



*"For unto you is born this day in the city of David
a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."*

Ascension Lutheran Church
Christmas Eve ~ December 24, 2024

CHRISTMAS EVE 2024

Welcome to all who are attending our service today. We are glad you are with us! To all guests and visitors, we especially extend our hands of friendship. May God bless the worship time for each one of you. Please come again!

NURSERY AVAILABLE We have an unstaffed nursery for your convenience and privacy. The nursery has audio and video so you may hear and see the worship service while attending to your child.

Holy Communion is celebrated at the 8:30 service on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, and at the 11:00 service on the 2nd and 4th Sundays.

+ PREPARATION +

Theme: “God’s Love”

AS WE GATHER: In a humble manger, God’s love entered our broken, sinful world. Without His action through the birth of Jesus, we would never truly understand or share real love. In Christ, God shows us His love, grace, and mercy. Jesus’ forgiveness is so complete that it wipes away sin and fills those who believe in Him with His love. On this holy night, wrapped in His forgiveness, we see the fullness of God’s love in Immanuel—God with us.

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

“On Christmas Night All Christians Sing”

Traditional English carol, setting by H.V. Gerike
Choir

“Angel Medley”

Terry Osman
Handbell Choir

WELCOME

HYMN

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels,
O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him!
O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

Highest, most holy, Light of light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
Son of the Father Now in flesh appearing!
O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him!
O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation!
Sing all ye citizens of Heaven above!
Glory to God, In the highest!
O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him!
O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

INVOCATION

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

OPENING SCRIPTURE

John 1:1-5; 14 (ESV)

- P** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
C He was in the beginning with God.
P All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made.
C In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
P The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
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 FORGIVENESS

- P** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
C But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

(Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.)

- C** Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

P Hear the Good News on this most holy night. The Lord sends out His love to find you and to save you. Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

O God of light, on the night of the birth of the Savior of the world, Your holy angels sang of Your glory. May Your Word be our lamp that guides us through the darkness of our earthly journey, showing us Your grace and lighting our path with Your holiness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

SHARING THE PEACE OF THE LORD

P The peace of the Lord be with you all.

C And also with you.

MUSIC Karlee Navarro, trumpet

+ THE WORD +

SCRIPTURE Isaiah 7:10–14; 9:2, 6 (ESV)

¹⁰ Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz: ¹¹ “Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹² But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.” ¹³ And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel,” [which means, God with us.]

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. ⁶For 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

“Hark, The Herald Angels Sing”

Hark, the herald angels sing;
“Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.”
Joyful all ye nations, rise;
Join the triumph of the skies;
With th’angelic hosts proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

Hail the Heav’n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Ris’n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that we no more may die,
Born to raise each child of earth,
Born to give us second birth.
Hark, the herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 1:18–23 (ESV)

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ²³ “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).

HYMN

“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 dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.

² 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;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

SCRIPTURE

Luke 2:1–20 (ESV)

¹ In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to 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, who was with child. ⁶ And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

MUSIC

“This Holy Night”

Words by R. Aspinall; Music by M. McDonald
Carlyn Staudt, soloist

⁸ And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰ And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a Baby wrapped in swaddling cloths 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, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!”

HYMN**“Angels We Have Heard On High”**

¹Angels we have heard on high,
 Sweetly singing o’er the plains;
 And the mountains in reply,
 Echoing their joyous strains:
 Gloria in excelsis Deo,
 Gloria in excelsis Deo.

¹⁵ When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶ And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷ And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸ And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰ And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

HYMN**“Angels We Have Heard On High”**

² Shepherds, why this jubilee?
 Why your joyous strains prolong?
 Say what may the tidings be
 Which inspire your heav’nly song?
 Gloria in excelsis Deo,
 Gloria in excelsis Deo.

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.

SERMON**“THE DAY LOVE WAS BORN”****Pastor Jim Sprengle**

Luke 2:1-20

TITHES AND OFFERINGS

(Our offerings are made as an act of worship, given in loving response to all that God has graciously given us, both materially and spiritually.)

“Noel”

Words and music by C. Tomlin, E. Cash, M. Redman
Karon Keup, soloist

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P Let us pray for the Church, the world, and all in need.

