An illustration of a nativity scene set against a dark blue, textured night sky. A large, bright yellow star with multiple points and a long vertical beam of light dominates the upper left. Below the star, the silhouettes of Mary, Joseph, and the infant Jesus in a manger are visible. The text 'THE PEOPLE WHO WALKED IN DARKNESS HAVE SEEN A GREAT LIGHT ...' is written in white and yellow capital letters, with 'GREAT LIGHT' in yellow. The background features faint, stylized star patterns.

THE PEOPLE
WHO WALKED
IN DARKNESS
HAVE SEEN A
GREAT LIGHT ...

ISAIAH 9:2, NRSV

Nativity of Our Lord
Christmas Day

Immanuel Lutheran Church- LCMS
Lakefield, Minnesota
December 25, 2025

Good News

As We Gather

“If it bleeds, it leads.” That’s the mantra of modern news media. Good news doesn’t seem to get the traction that destruction and division do. But good news is what God speaks through His Son, the Word who became flesh and dwelt among us. God publishes peace, salvation, and the good news of happiness through the Word and reminds us, “Your God reigns” (Isaiah 52:7) That’s good news!

Preparation

Call to Worship

Choir and Congregation

O Come, All God’s Children

with Angels We Have Heard on High

after a brief organ introduction, please join to sing:

**Angels we have heard on high
sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
echoing their joyous strains.
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!
Gloria in excelsis deo!**

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Opening Sentences

Psalm 26:8; 1 Kings 8:27; Matthew 1:23; John 1:14

P O LORD, I love the habitation of Your house and the place where Your glory dwells.

C Will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and

the highest heaven cannot contain You; how much less this house that I have built!

- P** “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).
- C** **And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

Confession and Absolution *Isaiah 52:7; John 1:12–13, adapt.*

- P** Let us confess our sins to God, our Father.
- C** **Heavenly Father, You sent Your Son, the Word, to become flesh and dwell among us. We confess we struggle to see His glory when life is difficult or when we are suffering. We look elsewhere for grace and truth instead of focusing on Your eternal Word. We have heard the Good News and struggle to share it. Forgive us, for the sake of You Son, Jesus Christ. Shine the light of Your love on us and dispel the darkness of our hearts.**
- P** People of God, I have good news for you, “Your God reigns.” In the mercy of our almighty God, Jesus Christ was born to die for you, and for His sake, God forgives you for all of your sins.
- C** **Alleluia! Amen!**
- P** To all who receive Him, who believe in His name, He gives the right to become children of God, who are born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man but of God.
- C** **Alleluia! Amen!**

Word

Introit

Psalm 98:1–4; antiphon: Isaiah 9:6

- P** For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- C** **Oh sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things! His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for Him.**
- P** The Lord has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations. He has

remembered His steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.

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

P Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

C Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.
Amen.

P For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Hymn: 367 Angels from the Realms of Glory



1 An - gels from the realms of glo - ry, Wing your flight o'er
2 Shep - herds in the field a - bid - ing, Watch - ing o'er your
3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, Bright - er vi - sions
4 Saints be - fore the al - tar bend - ing, Watch - ing long in
△ 5 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God the Fa - ther,



all the earth; Ye who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry,
flocks by night, God with us is now re - sid - ing,
beam a - far; Seek the great De - sire of na - tions,
hope and fear, Sud - den - ly the Lord, de - scend - ing,
Spir - it, Son, Ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing



Now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth.
Yon - der shines the In - fant Light.
Ye have seen His na - tal star.
In His tem - ple shall ap - pear.
To the e - ter - nal Three in One.

Refrain



Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship;



Wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.

Text (sts. 1, ref, 2–4): James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt.; (st. 5): Salisbury Hymn Book, 1857, Salisbury, alt.

Tune: Henry T. Smart, 1813–79

Text and tune: Public domain

Salutation

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, in ages past, You spoke through the prophets. Today You have spoken to us through Your Son, the Word who became flesh and dwelt among us. Tune our ears to Your Word and nourish us with the flesh and blood of Your Son, who is always with us; through the same Jesus Christ, who rules and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

C Amen.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 9:2–7

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shined.
You have multiplied the nation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.

For the yoke of his burden,
and the staff for his shoulder,
the rod of his oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult
and every garment rolled in blood
will be burned as fuel for the fire.

For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Immanuel Ringers

Of the Father's Love Begotten

*Of the Father's love begotten,
Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega,
He the source, the ending He,
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see
Evermore and evermore.*

*This is He whom seers in old time
Chanted of with one accord,
Whom the voices of the prophets
Promised in their faithful word.
Now He shines, the long-expected;
Let creation praise its Lord
Evermore and evermore.*

Epistle

Hebrews 1:1–12

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

For to which of the angels did God ever say,

“You are my Son,
today I have begotten you”?

Or again,

“I will be to him a father,
and he shall be to me a son”?

