

“Blessed are you  
among women, and  
blessed is the child you will bear!”

Luke 1:42

# St. Luke Lutheran Church

PO Box 278 Schaefferstown, PA 17088 717-949-3375

December 17, 2023

Third Sunday of Advent

Service of Holy Communion



St. Luke Guiding Story and Mission:

The Road to Emmaus: Luke 24:13-35

As the Body of Christ, we proclaim the Gospel by serving and doing God's will  
in a manner that meets the needs of our changing world.

## Welcome!

We are glad you have joined us today.

Visitors: please sign the visitor book  
upon entering the sanctuary.

Guide to abbreviations:

**P:** spoken by the Pastor      **C:** Congregation responds

WOV—With One voice— blue hymnal

LBW—Lutheran Book of Worship—green hymnal

\* stand as you are able

On our website ([stlukelutheran.org](http://stlukelutheran.org))  
you can find current events and links to our online worship services.

Direct access:

Facebook is at [www.facebook.com/StLukeEvangelicalLutheran](https://www.facebook.com/StLukeEvangelicalLutheran), or on YouTube:  
[www.youtube.com/@stlukeschaefferstownpa](https://www.youtube.com/@stlukeschaefferstownpa)

## GATHERING

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

### Welcome and Announcements

**Prelude:** Carol of the Children of Bethlehem—arr. Ralph Lehman  
Wendy Schmehl, Linda Holt, Emily Holt, flute and organ

### Confession and Forgiveness:

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, who alone does wonders,  
who lifts up the lowly, who fills the hungry with good things.

**C: Amen.**

P: Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P: God for whom we wait,

**C: In the presence of one another,  
we confess our sin before you.**

**We fail in believing that your good news is for us.**

**We falter in our call to tend your creation.**

**We find our sense of self in material wealth.**

**We fear those different from ourselves.**

**We forget that we are your children  
and turn away from your love.**

**Forgive us, Blessed One,  
and assure us again of your saving grace.**

**Amen.**

P: God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you!

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, ✚ your sins are forgiven.

You are children of the Most High, inheritors of the eternal promise, and recipients  
of divine mercy. God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace.

**C: Amen.**

### **Lighting the Advent Candle**

L: Today we light the third Advent candle, the shepherd's candle. This candle is offered in honor of the shepherds whose love and care for their sheep become the example of God's love for us. We remember that the shepherds were the first human witnesses of our Savior's birth. In honor of all good shepherds, and especially Jesus the Christ, we light this third candle.

*(Lighting of the third candle)*

We praise you, O God for this victory wreath that marks our days of preparation for Christ's Advent.

**C: As we light the candles on this wreath, strengthen our hearts as we await the Lord's coming in glory. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may serve our neighbors in need. Grant this Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. Amen.**

**Sung Response:**      Light three candles to Watch for Messiah  
   let the light banish darkness  
   Lift up your heads and lift high the gateway  
   for the King of glory.

### **\*Apostolic Greeting:**

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Let us pray...

### **\*Prayer of the Day:**

P: Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

## WORD

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

### **First Reading: Micah 5:2-5**

<sup>2</sup>But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

<sup>3</sup>Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. <sup>4</sup>And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; <sup>5a</sup>and he shall be the one of peace.

The word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God**

**Ministry of Music:** Choir: Come, O Long Expected Jesus

### **Second Reading: Hebrews 10:5-10**

<sup>5</sup>Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; <sup>6</sup>in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. <sup>7</sup>Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God' <sup>8</sup>When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings", <sup>9</sup>then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. <sup>10</sup>And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

The word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God**

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke the first chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord

### Gospel: Luke 1:39-55

<sup>39</sup>In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup>where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup>When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup>and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup>And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup>For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup>And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

<sup>46</sup>And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,

<sup>47</sup>and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

<sup>48</sup>for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

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

<sup>49</sup>for the Mighty One has done great things for me,

and holy is his name.

<sup>50</sup>His mercy is for those who fear him

from generation to generation.

<sup>51</sup>He has shown strength with his arm;

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

<sup>52</sup>He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,

and lifted up the lowly;

<sup>53</sup>he has filled the hungry with good things,

and sent the rich away empty.

<sup>54</sup>He has helped his servant Israel,

in remembrance of his mercy,

<sup>55</sup>according to the promise he made to our ancestors,

to Abraham and to his descendants forever."



P: The Gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

### The Message

Hymn of the Day: All Earth is Hopeful

WOV 629

**\*Apostles' Creed:**

P: Let us confess our faith using the words of the Apostles' Creed

**C: 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 power of 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

**\*Prayers of the Church**      P: Hear us, O God... **C: Your mercy is great**

**\*Passing of the Peace:**

P: The peace of the Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Let us share his peace with one another.

