



St. Peter's Lutheran Church & School

7710 East State Boulevard
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46815
749-5816

December 24, 2025 – 11:00pm

Rev. Danny Eggold, Senior Pastor
Rev. Adam McDowell, Associate Pastor
Rev. Nathan Widener, Associate Pastor & Director of Community of Care
Rev. James Sharp, Missionary to Puerto Rico
Tim Degen, Director of Music & Organist
Chris Brune, Principal
Barb Christian, Preschool Director

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

December 24, 2025 – 11:00pm

PRELUDE

“Christmas Fantasy for Organ and Brass”

Joel Raney

RINGING OF THE BELL

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING CAROL

“Joy to the World”

#387

INVOCATION

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

OPENING SENTENCES and LORD’S PRAYER

P Beloved in Christ, we gather this Christmas Eve to hear the message of the angels and to journey with the shepherds to kneel in awe and adoration before the gift of the Light of the world. In words and in music we seek to understand and to marvel at the wonder of the incarnation.

C As we meet to offer our praises and our prayers to the Christ Child, let us pray first for the needs of the world. For the poor, the hungry, the homeless; for the persecuted and for the bereaved; and for all who know not the loving kindness of the Lord.

P Let us also remember those whom we have loved but see no longer; those whose lives have influenced and enriched our own; and who now rejoice with us, but on another shore and with a greater understanding.

C We pray that we may, this night, be so filled with the love of God that our lives may reflect the light of His glory and of His infinite compassion.

P Let us pray that we may be counted among that Communion of Saints, receiving grace to offer unto God our reasonable service. These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up unto the throne of heaven in the words, which Christ Himself has taught us:

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.

SALUTATION and COLLECT OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray together:

C **O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our Judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

ANTHEM

“Ding Dong! Merrily on High”

Adult Choir

Ding dong! Merrily on high in heav’n the bells are ringing:
Ding dong! Verily the sky is riv’n with angel singing.
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

E'en so her below, below, let steeple bells be swungen,
And *i-o, i-o, i-o*, by priest and people sungen.
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

Pray you, dutifully prime your matin chime, ye ringers;
Pray you beautifully rime your evetime song, ye singers.
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 9:2-7

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. ³You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. ⁴For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. 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. ⁷Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

P This is the Word of the Lord.
C Thanks be to God.

CHRISTMAS CAROL

“The People That in Darkness Sat”

#412

(We rise for stanza 6.)

EPISTLE READING

Titus 2:11-14

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹²training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL READING

Luke 2:1-7

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And 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 ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And 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.

CHRISTMAS CAROL

“What Child is This”

#370

HOLY GOSPEL READING

Luke 2:8-14

⁸And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” ¹³And 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!”

CHRISTMAS CAROL

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

#368

HOLY GOSPEL READING

Luke 2:15-20

¹⁵When 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.” ¹⁶And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

CHRISTMAS CAROL

“Once in Royal David’s City”

#376

SERMON

“Christmas is Good News”

Text: Luke 2:1-20 – Pastor Danny Eggold

CONFESSION OF FAITH

Second Article of the Apostles’ Creed with Martin Luther’s Explanation

P What is the second article of the Apostles Creed?

C And 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 sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

P What does this mean?

C I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

RITUAL OF FRIENDSHIP and GATHERING OF OUR OFFERINGS

ANTHEM

“The Midnight Clear”...Joel Raney

Adult Choir

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold.

Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats o’er all the weary world.

“Peace on the earth goodwill to all, from heaven’s all gracious King!”
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

It came upon the midnight clear; that glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold!

Above these sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing.
And all the world can hear the song that now the angels sing.

“Peace on the earth, goodwill to all, from heaven’s all gracious King!”
The world in solemn still lay, to hear the angels sing.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P Almighty God, by the incarnation of Your eternal Son, You revealed that You are love. Give us true faith in Christ and His promise, that by His conception, virgin birth, holy life, sacrificial death and victorious resurrection our sins are forgiven and we are Yours. Increase our love for one another – for as You abide in us, we abide in You and Your love is perfected in us. Fill us with joy, and lead us to proclaim Your glad tidings to all people. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **Hear our prayer.**

P Lord God, by His birth in human flesh, Your dear Son took His place in the family of Mary and Joseph. Bless the families of our church and our country, that men and women would live faithfully as husbands and wives, loving and caring for their children and nurturing them in the grace of Baptism and all the truth of Your Word. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **Hear our prayer.**

