

...a **Savior**
has been
born
to you;
he is
Christ
the **Lord.**

Luke 2:11, NIV

Immanuel Lutheran Church & School

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As We Gather

There are few days which can rival Christmas Eve—the familiar carols, the sparkling lights of the tree, the family gatherings, and the precious story all combine to fill us with special joy and peace. Today has become so identified with Christianity that a whole world pauses to celebrate. The only problem is that we easily forget what we are celebrating. The celebration becomes the focus instead of the good news of God come to earth in the flesh and blood of our humanity to redeem us sinners from our sin and death and to lead us home to our Father in heaven. Today, let us pause to read, sing, and give honest reflection to what makes this day different from all the rest!

✠ Service of Lessons and Carols ✠

Hymn

708 – Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful

1. 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.

Refrain:

Oh, come, let us adore Him,
Oh, come, let us adore Him,
Oh, come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!

2. God of God, Light of Light,
Born of a virgin, to earth He comes,
Very God, Begotten, not created. [Refrain]

3. Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation;
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above.
Glory to God,
In the highest. [Refrain]

4. Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n.
Word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing. [Refrain]

Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

Exhortation

- P** Dear people of God, in this Christmas season it is our duty and delight to hear again the message of the angels and, in heart and mind, to go to Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us—the Christ-Child lying in a manger.

Let us read and learn in Holy Scripture the story of the loving purposes of God from the first days after our fall into sin to the glorious redemption brought to us by this holy Child.

Confession and Absolution

- P** But first, since we are gathered to hear God's Word and call upon Him in prayer and praise, let us confess our sins.

- C** **Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called Your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to Your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.**

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

- C** Amen.

Salutation

- P** The Lord be with you.
C And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

- P** Let us pray...
... who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C Amen.

The Seed of the Woman Will Crush the Serpent's Head

⁸ And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" ¹⁰ So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." ¹¹ And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?" ¹² Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." ¹³ And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." ¹⁴ So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. ¹⁵ And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

Hymn

90 (1, 3-5, 8) - Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising

1. Come, your hearts and voices raising,
Christ the Lord with gladness praising;
Loudly sing His love amazing,
Worthy folk of Christendom.
3. See how God, for us providing,
Gave His Son and life abiding;
He our weary steps is guiding
From earth's woe to heavenly joy.
4. Christ, from heaven to us descending
And in love our race befriending,
In our need His help extending,
Saved us from the wily Foe.
5. Jacob's Star in all its splendor
Beams with comfort sweet and tender,
Forcing Satan to surrender,
Breaking all the powers of hell.
8. Gracious Child, we pray Thee, hear us,
From Thy lowly manger cheer us,
Gently lead us and be near us
Till we join the angelic choir.

God's Promise to Abraham

¹⁵ Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, ¹⁶ and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son—¹⁷ blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. ¹⁸ In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

Hymn

98 - Of the Father's Love Begotten

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.
2. Oh, that birth forever blessed When the Virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving, Bare the Savior of our race,
And the Babe, the world's Redeemer, First revealed His sacred face
Evermore and evermore.
3. O ye heights of heaven, adore Him; Angel hosts, His praises sing;
Powers, dominions, bow before Him And extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent, Every voice in concert ring
Evermore and evermore.
4. This is He whom Heav'n-taught singers Sang of old with one accord;
Whom the Scriptures of the prophets Promised in their faithful word.
Now He shines, the Long-expected; Let creation praise its Lord
Evermore and evermore.
5. Christ, to Thee, with God the Father, And, O Holy Ghost, to Thee
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving And unending praises be,
Honor, glory, and dominion, And eternal victory
Evermore and evermore.

Third Reading

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

The People Who Walked in Darkness Have Seen a Great Light

² The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined. ⁶ For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of His

government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Hymn

106 (1, 4-7) - The People That in Darkness Sat

1. The people that in darkness sat A glorious light have seen;
The light has shined on them who long In shades of death have been.
In shades of death have been.

4. To us a Child of hope is born, To us a Son is given,
And on His shoulder ever rests All power in earth and heaven.
All power in earth and heaven.

5. His name shall be the Prince of Peace, The Everlasting Lord,
The Wonderful, the Counselor. The God by all adored.
The God by all adored.

6. His righteous government and power Shall over all extend;
On judgment and on justice based, His reign shall have no end.
His reign shall have no end.

7. Lord Jesus, reign in us, we pray, And make us Thine alone,
Who with the Father ever art And Holy Spirit, one.
And Holy Spirit, one.

Fourth Reading

Isaiah 11:1-9

A Branch from the Stump of Jesse

¹ There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. ² The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. ³ His delight is in the fear of the LORD, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears; ⁴ But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. ⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, And faithfulness the belt of His waist. ⁶ "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them. ⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸ The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. ⁹ They shall not hurt nor

destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge
of the LORD As the waters cover the sea.