**\*Offering Prayer:**

P: God of our waiting and watching, we offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives to the service of all your people. Prepare the way before us as we meet you in this simple meal, through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace.

**C: Amen.**

## MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ



### \*Great Thanksgiving:

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

### \*Preface:

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places  
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,  
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,  
through whom you will also make all things new  
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,  
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

### \*Sanctus (Holy, Holy Holy)

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.



**\*Eucharistic Prayer:**

P: Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:  
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.  
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.  
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.  
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.  
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.  
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,  
the Word made flesh.

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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**C: Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us,  
full of grace and truth.

We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.

We look with hope for his coming.

**C: Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.

Come among us.

Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us.

Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light.

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

**C: Come, Holy Spirit.**

P: All praise and glory are yours,  
Holy One of Israel,  
Word of God incarnate,  
Power of the Most High,  
one God, now and forever.  
C: Amen.

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C: 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

### Invitation to Communion

P: In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together.  
Come, take your place at the table.

### \*Agnus Dei (Lamb of God)

**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.**

**Distribution of Communion:**

*All are welcome and encouraged to receive the forgiveness and community that are given in the bread and wine. Come forward as directed.*

**\*Communion Music:** O Come Little Children and Carol of the Bagpipers  
(German and Spanish Carols arranged by Ralph Lehman)

**\*Communion Blessing:**

P: The body of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: **Amen.**

D:

**\*Prayer after Communion**

P: Most High God, you have come among us at this table. By the Spirit's power, form us to be bearers of your word, sharing gifts of mercy and grace with all, through Christ Jesus, our host and our guest.

C: **Amen**

**SENDING**

**God sends us boldly into the world to share the good news**

**\*Blessing:**

The God of peace bless you,  
the love of Christ sustain you in hope,  
and the anointing of the Spirit ✠ remain upon you  
now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

**\*Closing Hymn:** The King Shall Come      LBW 33

**\*Sending:**

P: Go in peace. Christ is near!

C: **Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude:** Adagio—J.S. Bach, ed. Arthur Ephross

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**Our worshipping community:**

**Pastor:** Rev. Angela Hammer      **Minister of Music:** Linda Holt

**Ministers:** The People of St. Luke

**December Worship Assistant:** Mike DeLong

**Today's Lay Reader:** Dolly Fasnacht

**Lay Readers for Dec 24 11 PM:** Donna Moyer, Richelle Deysher, Faith Thunberg

**Lay Readers for Dec 31 10 AM:** Council Members from St. Luke

**Live Streaming Technician:** William Hoffman      **Technical Assistant:** Beverly Hoffman

Attendance 12/10/23: In person: 43      Online: 41      Offering: \$1,067.90

*The altar flowers are presented by  
Joan and Ed Miller in memory of their loved ones.*

**This week at St. Luke**

**Sunday, December 17—Advent 3**

8:30 AM      Service of Holy Communion  
9:30 AM      Sunday School (Children/Adults)  
5:30 PM-7:00 PM      Community Free Meal

**Tuesday, December 19**

10:00 AM      Band Together

**Wednesday, December 20**

7:00 PM      Choir Rehearsal

**Thursday, December 21**

10:00 AM      Band Together  
11:30 AM-1:00 PM      Community Free Meal

**Next Sunday, December 24—Advent 4/Christmas Eve**

8:30 AM      no morning service  
6:30 PM      Family Service—St. Paul, Penryn  
11:00 PM      Candlelight Service—St. Luke

**Office Hours for the next two weeks:**

Dec 18, 19, 21, 22, 26, 28—9:30-4:00

## NEWS IN OUR PEWS

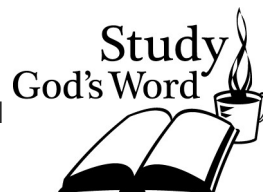
**Advent Bible Study:** Every Wednesday at 6:30 PM via Zoom.  
Link and information is emailed weekly.

### **Beer & Bible:**

A Thursday evening monthly meeting at the Franklin House for dinner, drinks, and conversation. Join us January 18 at 6:30 PM.

### **Bible Study—Thursday morning ZOOM:**

Join Pastor Angie online to take a look at the texts coming up for the Sunday lectionary. A ZOOM link will be emailed out the week of each study. Contact the church office to be added to the email invitation. Next date January 11 at 10:00 AM.



