

# **Trinity Lutheran Church – ELCA**

612 N. Water Street, Sparta, Wisconsin, Tel. (608) 269-5081

Office Email: [office@tlcsparta.org](mailto:office@tlcsparta.org) Website: [www.tlcsparta.org](http://www.tlcsparta.org)

**Christmas Eve**

**December 24, 2023 – 3:00 pm and 9:00 pm**

**Live streaming on Facebook and YouTube (Trinity LutheranSparta)**

**Our worship service will also be recorded  
and will be available on our website [www.tlcsparta.org](http://www.tlcsparta.org)**



## Order of Worship

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Ringing of the Bell

### **The Lighting of the Advent and Christ Candles**

Hymn: *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (vs. 1 & 2)

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive  
Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, O Wisdom from on high, embracing all things  
far and nigh: in strength and beauty come and stay;  
teach us your will and guide our way.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

Hear the word from the Prophet Micah 5:2-5

<sup>2</sup>But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,  
who are one of the little clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for me  
one who is to rule in Israel,  
whose origin is from of old,  
from ancient days.

<sup>3</sup>Therefore he shall give them up until the time  
when she who is in labor has brought forth;  
then the rest of his kindred shall return  
to the people of Israel.

<sup>4</sup>And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD,  
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.  
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great  
to the ends of the earth,

<sup>5</sup>and he shall be the one of peace.

Today we light the four advent candles. The candles of hope, peace, joy and love. We also light the Christ candle which stands in the center of the other four candles. All the advent candles find their fulfillment in the white Christ candle. Our hope, peace, joy and love are all fulfilled by Jesus Christ, God's only Son, born in a manger. As we have received these gifts from Jesus, let us turn and share them with the world. Let us call all to come to Jesus Christ and be filled with the Spirit of God.

Please join me in Prayer:

**Holy God, as we see these candles bring light in this place, so bring the light of Christ into our hearts, that we may live and share the hope, peace, joy, and love of Jesus Christ every day. Amen.**

**\*Opening Hymn:** *The First Noel*

The first Noel the angel did say was to certain poor shepards 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.

They looked up and saw a star shining in the east beyond them far;  
And to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night.

Noel, noel, noel, noel! Born is the king of Israel.

And by the light of that same star three wise men came from country 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.

This star drew near to the northwest. O'er Bethlehem it took its rest;  
And there it did both stop and stay right over the place where Jesus lay.

Noel, noel, noel, noel! Born is the king of Israel.

Then entered in those wisemen three, full rev'rently upon their knee,  
And offered their in his presence their gold and myrrh and frankincense.

Noel, noel, noel, noel! Born is the king of Israel.

**\*Prayer of the Day**

**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 Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

Christmas Anthem – Alleluia Choir (3:00 p.m. service)

**First Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7**

<sup>2</sup>The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.

<sup>3</sup>You have multiplied the nation,  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.

<sup>4</sup>For the yoke of their burden,  
and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

<sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup>For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup>His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.  
He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onward and forevermore.  
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**\*Gospel: Luke 2:1-20**

**\*Gospel Acclamation**

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

This is the Holy Gospel according to Luke the second Chapter.

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>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.

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>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: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in

bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

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

<sup>15</sup>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.” <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**\*Gospel Response:** *O Little Town of Bethlehem* (vs. 1 and 2)

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 streets shineth the everlasting light.  
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, and, gathered all above  
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond’ring love.  
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,  
and praises sing to God the king, and peace to all the earth!

Sermon

**\*Hymn:** *I am So Glad Each Christmas Eve*

I am so glad each Christmas Eve, the night of Jesus' birth!  
Then like the sun the star shone forth, and angels sang on earth.

The little child in Bethlehem, he was a king indeed!

For he came down from heav'n above to help a world in need.

He dwells again in heaven's realm, the Son of God today;  
and still he loves his little ones and hears them when they pray.

I am so glad each Christmas Eve! His praises then I sing;  
he opens now for ev'ry child the palace of the king.

And so I love each Christmas Eve, and I love Jesus too;  
and that he loves me ev'ry day I know so well is true.

**\*Sharing of the Peace**

**L:** The peace of Christ be with you all.

**C: And also with you**

Offering

**Carol:** *Away in a Manger* (vs. 1-3)

Away in a manger, no crib for his 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 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.

**\*Offertory:** *Angels We Have Heard on High* (vs 3)

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; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

**\*Offering Prayer**

God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. **Amen.**

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

**\*Great Thanksgiving** Page 152

The Lord be with you. And al - so 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 Lord** Page 153



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,  
 heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.  
 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.

**\*Words of Institution**

**\*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.**

**Distribution of Communion:**

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, grant us peace.

**Distribution Hymn:** *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

\* Symbol indicates a time when the congregation stands

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

**\*Communion Blessing**

**\*Carol:** *Go Tell It on the Mountain*

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

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

The shepherds feared and trembled  
when, lo, above the earth  
rang out the angel chorus  
that hailed our Savior's birth. Refrain

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

## The Passing of the Light of Christ

The Good News of the Light: John 1:1-6

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. <sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God whose name was John.

### **\*Sending Hymn: *Silent Night, Holy Night***

*As a sign of the light of Christ within each one of us, the ushers will move down the aisle with lit candles. Please hold the lit candle upright and tip the candle that is unlit.*

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,  
heav'nly hosts....sing, alleluia! Christ, the Savior, is  
born! Christ, the Savior, is born!

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.

### **\*Dismissal**

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