



Christmas Eve Worship

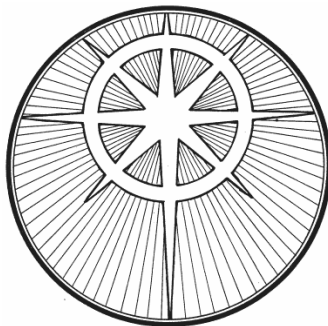
St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
1010 Adams Ave. North Fond du Lac, WI 54937
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Welcome! On this holy night, the Christian Church remembers the birth of Jesus Christ. His birth changes everything for his people. The child of light entered into this sin-darkened world and shone the brightness of God's love upon all people: "*Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord* (Luke 2:11 – the Verse of the Day)." This child has changed fallen man's life, death and destiny.

Today's Service: The order of worship for this service is printed beginning on the next page of this service folder. All Hymns are printed in the service folder but may also be found in *Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal* located in the pews in front of you.

Restrooms and a Child Training Room: Both areas are located at the back of the Church to your right as you exit through the doors. Sound from the service is fed into the Child training room which also has dimmable lights should you need to use it. Should you have difficulty locating either of these areas, feel free to ask an usher for assistance.

Assistive Listening Devices & Large Print Service Folders: Both of these items are provided for your use and are located on the information center nearest the sanctuary in the Narthex. The assistive listening devices patch into our sound system. Should you wear a hearing aid, please turn it off or remove it from the ear in which you place the listening devices ear bud.



A Service for Christmas Eve

The Nativity of our Lord

PRESERVICE MUSIC

Choir will be caroling in the library as you enter	4:00pm
Various selections will be played by our organist	6:00pm

CALL TO WORSHIP:

St. Paul's Church Choir sings <i>Midst the Deep Silence</i>	4:00pm
Organist will chime	6:00pm

A GATHERING RITE FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

"What Child Is This" (#67) plays softly throughout

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

Congregation: Amen.

M: We have come into the presence of God, Who created us to love and to serve him as His dear children. But we have disobeyed Him and deserve only His wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to Him and plead for His mercy.

Sung: *What child is this who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet With anthems sweet
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing.
Haste, haste to bring him laud,
The babe, the Son of Mary! (67:1)*

All (spoken): Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed You in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve Your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Sung: *Why lies he in such mean estate
Where oxen now are feeding?
Good Christians, fear; For sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through;
The cross he'll bear for me, for you.
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
The babe, the Son of Mary! (67:2)*

M: "Do not be afraid. 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 (Luke 2:10,11)."

By the perfect life and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, God our heavenly Father has forgiven all your sins and removed your guilt forever. You are His own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to His will.

Sung: *So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
Come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings Salvation brings;
Let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high;
The virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy, for Christ is born,
The babe, the Son of Mary! (67:3)*

PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

M: Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true light. Grant that as we have known on earth the wonder of that light, we may behold him in all glory in the life to come; through your only Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen!



GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

Luke 2:14

("Glory to God in the Highest" has been a Christian song of worship since the fourth century. A great and Mighty Wonder [cw #36] as almost been around as long and uses that joyous refrain of the angels as its own. We'll sing verse 1,2,4,5.)

A great and mighty wonder, A glorious mystery:

A virgin bears an infant Who veils his deity.

Repeat the hymn again:

"To God on high be glory And peace on earth to men."

The Word becomes incarnate And yet remains on high,

And cherubim sing anthems To shepherds from the sky.

Repeat the hymn again:

"To God on high be glory And peace on earth to men."

Since all he comes to ransom, By all be he adored,

The infant born in Bethl'em, The Savior and the Lord.

Repeat the hymn again:

"To God on high be glory And peace on earth to men."

All idols then shall perish And Satan's lying cease,

And Christ shall raise his scepter, Decreeing endless peace.

Repeat the hymn again:

"To God on high be glory And peace on earth to men."

THE WORD

The Promise Foretold

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

M: The people walking in darkness have seen a great light

C: on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.