### **Book Club:**

Book Club will be meeting on Thursday, January 11 at 7:00 PM in the Chapel. They will be discussing "Beyond That, the Sea" by Laura Spence-Ash. All are invited to join us for a great conversation. Please see Richelle Deysher for additional information!



**Coffee Hour:** Volunteers are always welcome!  
Please sign up in narthex.

### **Contemporary Service Updates:**

We're revamping the contemporary worship service! We're taking the rest of the year off from the contemporary services, but will bring it back at the beginning of the new year. Pastor Angie will be creating a new liturgy, while the music team will be welcoming a variety of new musicians into the mix. We'll be experimenting with music and the word and we invite you to give your feedback as we explore new ways to engage with a contemporary service!



**Council Invitation:** Please prayerfully consider serving on council. The terms of 4 members of council are concluding at the annual congregation meeting in January. One of those 4 has consented to another term and at this time 2 other church members have agreed to serve. Council needs 3 more people to serve. If interested or would like more information, please talk to a current council member or notify the church office.



**History Books:** These are available for \$20.00. Please contact Anna Mae Grubb: 717-273-7035 or mrgrubby@comcast.net.

**Ministry Emphasis for December:**  
Habitat for Humanity



**Yes, you can sing!**

Share your musical gifts with the congregation. Choir rehearsals are held on Wednesday at 7:00 PM. Contact Linda Holt for more information.

**Votive candles and cups needed for Christmas Eve:** We are need of donations of 3 oz paper dixie style cups and votive candles for Christmas Eve. Questions, please see Mike Reber.

### Christmastide Services:

December 24—no morning services

Christmas Eve Services:

December 24—Family Service at St. Paul in Penryn—6:30 PM

December 24—Candlelight Service at St. Luke—11:00 PM

Sunday, December 31 – 10:00 at St. Luke. St. Luke and St. Paul join in worship to celebrate Christmas with a service of Lessons and Carols.



## The Magnificat:

Today's reading from Luke's Gospel (1:46-55),  
is the Blessed Virgin Mary's hymn of praise to the Lord.

It is also known as: The Magnificat and The Canticle of Mary

Well known composers such as Palestrina, Bach and Mozart  
have set the text to music.

Its name comes from the first line of its text in Latin:

“Magnificat anima mea Dominum”

The angel Gabriel informed Mary that she was to be the Mother of Jesus, and also  
told her of her sister Elizabeth's pregnancy with John the Baptist.

Mary, goes to see her sister Elizabeth and expresses her joy in the *Magnificat*.



## Prayers for:

### **Those who are ill, recovering, or shut-in, especially:**

John Adams, Marilyn Adams, Claudia Addison, Brenda Boyer, Amanda Cupernall, Alexandria (Lexxi) Ditzler, Cathy Dunkelberger, Henry Fasnacht, Deb Glassmoyer, Peg Griffie, David Grubb, Bill Gundrum, Kim Lenhart Hale, John Hassinger, Earl Hehnly, Dean Hettinger, Lilly Higgins & Family, Richard and Nancy Hollen, Christopher Johnson (D Hettinger), Landon Kreider, Richard Leshner, Ken Light, Donald and Sue McClure, Steven McCracken, Casey McGarvey, Dana McKinney, Maureen Marinkov, Harold (Spike) Moore, Howard Moore, Brian Navarre, Barry Nolt, Kathy O'Roark, Ruth Parson, George Pastore, Ronald Ream, Lance Rhodes, Landon Rhodes, Al Shade, Barry Shriver, Lloyd Smith, Richard Strohl, Caitlyn, Gretta and Mike Stuber, Robert Todisco, Landis Wenger, Josephine Wenrich, Janet Wharton, Josie Williams, Eddie Wolfe, Marian Yoder, Ashton Zohn.

### **Those who are serving in the military, especially:**

Timothy Beamesderfer, David Deysher, Tyler Fleagle, Shane Gettler, Steven Ginder, Matthew Plummer, Greg Rocker.

### **Congregations and ministries with whom we share mutual ministry:**

The congregations and pastors of the Heidelberg Ministerium and Lebanon Conference, Agape House, Lebanon Co. Christian Ministries, Women's Shelter, Lancaster/Lebanon Habitat for Humanity, Lebanon Rescue Mission, Support Connections of Lebanon County, St. Paul's Penryn, Our Bishops: James S. Dunlop and Elizabeth Eaton and their staff.

**The St. Luke Vision to Mission Team** - Kit Ahnert, Richelle Deysher, Elaine Matternas, Scott Rights, and Todd Snyder.

**Please notify the church office and Pastor Angie**  
**when the prayer chain is activated and for pastoral care & emergencies.**  
**For revisions to the above list, please contact the church office.**

