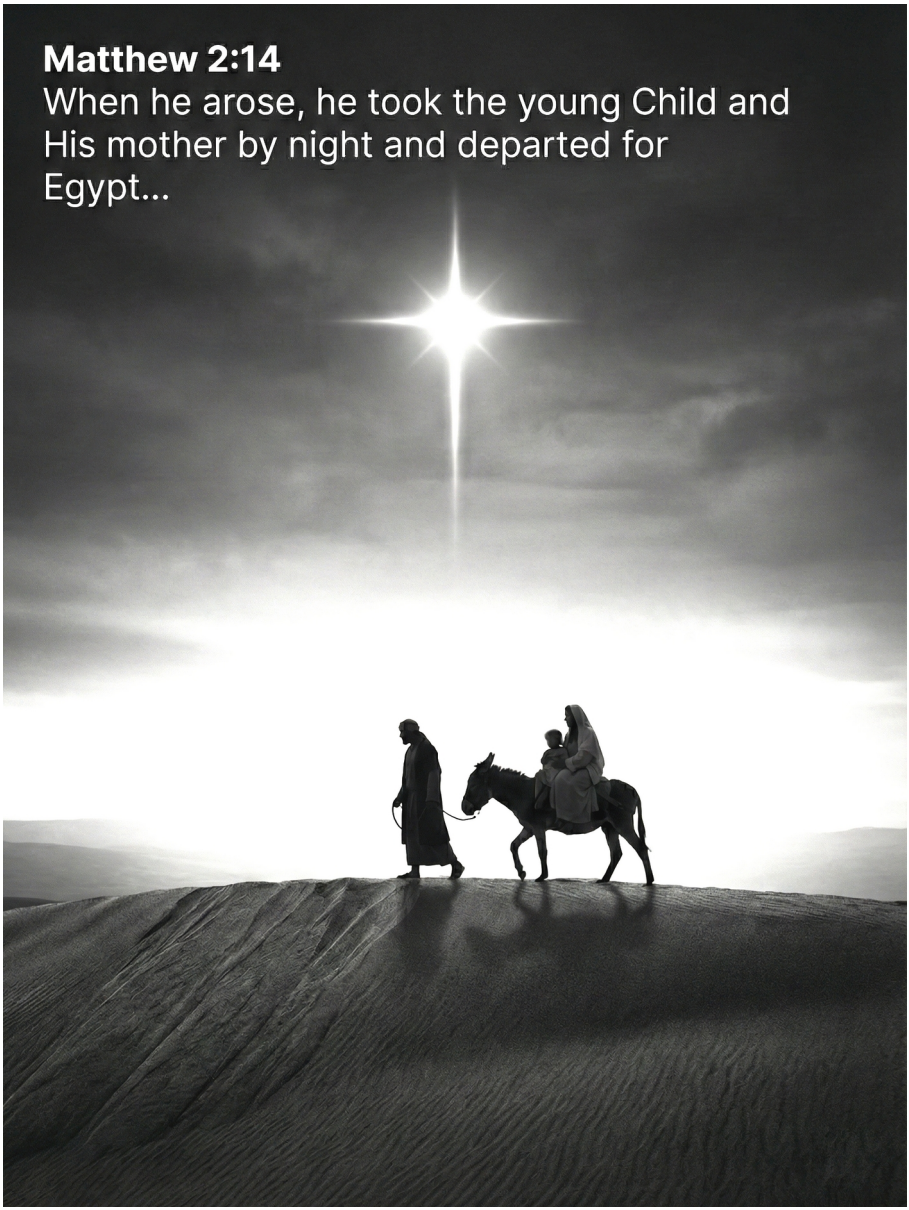

Immanuel Lutheran Church & School
1449 34th Street NW, Winter Haven, FL 33881
www.WinterHavenLutheran.com

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Katie Naumann, Teacher	(253) 230-4184

As We Gather

The sentimental glow of Christmas often fades quickly, replaced by the harsh realities of a fallen world. In today's Gospel, the "silent night" is shattered by the wails of grief and the urgency of a midnight flight. We might prefer the manger scene to remain undisturbed, but the "Real" Christmas story involves a Savior born into the very midst of hostility, danger, and sorrow. As we gather for worship on this First Sunday after Christmas, we are reminded that Jesus did not come to overlook our suffering, but to enter it. Prepare your hearts to hear how God's sovereign plan of salvation weaves through history—even through the darkest valleys—to secure the redemption of His people.

