

December 25, 2025



Christmas Day



14940 62nd St. N - Stillwater, MN 55082

651-439-7831

www.salemlutheran.org

Christmas Day

*The Gift of God:
God Gives Himself as One of Us*

Welcome! Thank you for joining us for worship today. In our services we gather before our almighty God to receive his gifts and to offer him our worship and praise. Through God's powerful Word and sacraments he renews our faith and strengthens us to serve in joy.

PRAYER BEFORE WORSHIP: Father in heaven, thank you for this greatest gift of a Savior. Fill our hearts with joy and peace as we see your promise kept. In the baby in the manger have forgiveness and life eternal. Amen.

THEME OF THE DAY: Have you ever opened a Christmas present and had to ask, "What is it?" You were grateful for the gift, but also not 100% certain what you were looking at. Today, as we look into the manger, we ask that question. In this case, the question is not quickly or easily answered. It requires both deep thought and humble awe. We are looking at the same God who once told the prophet Moses, "No one may see me and live." Yet, Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds all saw their holy God and survived. How? God became human, hiding his glory within our flesh, so that he might come to us without instilling fear or dread.

"What is it?" This gift is God and man in one person, exactly what humanity needed to deliver us from our greatest enemies: sin, death, and Satan. On the Festival of Christmas, we thank God for this greatest of gifts.

A WORD ABOUT HOLY COMMUNION: Our church observes the biblical practice of member communion (also called close communion). In Holy Communion we not only receive forgiveness from God, but we also express the unique relationship our members have with each other. If you are not a member of our congregation, we kindly ask that you not take communion today, but speak with our pastor after the service. We would love to share the sacrament with you in the future.

SERVING GOD, SERVING US:

Preacher: Pastor Ryan Wolfe Piano/Organ: Robyn Stoller, Madison Boerner
Soloist: Abigail Ibsch Band Director: Roger Zolldan

14940 62nd St N, Stillwater + www.salemlutheran.org + 651-439-7831

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Order of Worship

CW Hymnal Setting Four, adapted



Pre-Service Christmas Carols

Minister: In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Amen.

M: Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

C: Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Hymn: Joy to the World

CW 353



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their
3 No more let sins and sor - rows 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 right - eous -



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



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.

Please stand.

CHRISTMAS DIALOGUE

M: The LORD has made his salvation known and revealed his righteousness to the nations.

C: **All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.**

M: But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears?

C: **If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?**

M: Restore us again, O God our Savior, and put away your displeasure toward us.

C: **Show us your unfailing love, O LORD, and grant us your salvation.**

M: Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people.

C: **My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.**

M: When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

C: **The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

M: I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord.

C: **Glory to God in the highest!**

Glory to God in the Highest



Glo - ry to God in the high - est and peace to his peo - ple on earth.



Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al - might - y God and Fa-ther. We



wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your



glo - ry. Glo - ry to God in the high - est and peace to his

peo - ple on earth. Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly
 Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God, you
 take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on
 us; you are seat - ed at the right hand of the
 Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer, re - ceive our prayer.
 Glo - ry to God in the high - est and peace to his peo - ple on
 earth. For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the
 Lord, you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ,
 with the Ho - ly Spir - it in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther.
 Glo - ry to God in the high - est and peace to his peo - ple on earth.
 Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God.

THE WORD OF GOD

Prayer of the Day

M: Let us pray.

Almighty God, grant that the birth of your only Son in the flesh may set us free from our old bondage under the yoke of sin; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Be seated.

First Reading

Exodus 33:18-23; 34:5-7

To reveal himself to us, God hid himself in human flesh. To reveal himself to Moses, God hid Moses within the cleft of the mountain.

¹⁸Then Moses said, "Now show me your glory."

¹⁹And the LORD said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. ²⁰But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live."

²¹Then the LORD said, "There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. ²²When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. ²³Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen."

⁵Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. ⁶And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, ⁷maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation."

M: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Handbell Anthem

News! News!

By J. Fedon

Second Reading

Romans 8:31-32

If the Father was willing to give us the gift of his only Son, clearly there is no good thing he would withhold from us.

³¹What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³²He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

M: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Please stand.

Gospel

John 1:1-18

In Jesus the God whose glory is impossible to see is seen. The God who cannot be known is known.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

⁹The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹²Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵(John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is the one I spoke about when I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' ") ¹⁶Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

M: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated.

Children's Devotion

Hymn of the Day: Of the Father's Love Begotten

CW 358



1 Of the Fa - ther's love be - got - ten ere the worlds be -
2 Oh, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed when the vir - gin,
3 This is he whom seers and sa - ges sang of old with
4 Let the heights of heav'n a - dore him, an - gel hosts his
5 Christ, to thee, with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho - ly



gan to be, he is Al - pha and O - me - ga,
full of grace, by the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing,
one ac - cord, whom the voic - es of the proph - ets
prais - es sing, pow'rs, do - min - ions bow be - fore him
Ghost, to thee hymn and chant and high thanks - giv - ing



he the source, the end - ing he,
bore the Sav - ior of our race,
prom - ised in their faith - ful word.
and ex - tol our God and King.
and un - end - ing prais - es be,



of the things that are, that have been,
and the babe, the world's Re - deem - er,
Now he shines, the long - ex - spect - ed;
Let no tongue on earth be si - lent,
hon - or, glo - ry, and do - min - ion



and that fu - ture years shall see ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
first re - vealed his sa - cred face ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
let cre - a - tion praise its Lord ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
ev - 'ry voice in con - cert ring ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
and e - ter - nal vic - to - ry ev - er - more and ev - er - more.

