy.

Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp, with the sound of music. With the trumpets and the sound of the horn acclaim the King, the Lord.

Music

Joy to the World

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!” The Gospel of the Lord, **Praise to you O Christ.**

Silence for Meditation

Jesus, son of the Virgin Mary, at Christmas you offer us the joyful message of your Gospel. All who listen, all who welcome the gifts of the Holy Spirit, by day as well as in the vigils of the night, discover that with very little faith, with almost nothing, they have everything.

~Meditation from Peace of Heart in All Things by Brother Roger of Taizé for December 25

Grace Notes

The Hands That First held Mary's Child

Litany of Praise

O Christ, the prophets foretold your coming, the poor longed to see you.

Our heart finds joy in God.

The heavens celebrated your birth; the apostles, the martyrs and the faithful down through the ages repeated the song of the angels.

Our heart finds joy in God.

Your Church praises you in every human language, for she has seen your salvation. **Our heart finds joy in God.**

Son of God, you humbled yourself and became a servant, raising us up to share in your glory. **Our heart finds joy in God.**

We were in darkness and you have given us light and strength, peace and joy. **Our heart finds joy in God.**

Lead us according to your loving will; make us a people who follow you in holiness. **Our heart finds joy in God.**

Give us generous hearts to hear your Word and produce in us abundant fruit. **Our heart finds joy in God.**

*** Hymn**

O Lord Hear my Prayer

Announcements

Offering

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 Hymn

*Jesus Christ, Bread of Life
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

Post Communion Blessing

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

Post Communion Prayer

Send us your Holy Spirit so that this bread and wine can be for us, the body and blood of Jesus, and through this food, give us strength to live as your people. Help us care for your world and for each other in the way that Jesus showed us.

*** Hymn of Light**

Silent Night, Holy Night!

Blessing

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ Child. Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING

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

Closing Prayer

Christ Jesus, humble shepherds found you in a stable. Come to us, so that we may advance towards the brightness of your presence, hidden with us. And our hearts can say to you: **Jesus, my joy, my hope, my life.**

*Sending Hymn

O Come, All Ye Faithful



Care to contribute to our Church and ministries?

Scan this QR Code to give digitally with Vanco Online Giving.

Or visit www.covluth.org and click 'On-line Giving'!



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 Grace Notes: Angie Kettner, Meghann Proper, Donna Tarpinian, accompanist Michelle Osterhaus for offering *The Hands That First Held Mary's Child* lyrics by Thomas Troeger music by Dan Forrest

WORSHIP NOTES

Pastor: *Pastor Wendy Moen;*

Acolyte: *Alex R. ;*

Assistant Minister: *Jessica Diebold;*

Lector: *Tom Nelson;*

Greeters: *Sam and Rhetta Smith;*

Communion Worship Assistants: *The Oaklands;*

Music: *Grace Notes;*

Ushers: *Mark, Evan, Garrett and Caleb Herbst, Rhetta Smith, Bill Cook;*

Sound/projection: *Lars Forde, Amanda Burian;*

Altar Guild: *Norm and Jean Sime;*

Communion Prep: *Jean and Norm Sime;*

Altar Flowers: *Given by Gloria Carpenter!*

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