✢ Preparation for Worship ✢

Hymn 99 – Now Are the Days Fulfilled

Invocation

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

Opening Sentences

Psalm 91:2, 4; 121:7-8

P I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress;
C **My God, in Him I will trust."**
P He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge;
C **His truth shall be your shield and buckler.**
P The Lord shall preserve you from all evil;
C **He shall preserve your soul.**
P The Lord shall preserve your going out and your coming in,
C **From this time forth, and even forevermore.**

Confession and Absolution

P The carols still echo and lights adorn our homes, yet Christ was born into a world of real danger and brokenness, not of silent peace. He came not to ignore our suffering but to enter it as the Savior of the exile, the refugee, and the sinner. Therefore, let us confess our true sinful condition to God our Father, imploring Him for the sake of His Son to grant us redemption.

C **Almighty God, we confess we have romanticized Your coming, ignoring the sin that made it necessary. We have sought comfort without cost and a kingdom without a cross. Hostile to Your will, we have fled Your commands rather than finding refuge in them. We are sinful by nature and deed. For the sake of the Holy Infant who shed His blood for us, forgive, renew, and lead us to everlasting life.**

P Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called servant of the Word, announce the grace of God to all of you. When the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. Therefore, in the stead and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

✢ The Service of the Word ✢

Glory be to the Father

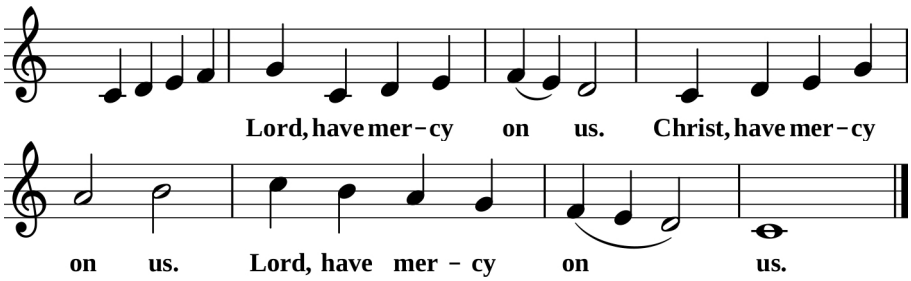
Gloria Patri

P In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

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.**

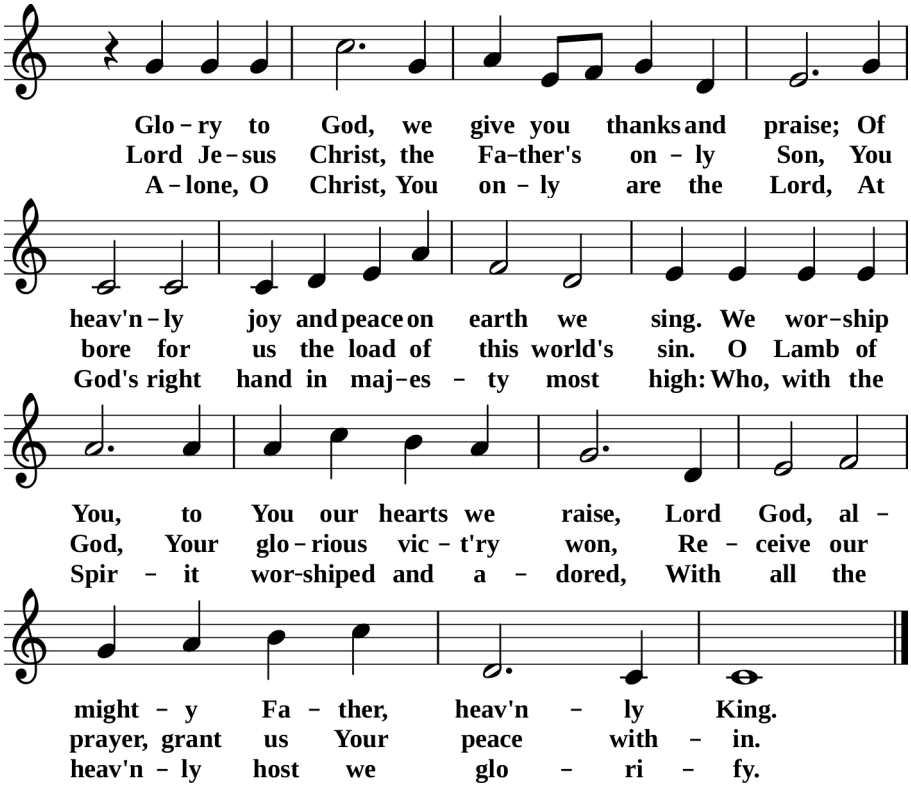
Lord, Have Mercy

Kyrie



Glory to God in the Highest

Gloria in Excelsis



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.**

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 63:7-14

