



**And the Word
became flesh and
dwelt among us ...**

John 1:14, ESV

Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Day

December 25, 2025

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

PRELUDE

While Shepherd's Watched Their Flocks

Arr. Gordon Young
One License #207501

From Heaven Above

Arr. Wilbur Held
One License #69915

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Arr. Wilbur Held
One License #110945

WELCOME

GATHERING SONG

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice RED ELW #288
(Vs. 1 & 3)

1 **Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today;
ox and ass before him bow,
and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!
Christ is born today!**

**3 Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now ye need not fear the grave;
Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all
to gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save!
Christ was born to save!**

Text: Medieval Latin carol; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-1866
Public Domain

GREETING AND PRAYER

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the Son of God sent from heaven above,
be with you all.
And also with you.

Let us pray.
Incarnate God,
on this Christmas Day we give
you thanks for sending your Son to bring light to our darkness.
Grant that we, like the angels over Bethlehem, may
sing your praises in our hearts and lives.
Amen.

WHO ARE THESE ANGELS WHO COME TO EARTH?

LESSON: Luke 2:8-14

⁸ Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ 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: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the

heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

Glory to God in highest heaven,
who unto us the Son has given.

CAROL

Angels We Have Heard on High RED ELW #289
(Vs. 1 & 2)

1 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.

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

Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864
Public Domain

WHO ARE THESE SHEPHERDS WHO RUN TO SEE?

LESSON: Luke 2:15-20

¹⁵ 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.” ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, ¹⁹ and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in

her heart.²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

Glory to God in highest heaven,
who unto us the Son has given.

CAROL

Go Tell It on the Mountain RED ELW #290
(Vs. 1 & 3)

Refrain

Go tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and ev'rywhere;
go tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born!

- 1 While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light. ***Refrain***

- 3 Down in a lonely manger
the humble Christ was born;
and God sent us salvation
that blessed Christmas morn. ***Refrain***

Text: African American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work Jr., 1872-1925, stanzas, alt.
Public Domain

WHO IS THIS CHILD, SO SMALL, SO SLIGHT?

LESSON: Luke 2:1-7

¹ In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ 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. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were

there, the time came for her to deliver her child.⁷ 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 in the guest room.

Glory to God in highest heaven,
who unto us the Son has given.

CAROL

Jesus Loves Me **RED ELW #595**
(Vs. 1 & 3)

**1 Jesus loves me! this I know,
for the Bible tells me so;
little ones to him belong,
they are weak, but he is strong.**

Refrain

Yes, Jesus loves me,
yes, Jesus loves me,
yes, Jesus loves me,
the Bible tells me so.

**3 Jesus loves me! he will stay
close beside me all the way;
when at last I come to die,
he will take me home on high. *Refrain***

Text: Anna B. Warner, 1820-1915, alt.
Public Domain

WHO IS THIS GOD, WHO SENDS A SON?

LESSON: John 1:1-14

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Glory to God in highest heaven,
who unto us the Son has given.

CAROL

In The Bleak Midwinter RED ELW #294
(Vs. 1 & 3)

- 1 In the bleak midwinter,
frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron,
water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow,
snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter,
long ago.**

- 3 What can I give him,
poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise man
I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him—
give my heart.**

Text: Christina Georgina Rossetti, 1830-1894
Public Domain

SERMON ON THE STEPS

MEDITATION

HYMN OF THE DAY

Of the Father's Love Begotten RED ELW 295
(Vs. 1 & 4)

- 1 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.**

- 4 Let the heights of heav'n adore him;
angel hosts, his praises sing;
pow'rs, dominions, bow before him
and extol our God and King;
let no tongue on earth be silent,
ev'ry voice in concert ring
evermore and evermore.**

Text: Marcus Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, 348-413; tr. Composite
Public Domain

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Gracious God, you come from heaven above
into the midst of our world.

**Fill our hearts
with the joy of the angels at your birth.**

You come from heaven above
to the lowliest of human conditions.

**Watch over those in need,
the sick, the hungry, the grieving.**

You come from heaven above to walk the way of the cross.
**Guide us to follow your path
of forgiveness, mercy, and peace.**

You come from heaven above
to become flesh and live among us.
May we see your glory, full of grace and truth. Amen.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

Silent Night

Arr. David Cherwien
One License #1038486

OFFERING SONG

Let Our Gladness Have No End RED ELW #291
(Vs. 1 & 4)

**1 Let our gladness have no end, Hallelujah!
for to earth did Christ descend. Hallelujah!**

Refrain

**On this day God gave us
Christ, the Son, to save us;
Christ, the Son, to save us.**

**4 Into flesh is made the Word, Hallelujah!
our true refuge and our Lord. Hallelujah! *Refrain***

Text: Bohemian carol, 15th cent.; tr. Unknown
One License #30660

OFFERING PRAYER

God of glory,

great are your wonders among us

and many are the blessings you bestow.

**Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world,
that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace,
through Christ our Savior.**

Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And also with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

HOLY HOLY HOLY

RED ELW page 207

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of power and might,

heav'n and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest,

hosanna in the highest.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord, Jesus Christ took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to the disciples saying, “Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Again after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Great is the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

God is now in flesh appearing.
Come to the feast of joy!

COMMUNION

(Zion practices an open table. God welcomes everyone to come forward. Young children may receive bread and a blessing. If you prefer not to receive, fold your hands and receive a blessing. Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available; please ask your servers. Come to the Lord's table and share in the feast!)

COMMUNION SONG

Sung to the tune
I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve

O Lamb of God, you bear the sin
of all the world away;
you suffered death our lives to save:
have mercy now, we pray.

O Lamb of God, you bear the sin
of all the world away;
you set us free from guilt and grave:
have mercy now, we pray.

O Lamb of God, you bear the sin
of all the world away;
eternal peace with God you made:
give us your peace, we pray.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

COMMUNION BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

O Lord our God,
we give you thanks for the gifts of bread and wine,
the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ.
Send us out into your world to proclaim with joy:
Glory to God in highest heaven,
who unto us the Son has given. Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

May the God who comes from heaven above
be born in your hearts and lives this day and always.
Amen.

- 1 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.
- 2 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.
- 3 No more let sin and sorrow 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.
- 4 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.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

Public Domain

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is with us.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Zion Lutheran Church
814 West Brooks St. P.O. Box 371
Arlington, MN 55307
Church: 507-964-5454
Email: zion.elca.814@gmail.com
Web: zionarlington.org // YouTube: Zion ELCA Arlington MN



Acknowledgements:

From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2021 Augsburg Fortress.

All rights reserved.

License #SB122759—11/30/2025

One License #A-732489

4/15/2025 for ELW hymns

All rights reserved.

CCLI License #20990483

Copyright License + Streaming License—2/28/2026

All rights reserved.

Church ArtPro

Account #73982207—6/30/2025



Darrel & Jackie Alsleben

Joyce Bening

Jim & Ann Carlson

Sheri Kumar

Pr. Gretchen & John Pierskalla

Joe Prasad

Jane Scharpe

Bobette Schauer

Mark & Lisa Strobel

Mary Sylwester

John & Lana Woehler



“The good news of great joy changed the course of
every silent night to come.”

—Alicia Bruxvoort