And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,
“Let all God’s angels worship him.”

Of the angels he says,

“He makes his angels winds,
and his ministers a flame of fire.”

But of the Son he says,

“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,
the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom.
You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has anointed you
with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.”

And,

“You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the
beginning,
and the heavens are the work of your hands;
they will perish, but you remain;
they will all wear out like a garment,
like a robe you will roll them up,
like a garment they will be changed.
But you are the same,
and your years will have no end.”

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Verse

John 1:14

P Alleluia.

C The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we
have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the
Father, full of grace and truth.

P Alleluia.

Holy Gospel

John 1:1–18

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All

things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”) And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Hymn: 380 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King;
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3 Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righ-teous-ness!



Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
Late in time be - hold Him come, Off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with heal - ing in His wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God-head see, Hail the in - car - nate De - i - ty!
Mild He lays His glo - ry by, Born that man no more may die,



With the an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Je - sus, our Im - man - u - el!
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec - ond birth.



Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–88, alt.

Tune: Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–47

Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon

Creed

Nicene Creed

C I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down

from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin
Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the
Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the
living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is
worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic
Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life ✠ of the world to come. Amen.

Prayer of the Church

- P** Holy Lord, almighty God and Father, You laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. You nourish us and all creatures through Your created world. Guide us in being good stewards of Your world. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Lord Jesus, the world we live in was created through You. In these last days, our Father has spoken to us through You. Give us ears to hear Your voice and willing hearts and minds to not only receive grace and truth but also live them out in our homes, neighborhoods, and communities. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Holy Spirit, we thank and praise You for the feet of those who brought us the Good News. We ask for Your blessing

on all pastors, parents, grandparents, and servants in Christ's church that they may continue to share the good news of peace and salvation. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Great physician and healer, comfort all who are struggling physically, emotionally, or spiritually, [*especially . . .*]. Give them healing and hope. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Gracious God, we thank You for the gift of family. Knit families together with Your love, mercy, and grace. Give parents and children calm minds and quiet hearts focused on Your Word. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

Silence for personal prayer.

P O God, we boldly and confidently lift these prayers to You, trusting in Your great mercy to hear and answer us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

Offering

Sacrament

Preface

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Proper Preface

P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, for You have done marvelous things. Your right hand and Your holy arm have worked salvation. You send good news—peace and salvation—and have spoken to us through Your Son, through whom You also created the world. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the heavenly host, we praise and honor Your glorious name and join in their unending hymn.

Sanctus



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:
Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho - san-na. Ho -
san-na. 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.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

- P** Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and in these last days have spoken grace and truth to us through Your Son, the Word who became flesh and dwelt among us. Through Your Son, You created the world and everything in it and uphold the universe by the power of His Word. Let Your Son dwell within us that faithfully eating and drinking His body and blood we may receive peace and salvation. Hear us as we confidently pray in His name the prayer He taught us:

Lord's Prayer

- 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.

The Words of Our Lord

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

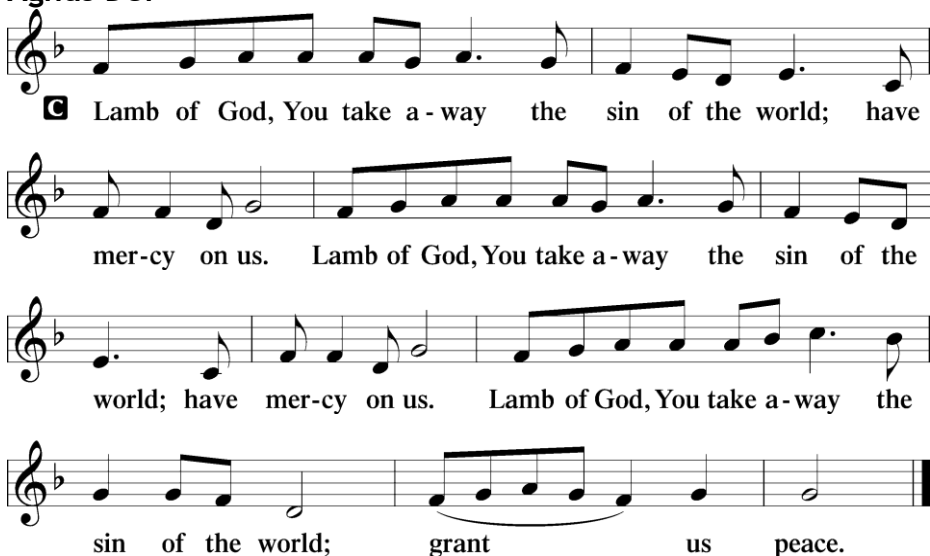
In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

Pax Domini

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

Agnus Dei



C Lamb of God, You take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a-way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

Distribution Hymns

Hymn: 384 Of the Father's Love Begotten

Hymn: 365 Away in a Manger

Hymn: 386 Now Sing We, Now Rejoice

Hymn: 358 From Heaven Above to Earth I Come sts. 13–15

Post-Communion Thanksgiving

P Let us pray.