7 I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD And the praises of the LORD, According to all that the LORD has bestowed on us, And the great goodness toward the house of Israel, Which He has bestowed on them according to His mercies, According to the multitude of His

lovingkindnesses. [8] For He said, “Surely they are My people, Children who will not lie.” So He became their Savior. [9] In all their affliction He was afflicted, And the Angel of His Presence saved them; In His love and in His pity He redeemed them; And He bore them and carried them All the days of old. [10] But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit; So He turned Himself against them as an enemy, And He fought against them. [11] Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people, saying: “Where is He who brought them up out of the sea With the shepherd of His flock? Where is He who put His Holy Spirit within them, [12] Who led them by the right hand of Moses, With His glorious arm, Dividing the water before them To make for Himself an everlasting name, [13] Who led them through the deep, As a horse in the wilderness, That they might not stumble?” [14] As a beast goes down into the valley, And the Spirit of the LORD causes him to rest, So You lead Your people, To make Yourself a glorious name.

Psalm of the Day

Psalm 111

P Praise the LORD! I will praise the LORD with my whole heart,
C **In the assembly of the upright and in the congregation.**
P The works of the LORD are great,
C **Studied by all who have pleasure in them.**
P His work is honorable and glorious,
C **And His righteousness endures forever.**
P He has made His wonderful works to be remembered;
C **The LORD is gracious and full of compassion.**
P He has given food to those who fear Him;
C **He will ever be mindful of His covenant.**
P He has declared to His people the power of His works,
C **In giving them the heritage of the nations.**
P The works of His hands are verity and justice;
C **All His precepts are sure.**
P They stand fast forever and ever,
C **And are done in truth and uprightness.**
P He has sent redemption to His people; He has commanded His covenant forever:
C **Holy and awesome is His name.**
P The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments.
C **His praise endures forever.**