Hymn

645 - Behold, a Branch is Growing

1. Behold a branch is growing As of loveliest form and grace,
As prophets sung, foreknowing; It springs from Jesse's race
And bears one little Flower In midst of coldest winter,
At deepest midnight hour.

2. Isaiah hath foretold It In words of promise sure,
And Mary' s arms enfold It, A virgin meek and pure.
Through God's eternal will This Child to her is given
At midnight calm and still.

3. The shepherds heard the story, Proclaimed by angels bright,
How Christ, the Lord of Glory, Was born on earth this night.
To Bethlehem they sped And in the manger found him,
As angel heralds said.

4. This Flower, whose fragrance tender With sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor The darkness everywhere.
True Man, yet very God; From sin and death He saves us
And lightens every load.

5. O Savior, Child of Mary, Who felt our human woe;
O Savior, King of Glory. Who dost our weakness know,
Bring us at length, we pray. To the bright courts of heaven
And to the endless day.

Fifth Reading

Luke 1:26-35, 38

The Angel Gabriel Visits Mary

²⁶ Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!" ²⁹ But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. ³⁰ Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. ³² He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. ³³ And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴ Then Mary said to the angel, "How

can this be, since I do not know a man?”³⁵ And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.³⁸ Then Mary said, “Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

Hymn

713 - Your Little Ones, Dear Lord, Are We

1. Your little ones, dear Lord, are we And come Your lowly bed to see;
Enlighten ev'ry soul and mind That we the way to You may find.
2. With songs we hasten You to greet And humbly fall before your feet.
Oh, blessed hour, oh, sweetest night That gave You birth, our souls' delight.
3. Oh, draw us wholly to You, Lord, To us Your constant grace accord;
True faith and love to us impart That we may hold You in our heart.
4. Until at last we, too, proclaim, With all Your saints, Your glorious name;
In paradise our songs renew And praise You as the angels do.

Sixth Reading

Luke 2:1-7

The Birth of Jesus

¹ And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. ³ So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city. ⁴ Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. ⁶ So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. ⁷ And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Hymn

647 - O Little Town of Bethlehem

1. 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 darkness shineth The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.
2. For Christ is born of Mary, And fathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep Their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together Proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing to God, the King, And peace to men on earth.

3. How silently, how silently, The wondrous Gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming, But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still, The dear Christ enters in.

4. O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in, Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell:
Oh, come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!

Seventh Reading

Luke 2:8-20

The Shepherds Visit the Manger

⁸ Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. ¹⁰ Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. ¹¹ For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, 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, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!” ¹⁵ So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, “Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶ And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. ¹⁷ Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. ¹⁸ And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. ¹⁹ But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

Sermon Text

Luke 2:1-20



Sermon

Two Kings

Hymn

712 - What Child Is This

1. 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!

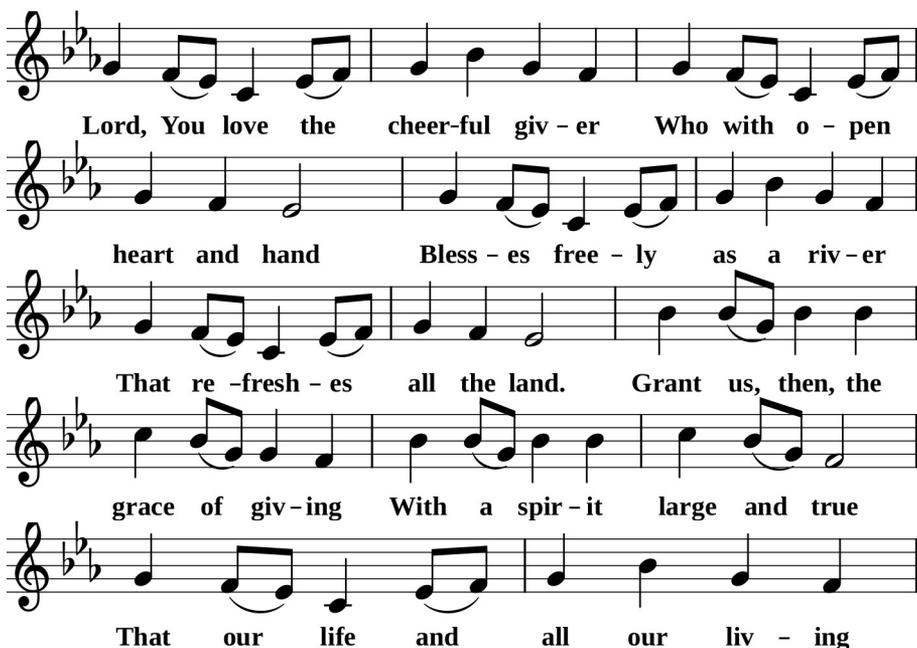
2. Why lies He in such mean estate Where oxen now are feeding?
Good Christians, fear; For sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through; The cross He'll bear for me, for you.
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The babe, the Son of Mary!

