



**CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE  
CHRIST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
DECEMBER 24, 2023**

**ALL ARE WELCOME HERE!**

**Gospel in Action: Caring for all God's children, we shall serve  
God through worship, learning, and sharing.**

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church  
32747 Lake Road  
Avon Lake, Ohio 44012  
440-933-6263

celc.mainoffice@gmail.com      www.christlutheranavonlake.org

Interim Pastor: Rev. Laura Kuntz

Office Administrator: Heather Nordman

Organist: Randi Smarsh      Custodians: Bill Higgins and Beth Lecorchick



## ORDER OF WORSHIP

### PRELUDE

"O Tannenbaum" Flute & Piano, Johanna & Brenda

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel" Violin & Piano, Angela & Rob

"Gesu' Bambino" Organ, Randi

"In a Manger" Bell Choir

"O Holy Night" Organ & Piano, Randi & Brenda

### LIGHTING OF CHRIST CANDLE

Reader One: Because injustice and despair threaten to overwhelm us, we pray for hope.

*Light the first candle in your Advent wreath.*

Reader Two: Because so many swords have not yet been beaten into ploughshares, we pray for peace.

*Light the second candle in your Advent wreath.*

Reader One: Because grief and loss weigh so heavily, we pray for joy.

*Light the third candle in your Advent wreath.*

Reader Two: Because hatred is still so strong, and because people all over the world are suffering, we pray for love.

*Light the fourth candle in your Advent wreath.*

Reader One: God has come to us as a child, to dwell with us, and to walk with us.

*Light the Christ Candle in your Advent wreath, often a candle in the center.*

Reader Two: May the light and the fire from these candles burn away everything that is preventing the God of hope and peace and joy and love from being born among us.

Reader One: Brothers and sisters, be not afraid, even now—even now—the light of Christ is overwhelming the world, on earth as it is in heaven!

*The congregation is invited to stand.*

### GATHERING HYMN

283

### O Come, All Ye Faithful

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O  
2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,  
3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,  
4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;

come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;  
 born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;  
 sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!  
 Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!

come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:  
 Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!  
 Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:  
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

*Refrain*

Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,  
 O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,

ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.  
 O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711–1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–1880, sts. 1, 3–4;  
 tr. unknown, st. 2  
 Music: attr. John Francis Wade

ADESTE FIDELES  
 Irregular

## INVOCATION

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the Word made flesh, our life and our salvation.

C: Amen.

## BRIEF ORDER OF CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior, let us confess our sin.

P: God of life,

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

**C: You promise good news of great joy for all people, and call us to be messengers of your peace. We confess that too often we hoard our joy, our resources, and our security. We nurture conflict and build barriers. We neglect the needs of our neighbors and ignore the groaning of creation. Have mercy on us. Where we are self-centered, open our hearts. Where we are reluctant, give us courage. Where we are cynical, restore our trust. Renew us with your grace and give us again the hope of eternal life in you. Amen.**

P: Hear the good news: We are children of God and heirs of God's promises through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In † Jesus we are forgiven and redeemed. Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth shall know the salvation of God.

**C: Amen.**

### **GREETING**

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Almighty God,

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

*The congregation is invited to sit.*

### **FIRST READING Isaiah 9:2-7**

L: The first reading is from Isaiah, the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter.

<sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup>You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. <sup>6</sup>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. <sup>7</sup>His authority shall grow continually, 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.

L: The word of the Lord!

**C: Thanks be to God!**

**SECOND READING Titus 2:11-14**

L: The second reading is from Titus, the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter.

<sup>11</sup>For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, <sup>12</sup>training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, <sup>13</sup>while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup>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.

L: The word of the Lord!

C: Thanks be to God!

**CHILDRENS SERMON**

*The congregation is invited to stand.*

**HYMN**

275

**Angels, from the Realms of Glory**

1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
 2 Shep - herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,  
 3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;  
 4 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God, the Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son,

once you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:  
 God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - fant light.  
 seek the great de - sire of na - tions, you have seen his na - tal star.  
 ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing to the e - ter - nal Three in One.

*Refrain*

Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born king.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt., sts. 1-3; *Salisbury Hymn Book*, 1857, st. 4  
 Music: Henry T. Smart, 1813-1879

## **GOSPEL READING Luke 2:1-20**

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter.

**C: Glory to you, O Lord!**

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>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 for them in the inn. <sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>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: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" <sup>15</sup>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." <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

P: The gospel of the Lord!