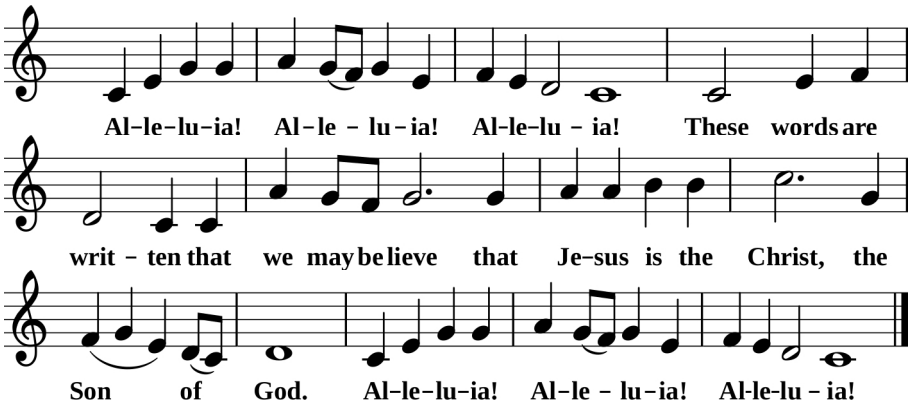
Epistle Reading

Galatians 4:4-7

4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born
of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law,
that we might receive the adoption as sons. 6 And because you are sons, God
has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba,
Father!” 7 Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an
heir of God through Christ.

Alleluia

℗ Blessed are they who hear the Word of God and keep it.



Confession of Faith

Apostles’ Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Hymn

263 – O Little Flock, Fear Not the Foe

Sermon Text

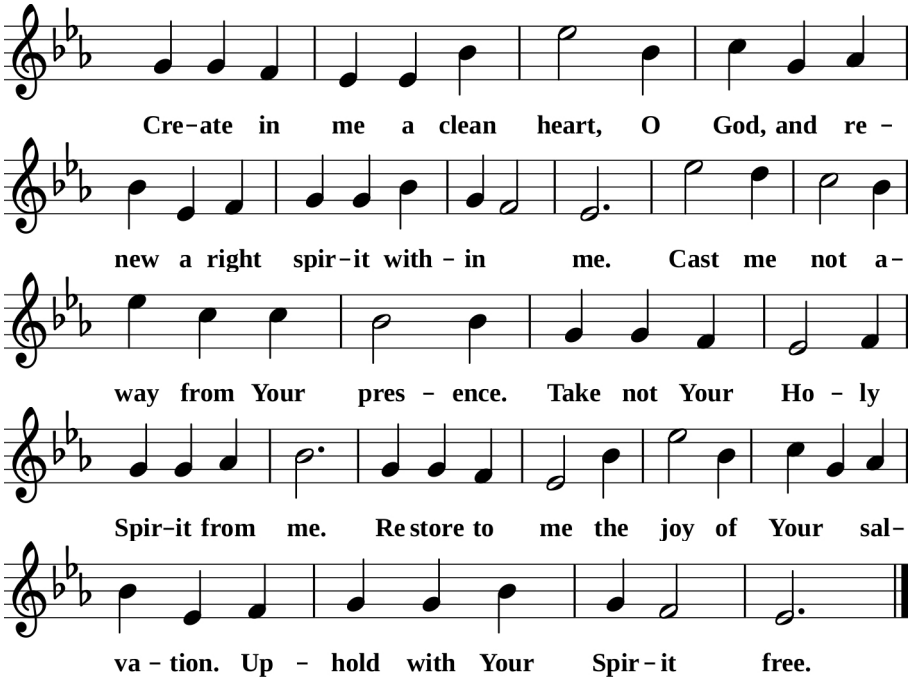
Matthew 2:13-23

13 Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to
Joseph in a dream, saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee
to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the
young Child to destroy Him.” 14 When he arose, he took the young Child
and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, 15 and was there until the
death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord
through the prophet, saying, “Out of Egypt I called My Son.” 16 Then Herod,
when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry;
and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in
Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to
the time which he had determined from the wise men. 17 Then was fulfilled
what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: 18 “A voice was heard in
Ramah, Lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her
children, Refusing to be comforted, Because they are no more.” 19 Now
when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to
Joseph in Egypt, 20 saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and
go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child’s life are
dead.” 21 Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came
into the land of Israel. 22 But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning
over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being
warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee. 23 And
he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which
was spoken by the prophets, “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