“The Greatest Gift”

Please stand after the sermon.

THANKSGIVING

A Christmas Creed

**I believe in God the Father Almighty,
who sent His Son to be my Savior.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ,
His only Son, my Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
announced by the angels,
worshiped by the shepherds,
adored by the wise men;
who lived to suffer, die and rise again
to free me from all sin, from death, and
from the power of Satan.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
who has brought me to faith in my Savior,
and by whose continuous work in my heart,
I rejoice in my salvation, show forth His praises,
and will one day live and reign with Him
through all eternity. Amen.**

Be seated.

Offering



Connect Card

Our members give offerings to support God's work in our church. Offerings can be put in the basket or made online by scanning the code. Visitors may give, but aren't expected to.

We ask members and visitors alike to fill out the connection card and place it in the basket now or as you leave. Please share your prayer requests that we can pray for you.



Give Online

Please stand.

Prayer of the Church

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Our Lord Jesus has given us a holy supper in which we receive his true body and blood for the forgiveness of sins. The meal also bears witness to the unity and fellowship we share with each other. Therefore, we invite to communion all those who share in our confession by virtue of their membership here or in a sister WELS or ELS congregation. We ask visitors to speak to the pastor before communing.

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

C: **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

M: It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, by whose wonderful and mysterious birth you have opened our eyes to the glory of your grace and renewed in our hearts the fervor of your love. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

Holy, Holy, Holy

CW 184

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er, God of 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, ho - san - na in the high - est!

Words of Institution

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my + body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

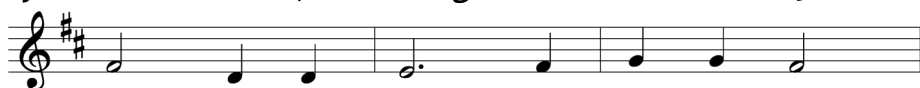
Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my + blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

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

C: Amen.

Hymn: O Jesus Christ, Your Manger Is

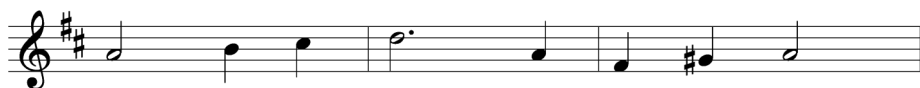
CW 342 sts. 1-3



1 O Je - sus Christ, your man - ger is
2 He whom the sea and wind o - bey
3 Dear Chris - tian friend, on him de - pend;



my par - a - dise at which I am re - clin - ing.
comes down to serve the sin - ner in great meek - ness.
be of good cheer and let no sor - row move you.



For there, O Lord, we find the Word
Now God's own Son with us is one
For God's own Child in mer - cy mild



made flesh for us— your grace is bright - ly shin - ing.
and joins us and our chil - dren in our weak - ness.
joins you to him—how great - ly God must love you!

Be seated.

Communion Distribution

For those who cannot have any alcohol for personal or medical reasons we offer white grape juice. You will find cups of white grape juice in the center of each communion tray. Gluten-free wafers are available by request for those medically unable to tolerate gluten.

Communicants may choose to receive the wine by individual or common cup. If you choose the common cup, please allow the individual tray to pass and then assist the minister by helping to tip the common cup.

Distribution Hymn: God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen

CW 356



1 God rest you mer - ry, gen - tle - men, let noth - ing you dis - may;
2 From God our heav'n - ly Fa - ther a bless - ed an - gel came
3 "Fear not," then said the an - gel, "let noth - ing you af - fright;
4 Now to the Lord sing prais - es, all you with - in this place,



re - mem - ber Christ, our Sav - ior, was born on Christ - mas Day
and un - to cer - tain shep - herds brought ti - dings of the same,
this day is born a Sav - ior, the true and ra - diant light,
and in true love and fel - low - ship each oth - er now em - brace;



to save us all from Sa - tan's pow'r when we were gone a - stray.
how that in Beth - le - hem was born the Son of God by name.
to free all those who trust in him from Sa - tan's pow'r and might."
this ho - ly tide of Christ - mas is filled with heav'n - ly grace.



O ti - dings of com - fort and joy, com - fort and joy,



O ti - dings of com - fort and joy.

After the distribution please stand at the pastor's direction.

Response of Thanksgiving

M: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.