M: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,

C: and the government will be on his shoulders.

M: And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

C: Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end.

M: He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.

C: The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

Response

Joy to the World (#62)

*Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare him room,
And heav'n and nature sing, And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n, and nature sing.*

*Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.*

*No more let sins and sorrows grow, Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found, Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as, the curse is found.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love, And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders, of His love.*

The Gospel Lesson: The Savior Is Born

Luke 2:1-7

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Response

Away in a Manger (#68)

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

*The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,
And stay by my side until 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 take us to heaven to live with you there.*

The Gospel Lesson: The Savior Is Born

Luke 2:8-20

Pastor: And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

All: *But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.*

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

Women: *This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”*

All: *Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.”*

Men: When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

Women: *So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.*

All: *When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child,*

Men: and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

Women: *But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.*

All: The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Hymn of the Day

Where Shepherds Lately Knelt (#54)

*Where shepherds lately knelt and kept the angel's word,
I come in half belief a pilgrim strangely stirred;
But there is room and welcome there for me,
But there is room and welcome there for me.*

*In that unlikely place I find him as they said:
Sweet newborn Babe, how frail! And in a manger bed,
A still, small voice to cry one day for me,
A still, small voice to cry one day for me.*

*How should I not have known Isaiah would be there,
His prophecies fulfilled? With pounding heart I stare:
A Child, a Son, the Prince of Peace for me,
A Child, a Son, the Prince of Peace for me.*

*Can I, will I, forget how love was born and burned
Its way into my heart unasked, unforced, unearned,
To die, to live, and not alone for me,
To die, to live, and not alone for me.*

SERMON

OFFERING

During the offering at 4:00pm the Chime choir will play.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH ON CHRISTMAS EVE

M: Oh gracious and almighty Father, we praise you that you kept your ancient promises by sending your everlasting Son in human flesh.

C: **On this holy night, receive our thanks and devotion, our songs and prayers.**

M: You sent Jesus as a lowly child to demonstrate your concern for all, the weak and lonely, the troubled and frightened, the timid and helpless. No one is overlooked by your ever-seeking eyes. No one is excluded from your upholding arms.

No one is denied the comfort and help of your outstretched hand.

C: Bless us with a childlike faith in the divine assurance that you love and care for us always.

M: You sent Jesus as the Savior of the world to deliver all from the curse of sin, the power of death, and the torment of hell. He took our place. He was born under the law to set us free. He became the innocent lamb of sacrifice. He came to die and rise again in order that we might live eternally. Firmly implant this good news in our hearts, and fill us with an eager desire to spread the Word concerning what we have heard tonight.

C: May all who hear the message, in every nation under heaven, be amazed and believe what is told them about the child.

M: You sent Jesus as the Light of the world to drive out all darkness that would rob us of the full life that you intend for us. May the “joy that will be for all people” be our joy. May the “peace on earth to all on whom his favor rests” be our peace. May the treasure that Mary pondered in her heart be our treasure.

C: For today in the town of David, a Savior has been born to us. He is Christ, the Lord. Amen.

LORD’S PRAYER (*special prayers may be spoken before*)

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.

HYMN

OH, COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL (#55)

Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant,

Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;

Come and behold him, Born the King of angels.

Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,

Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

*God from true God, and Light from Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, to earth he comes,
Only begotten Son of God the Father.
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

*Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation;
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above.
Glory to God, all Glory in the highest.
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

*Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n,
Word of the Father, Now in flesh appearing.
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

BLESSING

M: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

C: Amen!

CLOSING HYMN

Silent Night! Holy Night! (#60)

*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.*

*Silent Night! Holy Night! Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar;
Heavenly host sing, Alleluia;
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!*

*Silent Night! Holy Night! Son of God, loves pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord at thy birth.*

*At 4:00pm the Men's Choir will sing the first verse again in
German after verse 3.*

CHRISTMAS EVE NEWS & NOTES

Welcome to one and all! What a blessing to worship the Savior with you this Christmastime. Our regular services are Saturday at 6:30pm and Sunday at 7:45 and 10:15am. We normally also offer Bible Study and Sunday School between the services (9-10am), but not this holiday weekend or next. **Large print** copies of the service are on the information center. **Assistive listening devices** for those with hearing problems are also available there.