Sermon

The “Real” Christmas Story

Offertory



Hymn

514 – God Moves in a Mysterious Way

Offering

Offering Hymn

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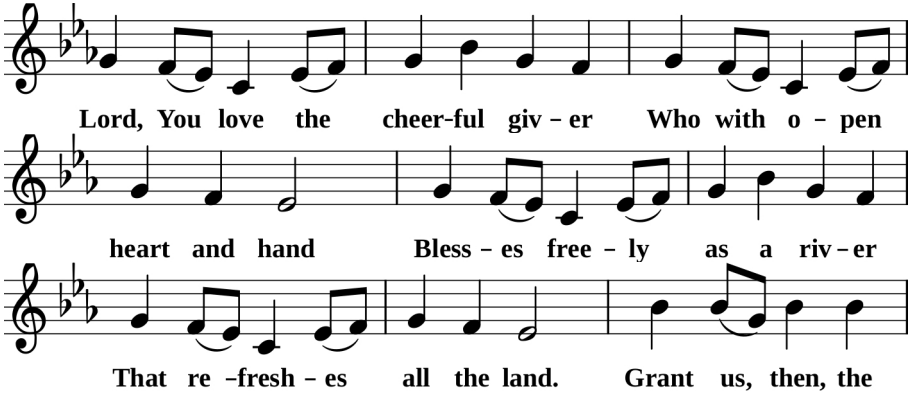

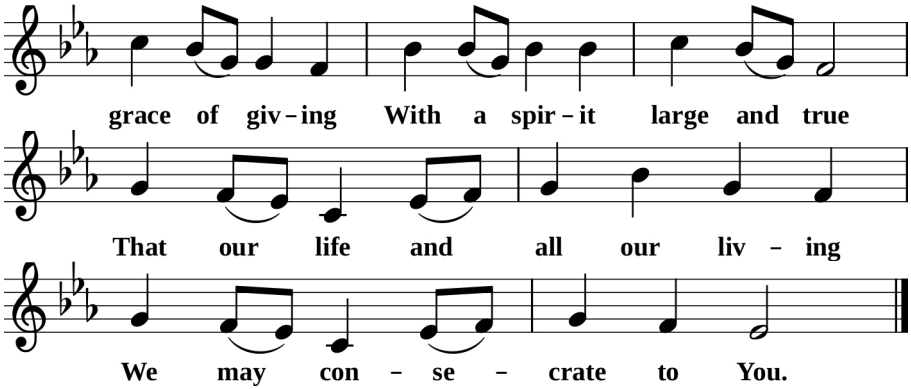

General Prayer

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

91 – Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord

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✢ Announcements ✢

Upcoming Schedule		
December 28	8:00 am	Worship Service (Orlando)
	10:15 am	Worship Service (Winter Haven)
January 4	9:15 am	Bible Class
	10:15 am	Worship Service w/ Holy Communion
	11:30 am	Annual Voters' Meeting
January 11	8:00 am	Worship Service (Orlando)
	10:15 am	Worship Service (Winter Haven)

Upcoming Meetings: Here is a schedule of our upcoming meetings:

- **January 4** – Annual Voters' Meeting
- **February 1** – Education/Elders
- **March 1** – Trustees/Church Council

In Our Prayers: Please keep our shut-in members in your prayers: Don Beymer, Bob & Joan Doriot, Johanna Jaehnigen, David & Elsie Kleinschmidt, Shirley Rosenberry, and Mike Sheffield.

Looking Forward to Next Sunday: "For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people." We feel the weight of that darkness in our sin-cursed world. Yet, next Sunday, on the Feast of the Epiphany, the prophet Isaiah commands a stunning reversal in Isaiah 60:1–6: "Arise, shine; For your light has come!" Our sermon theme, *The Gravity of Glory*, explores how the weighty, brilliant grace of God in Christ draws us out of the shadows. This is not a light of our own making, but "the glory of the LORD" risen upon us. Just as the Gentiles were drawn to His brightness with gold and incense, we too are drawn to the Light that conquers the night. Join us as we behold the Savior who turns our darkness into dawn.

