

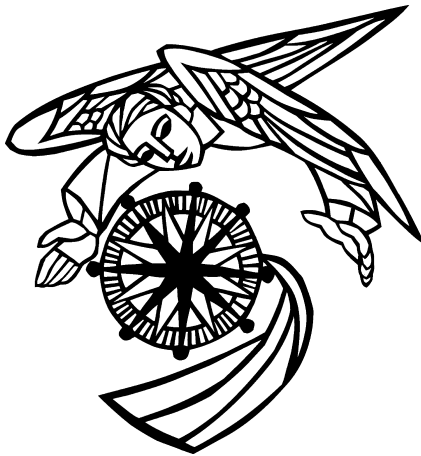
**St. Luke and St. Paul
Lutheran Churches**

Worshipping together

First Sunday of Christmas

Lessons and Carols

December 31, 2023



Welcome!

We are glad you have joined us today.

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



LESSONS *and* CAROLS

History of Carols

The word Carol is a medieval word of French and Anglo-Norman origin, believed to mean a dance song or a circle dance accompanied by singing. The carol's English origin is in songs of a variety of subjects utilizing a verse and refrain, which often alternate. The two-hundred-year golden age of English carols is believed to have begun around 1350. During this time, carols became a popular religious song form, revolving around a particular Saint, the Christ Child or Mary, and often blending English and Latin. By the late 1500s this "art music," as it was often called, became less and less popular, almost disappearing, until its revival in the mid-1700s when most Christmas Carols were composed.



GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

Welcome and Announcements

Sharing the Peace

L: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: **And also with you.**

L: Let us share a sign of peace with each other.

Prelude

*Confession & Forgiveness

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who sends the word with angels,
who is made flesh among all peoples,
and who breathes peace on all the earth.

C: **Amen.**

L: In Christ, we are bold to name our sin and cry out for peace.

Silence is kept for reflection.

L: Holy God,

C: **we confess our sin before you.**

We replace compassion with competition.

We seek what is mighty while ignoring the meek.

We are quick to anger but slow to forgive.

We have not put on love in harmony with you.

Wrap us in the grace of your powerful Word.

Swaddle our hearts with your peace,

that all we do, in word or deed,

may reflect your love born among us.

Amen.

L: I bring you good news of great joy for all people:
God has come among us in the child born of Mary,
Christ the Lord. ✚ In Christ your sins are forgiven
and you are clothed in peace.

C: Amen.

***Gathering Hymn:** Hark! The Herald Angels Sing LBW #60

***Call to Worship**

L: The people who walk in darkness have seen a great light.

**C: The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it.**

P: Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness,
on them has light shined.

**C: We have beheld Christ's glory,
glory as of the only Son from the Father.**

P: To us a child is born, to us a son is given.

C: In him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

***Prayer of the Day**

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

L: Let us pray. Almighty God, you have filled us with the new
light of the Word who became flesh and lived among us. Let
the light of our faith shine in all we do; through your Son, Jesus
Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy
Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C. Amen.

Ministry of Music: Angels We Have Heard on High
Brooke Liskey, violin and Linda Holt

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song

First Reading: Luke 1:26-35, 38

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."^[a] ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He 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. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"^[b] ³⁵ The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born ^[c] will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁸ Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Carol History

William Chatterton Dix was an English writer of hymns and carols. He was born in Bristol, England, June 14, 1837, the son of John Dix, a surgeon and writer. His father gave him his middle name in honor of Thomas Chatterton, a poet about whom he had written a biography. Dix spent most of his life as manager of a Maritime Insurance Company in Glasgow. However, at the age of 29 he was struck with a near fatal illness and consequently suffered months confined to his bed. During this time he became severely depressed. Yet it is from this period that many of his hymns date. His hymns and carols included—*As with gladness men of Old, What child is this,*

To you, O Lord, our hearts we raise, and Alleluia sing to Jesus.
He died September 9th 1898 at Cheddar, Somerset, England,
and was buried at his parish church.

Carol: What Child is This LBW #40

Second Reading: Luke 2:1-7

In 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.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Carol History

In 1223, St. Francis, the great mystic of the Middle Ages, was wrestling with a problem of deep significance. In his opinion the Gospel message had become so highly intellectualized that it seems cold and dogmatic. He thought the message should be humanized so that it might better appeal to the heart of the common man. St. Francis wanted to dramatize the Christmas story so that man could better understand the incarnation. Accordingly, he had a manger and all the trappings of a stable placed in his church. The Christmas crib became the occasion of manger-carols and lullabies. One of the best of these is the charming lullaby, *Away in a Manger*. The hymn is generally referred to as "Luther's Cradle Hymn". Luther may have used the hymns at Christmas festivities.

