

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
Christmas Eve Service | December 24, 2025, 10:00 p.m.

Prelude:

O Holy Night – Adolphe Adam, arr. by Carl Deis
Gilbert and Alexandra Lopez, Tenor and Mezzo-Soprano

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty Savior,
Prince of Peace. **Amen.**

Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Reconciling God, we yearn for your presence to transform our grief, pain, and despair. We confess that we have not always prepared room in our hearts for your love; we have not always recognized your presence among us; we have not always embraced your message of peace.

We cry out, weary with the burden of violence, oppression, and fear. We confess our failure to make room for those seeking refuge; our participation in violent systems that harm your innocent ones; our reluctance to embody your good news.

Be born in us today and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation. Amen.

God's grace upon grace flows over you. † Christ's presence redeems the whole creation.

Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad! **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn

O Come, All Ye Faithful ELW #283, stanzas 1-3

Greeting and Prayer

May the grace and truth of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

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 his glory; through your only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The Prophecy of the Messiah: Isaiah 9:2, 6-7, John 1:1-2, 4-5

Response: Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, Emmanuel, Emmanuel, God with us, Emmanuel.

(As congregation responds, the Christ Candle is lit.)

The Preparations for the Birth of Jesus: Luke 2:1-5

Response: Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, Emmanuel, Emmanuel, God with us, Emmanuel.

O Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie,
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep, the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark street shineth the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

Jesus is Born: Luke 2:6-7

Response: Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, Emmanuel, Emmanuel, God with us, Emmanuel.

Away in a Manger

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus lay down His sweet head.
The stars in the sky look down where He lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

(As congregation sings, the baby Jesus candle is lit.)

Jesus' Birth is Announced to the Shepherds: Luke 2:9-14

Response: Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, Emmanuel, Emmanuel, God with us, Emmanuel.

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

It came upon the midnight clear that glorious song of old
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold
Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven's all gracious King.
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

(While congregation sings, the angel candles are lit.)

The Shepherds Find the Baby Jesus: Luke 2:15-18

Response: Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, Emmanuel, Emmanuel, God with us, Emmanuel.

The First Noel

The first noel the angels did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay.
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep on a cold winter's night that was so

deep.

Noel, noel, noel, noel. Born is the King of Israel
(While congregation sings, the shepherd candles are lit.)

The Wise Men Bring Their Gifts to Jesus: Matthew 2:1-11

Response: Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, Emmanuel, Emmanuel, God with us, Emmanuel.

The First Noel

And by the light of that same star, three wise men came from county far.
To seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went.

Noel, noel, noel, noel. Born is the King of Israel.

Then entered in the wise men three, full reverently upon the knee.

And offered there in His presence their gold and myrrh and frankincense.

Born is the King of Israel.

(While congregation sings, the king candles are lit.)

Homily

Pastor Jon Nelson

Prayers

Each petition concludes, "Hear us, O God." Response: "Your mercy is great."

Offertory: We Offer Our Gifts to God

Anthem: Angel Carol Traditional Polish Carol, Arr. by Anna Laura Page
Gilbert and Alexandra Lopez, Tenor and Mezzo-Soprano

Offertory Response

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh, come, peasant, king, to own Him.

The King of Kings salvation brings. Let loving hearts enthrone Him.

This, this is Christ the King whom shepherds guard and angels sing.

Haste, haste to bring him laud the Babe, the Son of Mary.

Words of Institution

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Holy Communion

When receiving Communion, please stand at the Rail. Pastor will distribute the bread, and a Communion Assistant will come with a tray of pre-filled cups of wine and grape juice. The juice will be in the middle of the tray. Gluten-free wafers are available as an alternative to bread. St. Stephen is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, so all are welcome to the Lord's Supper.

Communion Anthem *A Christmas Carol* Norman Dello Joio
Gilbert and Alexandra Lopez, Tenor and Mezzo-Soprano

Table Blessing

Prayer after Communion

We are filled with joy for we have heard good news of great joy. We are filled with love for we have tasted the sign of God's great love. We are filled with hope for the angels still sing in our world and there is a Light for us to follow. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn (by Candlelight) *Silent Night* *ELW 281*

Blessing

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ Child. Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever. Amen.

Dismissal

Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.
Thanks be to God.