**C: Praise to you, O Christ!**

*The congregation is invited to sit.*

**SERMON**

**Pastor Laura Kuntz**

*The congregation is invited to stand.*

# HYMN OF THE DAY

277

## Away in a Manger

1 A - way in a man-ger, no crib for his bed, the lit - tle Lord  
2 The cat - tle are low-ing; the ba - by a - wakes, but lit - tle Lord  
3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay close by me for -

Je - sus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked  
Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes. I love you, Lord Je - sus; look  
ev - er and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil - dren in

down where he lay, the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.  
down from the sky and stay by my cra - dle till morn-ing is nigh.  
your ten - der care and fit us for heav-en, to live with you there.

Text: North American, 19th cent.  
Music: James R. Murray, 1841-1905

AWAY IN A MANGER  
11 11 11 11

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

**A:** Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world God loves.

*A brief silence.*

**A;** Glory to you, God, for the song of the angels, proclaiming to the world Christ's holy birth. Give your church a joyful song to sing, that we bring the good news of peace and salvation to all people. Hear us, O God.

**C:** Your mercy is great.

A: Glory to you, God, for the stars that shine in the depth of the night. Provoke awe in our hearts at the expansive mystery of the cosmos. Open us to find beauty in the clear darkness of night and in the first glimmers of dawn. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

A: Glory to you, God, for the child born to us who establishes a kingdom of justice and righteousness. Break bonds of oppression, bring reconciliation to warring lands, and establish peace from this time onward and forevermore. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

A: Glory to you, God, for Mary's loving care. Lead us to tend to one another in time of need. Share the comfort of your presence with all people tonight who are alone or separated from loved ones due to estrangement, incarceration, or illness especially those we say aloud or silently in our hearts.... Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

A: Glory to you, God, for the faithfulness of the shepherds in their vocation. Grant rest to any who feel exhausted from their work during this season: retail and restaurant workers, church musicians, administrative staff, and clergy, organizers of charitable-giving events, and service workers doing essential tasks. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

A: Glory to you, God, for the multitude of the heavenly host. We rejoice in the zeal of all your saints who have witnessed the appearing of your grace, and who reveal to us your salvation for all. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

A: Glory to you, God, we pray for this community of faith and for its Call Committee. For your wisdom and love. Give us holy indifference that we may be indifferent to our own will. Through your Holy Spirit, help us to be unwilling to do anything but your will. Give us patience and guidance as we seek to know what you would like us to do. Bless all that we do, so that we can do what you bless. Merciful God,

**C: Your mercy is great.**

P: Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace.

**C: Amen.**

## **SHARING OF THE PEACE**

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

*The congregation is invited to sit.*

## OFFERING

## "Go tell it on the Mountain"

Choir

*The congregation is invited to stand.*

## DIALOGUE

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

**C: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

## PREFACE

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name.

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

## LORD'S PRAYER

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus 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.**

*The congregation is invited to sit.*

# COMMUNION

## Once in Royal David's City

269

1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,  
 2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and Lord of all,  
 3 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re - deem - ing love;  
 4 Not in that poor low - ly sta - ble, with the ox - en stand - ing by,

where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a man - ger for his bed:  
 and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall;  
 for that child so dear and gen - tle is our Lord in heav'n a - bove;  
 we shall see him; but in heav - en, set at God's right hand on high;

Mar - y was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.  
 with the poor and meek and low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.  
 and he leads his chil - dren on to the place where he is gone.  
 there his chil - dren gath - er round, bright like stars, with glo - ry crowned.

Text: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818-1895  
 Music: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805-1876

IRBY  
 878777

# Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

288

1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;  
2 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;  
3 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;

give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;  
now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!  
now ye need not fear the grave; Je - sus Christ was born to save!

ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.  
He has o - pened heav - en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.  
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.

Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!  
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!  
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Text: Medieval Latin carol; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-1866  
Music: German carol, 14th cent.; arr. Robert L. Pearsall, 1795-1856

IN DULCI JUBILO  
66 77 78 55

1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to  
 2 They look - ed up and saw . . . a star shin - ing  
 3 And by the light of that . . . same star three . .  
 4 This star drew near to the . . . north - west, o'er . .  
 5 Then en - tered in those wise . . . men three, full . .

cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where  
 in . . . the east . . . be - yond . . . them far; and to the  
 wise . . . men came . . . from coun - try far; to seek for a  
 Beth - le - hem . . . it took . . . its rest; and there it  
 rev - 'rent - ly . . . up - on . . . their knee, and of - fered

they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's  
 earth it gave . . . great light, and . . . so it con -  
 king was their . . . in - tent, and to fol - low the  
 did both stop . . . and stay right . . . o - ver the  
 there in his . . . pres - ence their . . . gold, . . . and