Carol: Away in a Manger LBW #67

Third Reading: Luke 2:8-16

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,^[a] 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,^[b] praising God and saying, ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” ¹⁵ When 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.” ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Choir: Come and Worship

Fourth Reading: Matthew 2:8-16

⁸ Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” ⁹ When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising,^[a] until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped,^[b] they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road. ¹³ Now after . ¹³ Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said

“Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” ¹⁴Then Joseph^[c] got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, ¹⁵and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.” ¹⁶When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Carol History

The Three Kings, Melchior, Casper, and Balthazar, guided by the Bethlehem Star, set out to pay homage to the new-born King. According to legend, they arrived on the twelfth night and presented the Christ child with gifts. *We Three Kings* is an American carol especially adapted for dramatizations. Rev. John Henry Hopkins, Jr., rector of Christ’s Church, Williamsport, composed both words and music in 1857.

Carol: We Three Kings of Orient Are WOV #646

Fifth Reading: John 1:1-14

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.¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son,[d] full of grace and truth.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Carol: Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful

LBW #45

Prayer:

L: Shine into our hearts the light of your wisdom, O God, and open our minds to the knowledge of your word, that in all things we may think and act according to your good will and may live continually in the light of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Ministry of Music: The King of Glory
Wendy and Emmy Holt

Prayers of Intercession

L: Joining our voices with the heavenly host and Christians throughout time and space, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

L: You come to us in gatherings of your church across the globe. Unite us with those who celebrate your birth even when they are weighed down by grief, loss, poverty, hunger, or injustice. Merciful God,

C. hear our prayer.

L: You come to us in the diverse splendor of the universe. Grant us the humility to trust our place in the network of creation, that we live in service to you and the natural world. Merciful God,

C. hear our prayer.

L: You come to us through relationships of many kinds: families, friendships, communities, and nations. Guide us in these relationships, that we recognize the Christ child in one another and show your love to those most vulnerable. Merciful God,

C. hear our prayer.

L: You come to us through people whom the world forgets. Poor shepherds and an imprisoned Paul announced your good news. Send your Spirit to all who are imprisoned, struggling with addiction, unwell, or in any need this day Merciful God,

C. hear our prayer.

L: You come to us in acts of justice and forgiveness. Open our hearts to forgive one another, without permitting injustice. Supply us with the wisdom to be clothed with love, binding all things together in perfect harmony. Merciful God,

C. hear our prayer.

L: Rejoicing in your Word made flesh among us, we commend these prayers to you, confident of your grace and love made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior.

C. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

L: 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.

SENDING

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

Blessing

L: The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ Jesus, the Word made flesh.

C: Amen

Closing Carol: Joy to the World LBW #39

Dismissal

L: Go in peace. Rejoice in Christ our Savior!

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude: Rejoice, Rejoice Believers

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Thank you to our readers and musicians
who led our service today.

Pastor Hammer is on a well deserved vacation this week.

Our worshipping community:

Pastor: Rev. Angela Hammer

Musicians: Linda Holt, JP Welliver, and the Choir

Today's Worship Assistant:

Today's Lay Readers: St. Luke and St. Paul

Live Streaming: William and Beverly Hoffman

Next Sunday's Worship Assistant: Donna Rhodes

Next Sunday's Lay Reader: Melissa Gettler

Ministers: The people of St. Luke and St. Paul

This week at St. Luke

Sunday, December 31, 2023

10:00 AM Combined Service of Lessons and Carols
5:30 PM-7:00 PM Community Free Meal

Wednesday, January 4

7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, January 4

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

Saturday, January 6—Day of Epiphany

9:00 AM Saturday Morning Bible Study

Next Sunday, January 7—Baptism of our Lord

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

St. Luke Congregational Meetings:

Sunday, January 7 at 9:30:
Special Meeting for purpose of Council nominations
and election of new council members.

Sunday, January 28 at 9:30:
Annual Congregational Meeting

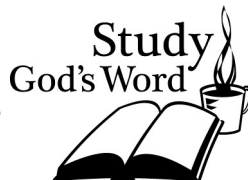
Recent services at St. Luke

| | In-person: | online: |
|-------|------------|---------|
| 12/17 | 44 | 51 |
| 12/24 | 91 | n/a |

NEWS IN OUR PEWS

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: The 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! These services will return in 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!

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



Share your musical gifts!

Choir rehearsals are held on Wednesday at 7:00 PM. Contact Linda Holt for more information.



Connect with St. Luke:

For more information, please see “News in the Pews” in this bulletin or speak to an usher. On our website, you can find current events and links to our online worship services via Facebook or YouTube. Direct access to Facebook is at www.facebook.com/StLukeEvangelicalLutheran, or on YouTube: www.youtube.com/@stlukeschaefferstownpa

Bulletins are emailed weekly, but are also available at in-person services. We welcome your feedback, recommendations, suggestions, or improvements regarding the current online transmissions. We also need volunteers to assist with the technical aspects of livestreaming and all the legwork and support this requires. Please send your feedback or volunteer availability to the Church Office.



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 Griffe, 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 Deysner, 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 Deysner, 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.

