

Christmas Eve Manger Service
December 24, 2023
4:30pm



Central Lutheran Church
1857 Potter Street
Eugene, Oregon
541-345-0395
www.welcometocentral.org

CHRISTMAS EVE MANGER SERVICE

First Service of Christmas, Anno Domini (the year of our Lord) 2023:

As the sun sets on Christmas Eve, and the season of Advent comes to a close, Christmas—the Season of the Nativity of our Lord—commences for Christians who observe the liturgical calendar. Christmas culminates in Epiphany twelve days later (hence the popular secular carol: The Twelve Days of Christmas). The Day of Epiphany on January 6th concludes the cycle, commemorating the visit to the Christ Child by the Magi (Three Kings) from the East. From the early days of the Church, Christians throughout the world (following the Jewish tradition) marked the beginning of the new day when the sun set in the West. Hence Christmas Day begins at sunset on Christmas Eve.

WELCOME TO WORSHIP AS WE CELEBRATE THE BIRTH OF THE CHRIST-CHILD

PRELUDE

Carol of the Bells Leontovitch
Arya Saks, Piano

Infant Holy arr. Stewart-Cook
Heidi Knebel, Violin; Lauralie Kallinen, Cello; and Martha Griffith, Harp

Angels We Have Heard on High
Paul (Violin), Sam (Vocalist) & Steve Rodgers (Vocalist & Guitar)

A French Carol from Provence arr. Stewart-Cook
Jack Benda, Violin; Liesl Benda, Viola; and Martha Griffith, Harp

CALL TO WORSHIP

The Carillon

Pealing a joyful welcome to Christmas!

CHRISTMAS GREETING

PROCESSIONAL CAROL Hark the Herald Angels Sing

(please stand, turn, and face the cross during the procession)

**Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king;
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"**

**Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see! Hail, incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel!
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"**

**Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"**

(please be seated)

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES & CHRISTMAS CANDLE

PLACING BABY JESUS IN THE CRECHE

BLESSING OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE

CHRISTMAS DIALOGUE (*congregation responds with bold text*)

Arise, shine for your light has come & the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.

Give us your light, O God, to shine in the darkness of our lives.

Come to us, Lord Jesus, with the light of your love and salvation.

SALUTATION

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. 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 Christ's glory; this we pray, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY Isaiah 9:2-7 Reader: Arya Saks

Light shines: a child is born for us!

CAROL Away in a Manger

**Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
the stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

**The cattle are lowing; the poor baby wakes,
but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.**

**Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay
close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care
and fit us for heaven to live with you there.**

CHRISTMAS GOSPEL Luke 2:1-7

Reader: Lukas Henriksen

Luke, the Evangelist, tells the story of Jesus' birth.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And 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.

CAROL*O Come Little Children*, a German Carol Carol McClure

The Children's Choir with

Jack Benda, Violin; Lauralie Kallinen, Cello; and Martha Griffith, Harp

CHRISTMAS GOSPEL Luke 2:8-14

Reader: Kiersten Knebel

Angels tell the shepherds the good news of Jesus' birth.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 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: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

CAROL*The Star Carol*

Alfred Burt, arr. Stewart-Cook

Siri Vik, Soprano

CHRISTMAS GOSPEL Luke 2:15-20

Reader: Jordin Johnson

The shepherds go to Bethlehem to see the Christ child and return praising God.

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." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

CHRISTMAS MEDITATION

Pastor Ben Nickodemus

CAROL I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve

(You may sing the first stanza in either English or Norwegian)



1 I am so glad__ each Christ-mas Eve, The night of Je - sus' birth!__
 (1) Jeg er så glad__ hver Ju - le kveld, For da blev Je - sus født,__
 2 The lit - tle child__ in Beth - le - hem, He was a king__ in - deed!__
 3 He dwells a - gain__ in heav - en's realm, The Son of God__ to - day;__



Then like the sun__ the star shoneforth, And an - gels sang__ on earth.
 Da ly - ste stjer - ne som een sol, Og en - gle sang__ så sødt.
 For He came down from heav'n a - bove To help a world__ in need.
 And still he loves__ his lit - tle ones And hears them when__they pray.

4 I am so glad each Christmas Eve!
 His praises then I sing;
 He opens now for every child
 The palace of the king.

5 And so I love each Christmas Eve,
 And I love Jesus too;
 And that he loves me every day
 I know so well is true.

RESPONSORY PROCLAMATION

Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy; for to you is born this day a Savior who is Christ the Lord.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, goodwill toward all.

God has come to join us in the Christ child. Let us rejoice and be glad!

Thanks be to God for this wonderful gift!