3. 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!

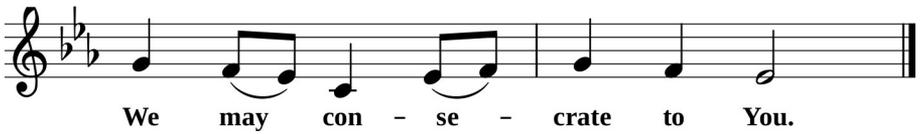
Offering

Offering Hymn

788 (1)



Lord, You love the cheer-ful giv-er Who with o - pen
heart and hand Bless - es free - ly as a riv - er
That re - fresh - es all the land. Grant us, then, the
grace of giv - ing With a spir - it large and true
That our life and all our liv - ing



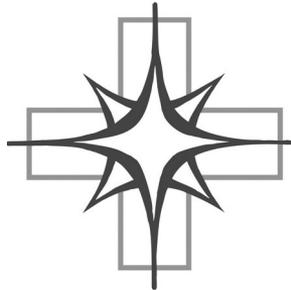
General Prayer

The 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.

Benediction

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.
- C** Amen.



Hymn

87 – Joy to the World, the Lord is Come

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 men 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 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.
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.

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✝ Announcements ✝

Upcoming Schedule

December 24	9:15 am	Bible Class
	10:15 am	Worship Service
December 25	10:15 am	Christmas Day Worship Service
December 31	9:15 am	Bible Class
	10:15 am	Worship Service
January 7	9:15 am	Bible Class
	10:15 am	Worship Service w/ Holy Communion
	11:30 am	Annual Voters' Meeting

Nominations for ILC Professor and ILC President: The Board of Regents announces the following nominations to fill the professorship vacated by the impending retirement of Professor Mark Kranz at the end of the 2023-24 academic year: Neil Bernthal, Jeff Karnitz, Joshua Ohlmann, Dan Roehl, Seth Schaller, Steve Sydow, Matthew Thurow, Paul Tiefel III, and Matthew Ude. In addition, the following and only person has been nominated for the office of President of Immanuel Lutheran College: Daniel Schierenbeck. The term of the ILC President's call is for two years, extending to the end of Academic Year 2026. All comments from members of CLC congregations regarding these candidates are to be received by email or letter no later than midnight January 2, 2024 (letters postmarked December 23, 2023) to: Mr. James Burkhardt; 217 Windy Lane; Rockwall, TX 75087; email: jeb6217@yahoo.com.

2024 CLC Mission Helper Trip: Applications are being accepted for the 2024 Mission Helper Trip to Africa. Find more information and apply online: www.mht.lutheranmissions.org

ILC Christmas Choral Service Replay: A replay of the Immanuel Lutheran Christmas Choral Service The King in the Cradle from December 15, 2023 is online. The strings, flute choir, and band play the first portion. The choral service begins at the 47 minute mark. A copy of the program booklet is available. The video is located at: bit.ly/23ccs

Fruits of Faith	December 17, 2023	WH: 35
Immanuel Home		\$1,415.25
Property Improvement		\$25.00
ILC Scholarship		\$300.00
Tuition Grant		\$25.00
Total		\$1,765.25

✠ Daily Bible Readings for Home Devotions ✠

December 25 – December 30

Monday: Luke 2:1-7 – In only seven verses, Luke recounts the birth of Jesus. This is no embellished legend, but an event set in history, naming rulers, places and participants. And the hand of God was guiding all.

Tuesday: Luke 2:8-14 – The Savior, Christ the Lord, was born for all, even shepherds out in the field. But if God had not let them (and us) know, we would all be in the dark about what He was doing for us.

Wednesday: Luke 2:15-20 – The great importance of Jesus' birth is shown by the shepherds who leave their flock to go and see God's gift, and then to become messengers themselves. With Mary may we ponder it all again and again.

Thursday: Hebrews 1:1-3 – In the past God spoke through many messengers, but in these last days God spoke through His Son. Through Him God created and sustains the world. Through Him came purification for sins.

Friday: Hebrews 1:4-6 – The Son of God is far superior to every other messenger of God, yes, even heaven's angels! He is the One whom all the angels worship! (v. 6)

Saturday: Isaiah 9:6-7 – The wondrous power and peace of the Christ-child is staggering, and cannot be over-emphasized! Through Him were all things made (John 1:3). But the message that lifts our hearts to heaven is the "unto us," "unto us!" (v. 6). He is ours!