Southeastern Women's Retreat: Registration is now open for the Southeastern Women's Retreat, to be held in Sherrills Ford, NC, February 13-15, 2026. The theme this year is "Sisters in Christ". To register, please head over to women's retreat.clclutheran.net, click on SOUTHEAST, and scroll down to the link for the online form. If you would like to register over email or you have any questions, reach out to southeasternwomensretreat@gmail.com. We hope to see you there!

National Women's Retreat Coming in January!: Before your 2026 calendar begins to fill up, we want you to mark your calendars and get ready to Press Pause with women across the country!

- **What**: Press Pause for the National Women's (Virtual) Retreat 2026
- **When**: Saturday, January 31, 2026 // 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm
- **How**: Join us virtually via Zoom
- **Cost**: Free event – all are welcome!
- **Register now**: https://tinyurl.com/PressPause26

2026 CLC Mission Helper Trip: The CLC Mission Helper Program is making preparations for another Mission Trip to Africa for the summer of 2026. The main focus of this trip will be presenting the Gospel, through a series of child evangelism lessons, to member and non-member children in village congregations. Possible areas of evangelism include the CLC−Tanzania, CLC−Kenya, CLC−Zambia, and CLC-Uganda. CLC members are welcome and encouraged to apply. For more information and to apply, visit www.mht.lutheranmissions.org.

Nominations for ILC Professor and ILC President: The Board of Regents announces the following nominations to fill the professorship vacated by the resignation of Professor David Schaller prior to the 2025-26 academic year: Paul Krause, David Reim, Dan Sullivan, and David 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 2028. All comments from members of CLC congregations regarding these candidates are to be received by email or letter no later than midnight January 17, 2026 (letters postmarked January 7, 2025) to: Mr. James Burkhardt; 217 Windy Lane; Rockwall, TX 75087; email:jeb6217@yahoo.com.

CLC Call News: Mr. Peter Reim has received the vacancy call to Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church, Red Wing, MN. <> Pastor Michael Wilke of Gethsemane Lutheran Church, Saginaw, MI, has received the part-time call to Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church, Red Wing, MN. <> Pastor Cory Drehle of Berea Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, SD, has returned the call to Living Hope Lutheran Church, Appleton, WI. <> Pastor Ben Libby of Redeemer Ev. Lutheran Church, Cheyenne, WY, has returned the call to Messiah Lutheran Church, Eau Claire, WI. <> Pastor Joe Naumann of Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church, Mankato, MN, has received the call to Holy Cross Ev. Lutheran Church, Phoenix, AZ.

✢ Daily Bible Readings for Home Devotions ✢

December 29, 2025 – January 03, 2026

Monday - *Luke 2:33-40*
Joseph and Mary are amazed to hear Simeon talking about the saving mission of the baby Jesus. Not all accept Him, but He brings thankful joy to all who are waiting for the Lord's redemption.

Tuesday - *Galatians 4:1-7*
As a child even the heir is like a slave under the law, but God sent His Son to redeem all mankind, that they might be adopted as heirs of God through Christ. Why would we want to go back?

Wednesday - *Isaiah 63:7-18*
The believer remembers all the undeserved mercies of God in the past and how He rescued His people of old. Thus as we face the future, let us entrust ourselves to His powerful hands.

Thursday - *Isaiah 11:1-5*
As we enter a new year, we commit ourselves to the shoot from the stump of Jesse, the Messiah. In Him we find wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, righteousness and faithfulness!

Friday - *Psalm 111*
Truly the LORD is worthy of all praise! His works from A to Z show forth His glory. His words proclaim His redemption and impart wisdom and understanding. "His praise stands forever" (verse 10).

Saturday - *Psalm 121*
In their daily walk the people of God need help. And help is what we receive from the LORD. Day or night, in sunshine or shadow, the LORD promises to watch over our going and coming. Hallelujah!