

Hope Lutheran Church
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Reverend Matthew Converse, Pastor
Kirsten Jines, Preschool Director
Joyce Dubach, Organist
December 24, 2025
Christmas Eve



Introduction to the day

Today Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. The gospel is Matthew's account of the annunciation and birth of the one named Emmanuel, God-with-us. During these final days of Advent we pray, "O come, O come, Emmanuel," a beloved hymn based on the O Antiphons, ancient prayers appointed for the seven days preceding Christmas. On this final Sunday of Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.

Food pantry need: cereal and soup
Attendance for December 21, 2025 -56

PRELUDE

GATHERING *The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

Christmas Proclamation

Many ages from the time when God created the heavens and the earth and then formed man and woman in his own image;
long after the great flood, when God made the rainbow shine forth as a sign of the covenant; twenty-one centuries from the time the promise was given to Abraham and Sarah; thirteen centuries after Moses led the people of Israel out of Egypt and Miriam danced in freedom;
eleven hundred years from the time of Ruth and the judges;
one thousand years from the anointing of David as king,
in fulfillment of the times and years and months and days discerned by the prophets; in the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad;
the seven hundred and fifty-second year from the foundation of the city of Rome; the forty-second year of the reign of Octavian Augustus;
while the whole world enjoyed a span of peace,
Jesus Christ, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father,
desiring to sanctify the world by his most merciful coming,
being conceived by the Holy Spirit and nine months of growth in the womb of his mother—now in our own times is the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, God made flesh.

Text: Traditional, adapt. Brian T. Johnson

Entrance Hymn: Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful (ELW 283)

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!

The highest, most holy, light of light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*
Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God in the highest: *Refrain*

Christmas Dialog and Greeting

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness, on them light has shined.

We have beheld Christ's glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.

For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

In him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

May the grace and truth of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

(A brief silence)

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

Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

A reading from Isaiah.

² 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.

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

⁴ 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.

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

⁶ 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.

⁷ Great will be his authority,
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.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn: O Little Town of Bethlehem (ELW 279)

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!
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!

Second Reading: Titus 2:11-14

A reading from Titus.

¹¹ The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹² training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (ELW 270)

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;
With angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain

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. *Refrain*

Third Reading: Luke 2:1-7

A reading from Luke.

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.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn: Away in a Manger (ELW 277)

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 poor baby wakes,
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.

Fourth Reading: Luke 2:8-20

A reading from Luke.

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!”

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.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn: Go, Tell It on the Mountain (ELW 290)

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*

Down in a lonely manger the humble Christ was born;

And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

Sermon

The assembly is seated.

Silence for reflection follows the sermon.

Offertory Hymn: What Child Is This (ELW 296)

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!

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!

The Gospel of the Incarnation

The minister lights a large candle from an altar candle, which symbolizes Christ, the Light of the world of whom John's gospel speaks. The ushers light their candles from the minister's candle, then light the candle of each worshiper nearest the aisle. The lighted candle is never tilted, but is always held upright when giving light to another.

THE GOSPEL OF THE INCARNATION: John 1:1-14

A reading from John.

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.

The Prayers

Glory to God in the highest,

and peace to God's people on earth.

Blessed are you, Prince of Peace.

You rule the earth with truth and justice.

Send your gift of peace to all nations of the world.

Blessed are you, Wonderful Counselor.

You enlighten the heart with steadfast love.

Enliven your church that it might

bear good tidings of great joy to all people.

Blessed are you, Emmanuel.

You promise to be with us even to the end of the age.

Open our eyes to see your presence in all

who are hungry, lonely, or homeless.

Blessed are you, Son of Mary.

You share our humanity.

Have mercy on the sick, the dying,

and all who suffer this day.

Blessed are you, Son of God.
You dwell among us as the Word made flesh.
**Reveal yourself to us in word and sacrament
that we may bear your light to all the world.**

Hymn of Light: 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 your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming
grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

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.**

Blessing

The minister blesses the congregation.

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary,
the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi,
and the peace of the Christ Child.

Almighty God, Father, ? Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and
forever.

Amen.

The candles are extinguished.

Departure Hymn: Joy to the World (ELW 267)

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.
Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding
joy.

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.
He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love.

DISMISSAL

Glory to God in the highest!

And peace to God's people on earth!

Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.

Thanks be to God.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

**BREAD LOAF OFFERING - DECEMBER – The Center For
Whitley County Youth**

- Food Pantry needs, with the colder weather the need for Soup increases. While we still need Cereal and Peanut Butter, we could also use Soup as well.
- December's Bread Loaf Offering will be going to "The Center For Whitley County Youth". The Center has served the youth of Whitley county for the past 20 years and has served over 10,000 students. Flyers and information will be available in the Parish Hall. If you have any questions, see Joe Freiburger
- Our annual congregational meeting will be held on January 18th right after church service. The church will be providing Fried Chicken and drinks. We will be passing around a sign up sheet for sides and desserts as we get closer to the date. Please put this on your calendar. Thank You

Weekly Agenda at Grace Lutheran Church

Monday December 29, 2025

No school – winter break

AA 7:30 pm

Tuesday December 30, 2025

No school – winter break

T.O.P.S 9:30 am

Wednesday December 31, 2025

No school – winter break

Men's Breakfast 8 am

Thursday January 1, 2025

No school – winter break

AA 7:30 pm

Al-non 7:30 pm

Friday January 2, 2025

Pastor's Day Off

No school – winter break

Saturday January 3, 2025

Sunday January 4, 2025

Worship @ Hope 8:15 am

Worship @ Grace 10:00 am

Fellowship 11:15 am

Blood Pressure checks 11:30 am

**We have new sign-up sheets in the parish hall, for coffee hour.
Coffee hour will be after church service, for anyone that would
like to stay.**