C: **His mercy endures forever.**

Psalms 118:1

M: Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,

C: **We proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.**

1 Corinthians 11:26

Closing Prayer

M: Almighty God, grant to your Church the Holy Spirit and the wisdom that comes from above. Let nothing hinder your Word from being freely proclaimed to the joy and edifying of Christ's holy people, so that we may serve you in steadfast faith and confess your name as long as we live, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

Blessing

M: May he who by his incarnation gathered things earthly and heavenly into one, fill us with such joy that comes with the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life.

And the blessing of God Almighty - the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit - be upon you and remain with you always.

C: **Amen.**



Hymn: Now Sing We, Now Rejoice

CW 363



1 Now sing we, now re - joice, now raise to heav'n our voice;
2 Come from on high to me; I can - not rise to thee.
3 Now through his Son doth shine the Fa - ther's grace di - vine.
4 Oh, where shall joy be found? Where but on heav'n - ly ground,



he from whom joy stream - eth poor in a man - ger lies;
Cheer my wea - ried spir - it, O pure and ho - ly Child;
Death was reign - ing o'er us through sin and van - i - ty
where the an - gels sing - ing with all his saints u - nite,



not so bright - ly beam - eth the sun in yon - der skies.
thro' thy grace and mer - it, blest Je - sus, Lord most mild,
till he o - pened for us a bright e - ter - ni - ty.
sweet - est prais - es bring - ing in heav'n - ly joy and light.



Thou my Sav - ior art! Thou my Sav - ior art!
draw me un - to thee! Draw me un - to thee!
May we praise him there! May we praise him there!
Oh, that we were there! Oh, that we were there!

Silent Prayer and Announcements

Fellowship & Spiritual Growth

Sunday morning, all are invited to enjoy refreshments and fellowship in the entry between services. Sunday JAM for children ages 3yrs to 6th grade starts at 9:15am in the sanctuary. Adult Bible study begins at 9:15 in the fellowship hall downstairs

For Worship Next Week

Worship theme: The Gift of God: God Gives Both Substitute and Sacrifice

Bible Readings: Isaiah 50:4-9, Hebrews 2:10-18, Luke 2:41-52

Hymns: 346, 355, 330, 342

Christmas Season Thank You

Thank you once again to all the talented people who make the Christmas season special here at Salem. It takes so many people to maintain and decorate the building, teach and organize the children, and practice and play the instruments. We are blessed to have so many people willing to share their time and talents so that our celebration and proclamation of the Savior's birth can be so rich. Thank you to everyone involved, from the youngest child to the oldest volunteer. Merry Christ-



Christmas Poinsettias

IN LOVING MEMORY

Michael Miller	Herb & Catherine	Harold & Mabel Zoldan
Amanda & Charlie Dahlke	Monthie Kent Hadrits	Bernice Roth Paul Roth
Victor Prescott	Johanna & Alfred Stoller	Connie Sweeny
Collin Fitzgerald	Tracy & Ella Berdan	David Richert
Zaylee Lucy Fitzgerald	Gilbert & Rosella Ecker	Linda Wyland
George & Mardell Hackler	Kay Berdan Stan Vetsch	Linda McKean Lyle Doerr
Merlyn & Arayla Rogge	Howard Jr. & Pearl Elder	Arlyn Kunze
Brenda Ross	Verna & Franklin Gruetzmacher	Beatrice & Evan Thompson
Fran Schubegel	Darliene & Maynard Ask	Carol Lange
Donald Roettger	Burdette Vrieze	Bruce Boerner
Geraldine Roettger	Richard Kerr	Gene Hartsock
Carl & Emma Bourman	Leonard LeMay	Family that are in heaven

Welcome to worship!

FOR OUR GUESTS

We are glad that you joined us to worship our Savior today. If you have questions about our church or service simply ask an usher or someone near you. We're happy to help. Please take note of a few helpful things:

- † **Restrooms** are located straight down the hall opposite the sanctuary entrance. Both men's and women's restrooms are equipped with **diaper changing tables** for your convenience.
- † Our sanctuary is equipped with an amplified "loop" system for **hearing assistance**. Please set hearing aids to the "T" position.
- † You will find a **connection card** in your pew. We ask members and guests to share their names and contact info, and invite you to share requests for contact or prayers. Cards can be placed in the offering basket or left on the table near the sanctuary entrance.
- † Salem members give an **offering** to support the work we do for the Lord. Guests are not expected to give anything, but if you wish to make a donation you can place it in a basket as it's passed during the service or give online.

FOR THOSE WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

We love to see families worship together and we welcome children to sing and pray and grow with us in our services. Please note these special worship aids and helps for families:

- † Children's bulletins & "*quiet bags*" for your child's use in worship are available in the entry, just to the left of the office hallway. Ask an usher if you need help finding them.
- † If your child needs to be nursed or quieted for a few moments you can use our "*cry room*" down the hallway across from the restrooms. The service is shown live on a TV in the room.
- † Sunday mornings, before the hymn of the day and sermon, children of all ages are invited to come to the front of church for a short devotion on God's Word. Parents may accompany their children as they wish.

**Salem Lutheran Church exists to glorify God
by teaching his timeless Truth, that all may
grow in grace and faith to share tomorrow's eternity.**