Heavenly Father, on this holy night, we stand in awe of the miracle of Jesus’ birth. Fill us with joy as we welcome our newborn King, the Savior of all. Help Your Church to share this good news throughout the world. Bless pastors to proclaim Your Word faithfully and give us open hearts to believe and rejoice in it. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer**

P Lord, remember families everywhere. Make homes places of prayer and devotion to Your Word. Give parents patience and guidance as they raise their children. Comfort those who long for children and care for the fatherless, widows, orphans, and those who are lonely or separated from loved ones. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer**

P Almighty God, bless our nation. Grant wisdom and justice to our leaders as they serve and protect. Move us all to speak up for the vulnerable and defend those in need. Watch over those working tonight to keep them safe. Bring peace to areas of conflict, protect the innocent and bring healing to the hurting. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Into Your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C **Amen.**

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.**

MUSIC

“Christmas Sanctus”

Words by S.N. Dengler; Music by L. Dengler

Choir

+ CHRISTMAS BY CANDLELIGHT +

(The choir will exit the chancel and carry lit candles as they move into the center aisle. The congregation will then light their candles from these. Always keep lit candles in the upright position to keep wax from spilling. The unlit candle is tipped to be lit.)

P As the light of these candles illumine our faces, it symbolizes the light of Christ, a child in the manger at Bethlehem, a Savior suffering our death on the cross, and soon to come from His throne on high as Judge of all. He is our Light here on earth and the eternal Light who enlightens heaven, where there is no need of candle or sun. Rejoice, for the Light of the world has come, who transforms us with the brightness of His glory.

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

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 Thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace.
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth;
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

CLOSING PRAYER

P Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, You came as pure love to unite earth and heaven. Fill our hearts with peace and goodwill. Help us always make room for You in our lives and join with the angels in praising You for Your grace and glory; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

C Amen.

(please extinguish candles and allow them to cool)

CLOSING ACCLAMATION

P On this day earth shall ring –

C **Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

P For Christ our Lord has been born for us, the Son given to us:

C **Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

P Love has come down at Christmas,

C **And perfect love has absolved all fear.**

P Friends, let us rejoice this day!

C **For Christ is born, and the angels sing: Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

BENEDICTION

P The blessing of God Almighty—the Father, who gave His Son to redeem the world; the Son, who has revealed to us God’s grace, mercy, and love; and the Holy Spirit, by whose blessed work in us we live our lives as children of God—be and remain with you, now and forever.

C Amen.

HYMN

“Joy To The World”

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive its 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.

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.

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 and wonders of His love!

DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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*We invite you to start your
Christmas Day with worship!*

Tomorrow at 10:00am

Ascension Lutheran Church

1440 SE 182nd Avenue, Portland, OR 97233

Office Phone: 503-665-8821 · Web Site: www.alcportland.org

Church Office Hours: Monday–Friday 9am to 3pm

Our Mission Statement:

~Go and Share Jesus Christ~

Our Vision Statement:

“Take part...Join Jesus on His mission.”

The members of Ascension Lutheran Church are committed to being God’s witnesses in Gresham, and in all of Portland and the Northwest, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8):

With the universal Christian Church, we believe, teach and respond to the love of the Triune God— the Father, Creator of all that exists; the Son Jesus Christ, Who left His home in Heaven to become flesh and blood, to suffer and die for the sins of all peoples of the world, and Who rose from the grave, victorious over sin, death and the devil, that we too might live with Him in Heaven; and the Holy Spirit, Who creates faith in our hearts in Christ Jesus through God’s Word and Sacrament. The three Persons of the Holy Trinity are one God, co-equal and co-eternal. The core teachings of our faith from the Lutheran perspective can be summarized in three short phrases: Grace alone, Scripture alone, Faith alone.

STAFF

Rev. Jim Sprengle, Pastor
pastor@alcportland.org

Ruberto Ek Yah, Pastor
pastorekyah@alcportland.org

Brad Hall, Worship and Music Coordinator
worship@alcportland.org

Michele Sprengle, Office Administrator
office@alcportland.org

Bonnie Webber, Treasurer

Rebecca Williamson, Assist. Treasurer
treasurer@alcportland.org

Wanda Cassetty,
Council Secretary
council@alcportland.org

Hana Brandt,
Deaconess Intern
deaconess@alcportland.org

Laura Potter, Property Management
alcproperty1440@gmail.com