*Refrain*  
 night that was so deep.  
 tin - ued both day and night.  
 star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -  
 place where Je - sus lay.  
 myrrh, and frank - in - cense.



el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

Text: English traditional  
 Music: English traditional; arr. John Stainer, 1840-1901

THE FIRST NOWELL  
 Irregular

## 291 Let Our Gladness Have No End



1 Let our glad - ness have no end, Hal - le - lu - jah!  
 2 Proph - e - sied in days of old, Hal - le - lu - jah!  
 3 See the love - liest bloom - ing rose, Hal - le - lu - jah!  
 4 In - to flesh is made the Word, Hal - le - lu - jah!



for to earth did Christ de - scend. Hal - le - lu - jah!  
 God has sent the one fore - told. Hal - le - lu - jah!  
 from the branch of Jes - se grows. Hal - le - lu - jah!  
 our true ref - uge and our Lord. Hal - le - lu - jah!

*Refrain*



On this day God gave us Christ, the Son, to



save us; Christ, the Son, to save us.

Text: Bohemian carol, 15th cent.; tr. unknown  
 Music: Bohemian carol, 15th cent.

NARODIL SE KRISTUS PÁN  
 7 4 7 4 6 6 6

*The congregation is invited to stand.*

### BLESSING

**P:** May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you, and keep you in his grace.

**C:** Amen.

## POST COMMUNION PRAYER

P: God our redeemer,

C: You have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

## LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

*The pastor lights a candle from the altar candles and lights the cantor's candle. After, the pastor and cantor will walk down the center aisle and light the candle of each person nearest the aisle and they in turn, light the candle of the person next to them. Lighted candles should not be dipped to avoid wax dripping on the floor. The unlighted candle should be dipped when lighting it from a neighbor's candle.*

## HYMN

CHRISTMAS

281

## Silent Night, Holy Night!

*Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!*

The musical score is written for a three-part setting. It features a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. The melody is simple and homophonic. The lyrics are provided in three parts, with the first part being a three-part setting. The second part is a single line of lyrics. The bass line consists of simple chords and single notes.

Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,  
1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,  
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake  
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,  
ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.  
all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.  
at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,  
love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,

Hol - der Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher  
 Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly  
 heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is  
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your

Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh.  
 peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.  
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!  
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792–1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820–1885  
 Music: Franz Gruber, 1787–1863

STILLE NACHT  
 Irregular

## **BENEDICTION** (*candles extinguished following the benediction*)

**P:** The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ Jesus, the Word made flesh.

**C: Amen.**

# SENDING HYMN

## Joy to the World

267

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -  
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their  
3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -  
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the

ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him  
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings  
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -

room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture  
plains re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing  
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his

and heav'n and na - ture sing, and

sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.  
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heav'n and na - ture sing,

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748  
Music: English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792-1872

ANTIOCH  
CM and repeat

## DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Rejoice in Christ our Savior!

C: Thanks be to God!

*“For unto you is born ... a Saviour,  
which is Christ the Lord.”*

CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS

*Luke 2:11*

***WELCOME*** to all of you who are celebrating Christ's birth this evening and a special welcome is extended to those here for the first time, visiting with us, or in response to an invitation from a parishioner. Peace and blessings to you on this Christmas Eve.

***A SPECIAL THANK YOU*** to all who participated in this worship service. Have a blessed Christmas!

*May the good news of Christ's birth give you joy as you open your hearts to the Savior!*

## **Welcome to Worship**

✠ **We are happy to have you with us** and wish you a warm welcome. If you would like more information about our church and its ministries, please contact our church office, 440-933-6263.

✠ **Attention families:** We encourage you to have your children participate in worship. They learn about worship and faith by being involved. If you or your children need a break, we have Wiggle Beach off to the left of the sanctuary. If you need assistance, an usher will happily direct you.

✠ **We honor our military among us.** Please lift in prayer all who serve in the military, past and present, along with their loved ones. Currently serving: Marty Koch, Coast Guard.

### **Congregation Calendar**

**Sunday, December 24**

*Christmas Eve Service*

7:00 p.m. Holy Worship

**Wednesday, December 27**

8:26 p.m. Unite in Prayer

**Friday, December 29**

Pastor's day off

**Sunday, December 31**

10:00 a.m. Holy Worship



May  
Lovely,  
Happy Times  
Decorate Your  
Holiday Season,  
May Warm, Special  
Memories Brighten  
Your New Year, May  
The Wonder of Christmas  
Be With You Forever.