Let us celebrate God's presence in our lives tonight and always.

God is here! Let us rejoice and sing!

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

OFFERTORY CAROL Angels, We Have Heard on High

**Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.**

REFRAIN Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

**Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heav'nly song?**

REFRAIN Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

**Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn king.**

REFRAIN Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

CAROL *The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy*, a West Indies Carol

Siri Vik, Soprano; Lauralie Kallinen, Cello; and Martha Griffith, Harp

DIALOGUE

Love came to us in Bethlehem's child.

We give thanks to God for this child born of Mary.

Let us turn our hearts and minds to Christ who is our light and our salvation.

The Child of Bethlehem is our Savior and Lord.

Unto us a child is born!

Unto us a Son is given! Let us praise God!

CAROL Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

**Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall;
Oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the child is Lord of all.
Swiftly winging, angels singing, bells are ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all.**

**Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new
saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing, greet the morrow:
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!**

PRAYERS

God of glory, we come before you on this holy night rejoicing in your love made manifest to us in the gift of the Christ-child and we pray that all may be comforted by your promise of a Savior.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For all the things that remind us of your love,

We give you thanks.

For this time of hearing and singing, of receiving and giving,

We give you thanks.

For the joy of child-like wonder that marks this season,

We give you thanks.

For the mystery and miracle of your Son's birth,

We give you thanks.

For the love of those who are with us,

We give you thanks.

For the love of those who are distanced from us,

We give you thanks.

For the love of those who have gone before us,

We give you thanks.

For your love in coming to us in the child, Jesus,

We thank and praise you, O God. Amen.

BENEDICTION

On this holy night, may the presence of the incarnate God of life, light, and salvation stream to you, so that you may abound in hope, peace, joy, and love by the power of the Holy Spirit. And may the God of grace bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

CAROL Silent Night, Holy Night

(You may sing the first stanza in either English or German)

**1. Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.**

Holy infant, so tender and mild,

Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

*1. Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht! Alles schläft, einsam wacht
nur das traute, hochheilige Paar.*

Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,

schlaf in himmlischer Ruh, schlaf in himmlischer Ruh.

**2. Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar, heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!**

**3. Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.**

RECESSIONAL VOLUNTARY Good Christian Friends Rejoice Bach

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Proclaim the good news. **Thanks be to God!**

The liturgy is adapted from the Evangelical Lutheran Worship, © 2006, Augsburg Fortress, reprinted by permission through One License #A-706755 with special permission to live-stream granted by Augsburg Fortress and One License.

We, the staff of Central, wish you all



*May the gift of the Christ-child fill your hearts with hope, peace, joy, and love.
Laurie, Ben, Clare, ElRay, Lindsey, Kristi, Cindy & Crystal.*

*Christmas Eve Festival Eucharist
Worship & Holy Communion at 9:30pm*

*Christmas Day
Monday, December 25th
Worship & Holy Communion at 9am*

*The Seventh Day of Christmas
Sunday, December 31st
Worship & Holy Communion at 9am*

We return to our regular worship schedule on January 7, 2024, with services at 8:30am and 11am. More information about opportunities for worship, education, fellowship, and service can be found on our church's website at welcometocentral.org.

Thank you for worshipping with us and for your generous gifts to support the Mission and Ministry of Central Lutheran Church.

Central Lutheran Staff

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Tonight's Worship Leaders

Presider: Pastor Laurie A. Jones
Preacher: Pastor Ben Nickodemus
Crucifer: Liesl Benda

Torch Bearers: Henry Koscho
& Signy Smith

Acolytes: Elise Henriksen
& Lucy Ruhland

Ushers: Howard Kallinen, Don
Rasmussen, Chuck Swenson, Dave
Swenson

Video & Tech Support: Thomas Stine
Organist: Dr. A. ElRay Stewart-Cook
Children's Choir Director:

Dr. Lindsey Hendriksen Rodgers
Vocalists: Siri Vik
Sam & Steve Rodgers

Piano: Arya Saks

Harp: Martha Griffith

Violin: Jack Benda, Heidi Knebel
& Paul Rodgers

Viola: Liesl Benda

Cello: Lauralie Kallinen

Guitar: Steve Rodgers

Brass Ensemble: James Meyer, Sheri
Pyron, Thomas Stine, Roger Welch

Children's Choir: Evan Barrett, Louisa
Barrett, Ella Franzwa, Lukas Henriksen,
Eliot Hodgetts, Henry Koscho, Greyson
Neckels, Piper Neubert, *Charlotte
Miller, *Sam Rodgers, Paul Rodgers,
*Arya Saks, *Signe Smith, and
*CJ Strietelmeier

*indicates Junior Cantors