P Father, in love You declared us to be Yours and promised to hear our prayers. Protect the police, fire personnel and other emergency workers whose duty and service to us have called them away from their loved ones this night. Keep safe all who are traveling during this holiday time. Relieve the sufferings of Your people, and heal their diseases according to Your mercy. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **Hear our prayer.**

P Lord Jesus, our Savior and brother, You feed us in body and soul. Give true faith in Your Word and promises to all who will receive Your body and blood this night. Sustain Your people in humble repentance and godly living. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **Hear our prayer.**

P Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

CONFESSION and ABSOLUTION

P Tonight, we remember our Lord, who was born in strife to bring us everlasting life. We remember His birth. As we ponder His love and the events of His birth, we also realize that looming in the background of the manger is the shape of a cross. This Child, true God and true man, was born to die for you and for me. In Him is all our hope and trust, for He removes our fears and gives us the gift of eternal life. Let us reflect on and confess our sins. Let us also rejoice in the One named Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us, who came to save us from our sins.

(We take a moment of silence for personal confession.)

P We confess together:

C Lord, have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed by what we've done and by what we haven't done. We have offended You with our fixation on giving and receiving gifts, our over-indulgence in food and drink, our frantic preoccupation with the frivolous things of the season while ignoring our neighbors in need. Forgive us, Lord, for our greed and frivolity. Forgive us for the unreasonable expectations we place on ourselves and others. Forgive us for our distraction and doubt. Forgive us for all our sins of thought, word, and deed. Forgive us, for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, who was born to save us from our sin.

P Friends, believe the Good News! This birth, this infant, this Savior is for you! No matter how great your sin, or intense your fear of God's judgment, all is well. It is finished. The redemptive work of Christ is done. By the command of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

THE PEACE OF OUR LORD

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

DISTRIBUTION ANTHEM and CAROLS

“See Amid the Winter’s Snow”...arr. Carl Schalk

Adult Choir

See amid the winter’s snow, born for us on earth below;
See the tender Lamb appears, promised from eternal years:
Hail, thou ever-blessed morn; hail, redemption’s happy dawn;
Sing through all Jerusalem, Christ is born in Bethlehem.

Lo, within a manger lies he who built the starry skies;
He who, throned in height sublime, sits amid the cherubim:
Hail, thou ever-blessed morn; hail, redemption’s happy dawn;
Sing through all Jerusalem, Christ is born in Bethlehem.

Say, ye holy shepherds, say what your joyful news today;
Wherefore have ye left your sheep on the lonely mountain steep?
Hail, thou ever-blessed morn; hail, redemption’s happy dawn;
Sing through all Jerusalem, Christ is born in Bethlehem.

As we watched at dead of night, lo, we saw a wondrous light;
Angels singing “Peace on earth” told us of the Savior’s birth:
Hail, thou ever-blessed morn; hail, redemption’s happy dawn;
Sing through all Jerusalem, Christ is born in Bethlehem.

Sacred infant, all divine, what a tender love was thine,
Thus to come from highest bliss down to such a world as this:
Hail, thou ever-blessed morn; hail, redemption’s happy dawn;
Sing through all Jerusalem, Christ is born in Bethlehem.

Teach, O teach us, Holy Child, by thy face so meek and mild,
Teach us to resemble thee, in thy sweet humility:
Hail, thou ever-blessed morn; hail, redemption’s happy dawn;
Sing through all Jerusalem, Christ is born in Bethlehem.

“Away in a Manger”

#364

“Now Sing We, Now Rejoice”

#386

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

#361

DISMISSAL

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart ✠ in peace.

C Amen.

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

P Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God and Mary's son, You were born into our world to save us from sin and death. You came to preach, heal and comfort, to forgive and encourage. You were born to die on a cross. You brought the light of life to those walking in darkness, and the joy of salvation to those doomed to death. By Your Word and Sacrament, be born in our hearts again this holy night. Help us hear and believe the mystery of Your incarnation. Watch over our dear ones near and far, that with them and all the saints in heaven and on earth we may treasure Your love and rejoice in Your salvation.

C Amen.

✠ CANDLELIGHT SERVICE ✠

P As the light of these candles illumines 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. This is the message we have heard from Him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

VOLUNTARY *(The candles throughout the sanctuary will be lit during the playing of the voluntary.)*

“Silent Night”

arr. Robert Powell

CANDLELIGHT CAROL

“Silent Night”

#363

CLOSING COLLECT

- P** O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that as we have known the mysteries of that Light on earth we may also come to the fullness of His joys in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

BENEDICTION

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.
- C** Amen.

CLOSING CAROL

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

#380

(Ring bells on stanza 3.)

POSTLUDE

“In Dulci Jubilo”

arr. J.S. Bach