Ushers this Christmas weekend are Teams Schumacher (Sat 4pm), Ziemer (Sat 6pm), and Peachy (Sun 9am). Next week New Year's ushers are Saturday 6:30pm Team 4 (B. Wright) and Sunday 9:00am Team 6 (R. Wilhelms). Greeters this weekend are Carlton, Sandy, & Kari Kastorff, Steve & Denise Rozek, and Janet White. Next weekend they are Pam Eckert & Barb Taddey.

Next weekend we will celebrate **New Year's** with services (with the Lord's Supper) on Saturday night at 6:30 and Sunday morning at 9:00 (same service). Your special New Year's Eve envelope may be brought either Saturday or Sunday (added to your 2016 offering totals). Please be reminded that we also have our normal weekend envelopes for our planned, regular offerings that are dated Jan. 1, 2017.

2017 offering envelope boxes are on a table near the mailboxes. Please pick yours up today if you haven't already. With the exception of the special New Year's offering, please don't use 2016 envelopes after Dec. 31st.

January Calendars, prayer calendars, newsletters, and 2017 ushering schedules are in our mailboxes this weekend.

Pictorial directories are in the mail slots of those who participated. We hope you will enjoy them! Thank you to all who included their photos, those who provided activity pictures, our Directory Committee for their service to St. Paul's, and in particular Cindy Johnson for her excellent, time-intensive work of laying out the directory in such a useful and artistic way.

Volunteer opportunities: (1) Cleaning church; (2) Blowing snow; (3) Help with WLA Hot Lunch January 9-12. Sign-up lists for all 3 are on the information center. Your time and talents are valuable to the Lord! Thank you.

We thank our Senior Choir (directed by Kathy Thurow & accompanied by Rebecca Miller), our Men's Choir (directed by Jeff Wegner) and the Chime Choir (directed by Rebecca Miller) along with our instrumentalists (Skylar Miller & Shannon Rickert) for proclaiming God's Word for us in music and song during our 4:00pm service. We would also like to thank our organists Rebecca Miller (4pm) and Trevor Kuphal (6pm).

POINSETTIA MEMORIALS AND GIFTS

In memory of Terry Reitz from Anna Reitz and Family
In memory of Gerald W. Adams from Gert Adams
In memory of Chad Donald Stellmacher from Don & Barb Stellmacher
In memory of Shirley Perry and Alan Perry from Marlene Perry
In memory of Todd M. Rupert from Bob & Mary Lou England and
Pam, Jake and Jena Rupert (2 plants)
In memory of Renee (Solid) Zager from Dave & Mary Jo Solid
In memory of Joyce Becker from the Cliff Becker Family
In memory of Robert & LaVerne Zemke & Francis & Dorothy Wiener
from Mark & Bonnie Wiener
In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Sylvester Abraham & Mr. & Mrs. Sylvester Huck
from the Dennis Abraham Family (2 plants)
In memory of Ed & Alila Kionka & Paul & Loretta Thurow
from Don & Kathy Thurow (2 plants)
In memory of Laurie L. Kresal from Robert G. Kresal
In memory of Carl & Helen Roberts & Al & Dolores Buerger
from Don & Bev Buerger (2 plants)
In memory of their parents from Todd & Katie Fischer
In memory of Harold A. Langacker & Dorothy M. Young & Lu Ann Langacker
from Sharon Adams & Family
In memory of Herbert & Janice Wilson from Mike, Julie, Noah & Karina
Jorgensen
In honor of military members not able to be with their families
from Karen & Derek Fontaine
Poinsettia gifts (non-memorial): From Dave & Beth Kemnitz
From Steve & Denise Rozek

Merry Christmas!