In former days, O Lord, You required sacrifices for sin and spoke to our ancestors through the prophets. But in these last days, You have atoned for our sins through the blood of Your Son, through whom You have spoken to us. Lead us to bring good news of happiness and to publish peace and salvation as we lift up our voices and sing for joy; for You reign, one God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—now and forever.

C Amen.

Closing Sentences *Matthew 1:22–23; John 1:14; Isaiah 52:10*

P All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

C “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).

P And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

C The LORD has bared His holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

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

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C Amen.

Hymn: 387 Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive her
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their songs em -
3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow Nor thorns in - fest the
4 He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the na - tions



King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare Him
play; While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
ground; He comes to make His bless - ings
prove; The glo - ries of His righ - teous -



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.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Tune: George Frideric Handel, 1685–1759, adapt.

Text and tune: Public domain

Wondering where you can watch this service?

1. Facebook: “Immanuel Lutheran Church” at the time of the service or any time after up to a month.
2. YouTube: “Immanuel Lutheran Church and School Lakefield” at the time of the service or any time after.

Acknowledgments

Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series A, Quarter 1.


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Poinsettias decorating the chancel area are given to the Glory of God by...

- ~ Crystal and Dale Dafoe
in memory of Grandma Lorraine Buss
- ~ Merle Hendricksen
in memory of Marlene Hendricksen
- ~ Joyce Bretzman
in memory of family members & friends
- ~ Kurt and Myleen Swanson
in memory of
Walter & Doris Baumann
Irvin & Pearl Swanson
- ~ Ron and Debbi Gettler
in honor of
Our grandchildren: Easton and Daisy
in memory of
Our loved ones in heaven
- ~ Jolene Rossow
in memory of Iven Rossow
- ~ Bruce & Jan Bakalyar
in memory of
Earl & Betty Bakalyar
Jack & Dorothy Morrison
Shelly Lesch
- ~ Wade & Deb Salzwedel family and Alan &
Sue Salzwedel family
in memory of Harley & June Salzwedel

- ~ Renee Erdman
in memory of Ron & Rita Erdman
- Roger and Beth Carlson
in memory of
Victor & Lorraine Rossow
Ed & Lorraine Carlson
- ~ Dennis & Vickie Baumann
in memory of
Clarence & Arlene Baumann
Larry Baumann
- ~ Mike & Dawn Rossow and Wade & Deb
Salzwedel
in memory of Marvin and Nita Appel
- ~ Joel and Deb Burmeister
in memory of
Albert (Abbie) Burmeister
Irvin & Pearl Swanson
- ~ Roger and Shelley Pohlman
in memory of
Helen & Norman Pohlman
Roland & Betty Koster
- ~ Dave and Carolyn Hansen
in memory of
Curt & Esther Hansen
Dick & Fern Jacobs
- ~ Chase, Hristina, and Sofia Hage
in memory of our loved ones in heaven
- ~ Dwaine Rossow and family
in memory of Doris Rossow



Assisting with the Service

Preacher *Rev. Eric Obermann*
Elder *Jim Berkevich & Joel Poppe*
Organist *Jayson Matasovsky*
Acolyte *Maddox Boogerd & Jada Milbrath*
Usher *Leann Henning & Crystal Dafoe*

We Remember in our Prayers

Marilyn Bauer in Hospice following a stroke
Dory Poppe recovering from knee surgery
Anitra Carlson, daughter-in-law of Roger and Beth Carlson, recovering from surgery
Silas Liepold recovering from surgery
Clyde Daberkow in Hospice
Those who have lost loved ones over the past year
Our residents at Colonial Manor, Valley View, Golden Horizons in Worthington, Accura HealthCare in Milford, Koronis in Paynesville, Good Sam in Estherville
Lila Voehl, Jan Bakalyar, Merlyn Rossow, Keith Kolander, dealing with health issues
Marla Holcomb, sister of Wade and Alan Salzwedel; Mary Beth Baumann, sister-in-law of Myleen Swanson & LaNell Rossow; Mackenzie Erickson, friend of Amber Liepold; Diane Hansen, wife of Pastor David McDonald (Trinity Brewster), Miles Ramsey, toddler cousin of Amy Altman; Pastor Dennis Brech; Joyce Urmie, sister-in-law of Vickie Baumann; Pastor Ben Rucker; Mitch Voehl, son of Lila Voehl; Denny Daberkow; dealing with cancer
Jeff Lillquist, friend of Bruce and Jan Bakalar; Chad Kolander, brother of Keith and Corey Kolande; David Morrison, brother of Jan Bakalyar; Curt Gates, brother-in-law of Miles Voehl (Lila's son), dealing with health issues
Our Missionaries in the Field
Our Country and Our Military

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