



*All the ends of the earth shall see  
the salvation of our God.*

*Isaiah 52:10b*

**Ascension Lutheran Church**  
Christmas Day ~ December 25, 2025

## CHRISTMAS DAY 2025

**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: "BECAME FLESH"

**AS WE GATHER:** Years ago, a singer named Joan Osborne sang, "What if God was one of us?" We don't have to wonder about the what-if because God is one of us. The God who tabernacled with His people is the same Word who became flesh and dwelt among us. He radically downgraded His living quarters from the throne room of heaven to a manger in the backwater town of Bethlehem. Through Jesus, the Word, we can see God's glory and our eternal life, even when life is more grinding than glorious.

### PRELUDE

### WELCOME

#### "The First Noel"

The first Noel, the angel did say,  
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay,  
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,  
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

**Refrain    Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,  
              born is the King of Israel.**

They look-ed up and saw a star  
shining in the east, beyond them far;  
and to the earth it gave great light,  
and so it continued both day and night. **(refrain)**

This star drew nigh to the northwest;  
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,  
and there it did both stop and stay,  
right over the place where Jesus lay. **(refrain)**

Then let us all with one accord  
sing praises to our heav'nly Lord,  
that hath made heav'n and earth of naught,  
and with His blood mankind hath bought. **(refrain)**

## INVOCATION

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

## OPENING SCRIPTURES

Psalms 26:8; 1 Kings 8:27; Matthew 1:23; John 1:14

- P** O LORD, I love the habitation of Your house and the place where Your glory dwells.
- C** Will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You; how much less this house that I have built!
- P** "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).
- 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 ABSOLUTION

Isaiah 52:7; John 1:12–13, adapt.

- P** Let us confess our sins to God, our Father.
- C** Heavenly Father, You sent Your Son, the Word, to become flesh and dwell among us. We confess we struggle to see His glory when life is difficult or when we are suffering. We look elsewhere for grace and truth instead of focusing on Your eternal Word. We have heard the Good News and struggle to share it. Forgive us, for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Shine the light of Your love on us and dispel the darkness of our hearts.

**P** People of God, I have good news for you, “Your God reigns.” In the mercy of our almighty God, Jesus Christ was born to die for you, and for His sake, God forgives you all your sins.

**C** Alleluia! Amen!

**P** To all who receive Him, who believe in His name, He gives the right to become children of God, who are born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man but of God.

**C** Alleluia! Amen!

### “Gentle Mary Laid Her Child”

LSB 374

- 1 Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;  
There He lay, the Undefined, to the world a stranger.  
Such a babe in such a place, can He be the Savior?  
Ask the saved of all the race who have found His favor.
- 2 Angels sang about His birth, wise men sought and found Him;  
Heaven’s star shone brightly forth glory all around Him.  
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight, heard the angels singing;  
All the plains were lit that night, all the hills were ringing.
- 3 Gentle Mary laid her child Lowly in a manger;  
He is still the Undefined But no more a stranger.  
Son of God of humble birth, beautiful the story;  
Praise His name in all the earth; hail the King of glory!

“Gentle Mary Laid Her Child”, Text: Joseph Simpson Cook, 1859–1933, Text: Public domain

### SALUTATION

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** And also with you.

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

**P** Let us pray.

O God of God, O Light of Light, Your coming brings life and salvation to humanity. Enable us to properly praise You for how You have revealed Yourself, that we still marvel at the mysterious majesty of eternal God made flesh—namely, in Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

## + THE WORD +

### OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 52:7-10 (ESV)

<sup>7</sup>How beautiful upon the mountains  
are the feet of Him who brings good news,  
who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness,  
who publishes salvation,  
who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.”

<sup>8</sup>The voice of Your watchmen—they lift up their voice;  
together they sing for joy;  
for eye to eye they see  
the return of the LORD to Zion.

<sup>9</sup>Break forth together into singing,  
you waste places of Jerusalem,  
for the LORD has comforted His people;  
He has redeemed Jerusalem.

<sup>10</sup>The LORD has bared His holy arm  
before the eyes of all the nations,  
and all the ends of the earth shall see  
the salvation of our God.

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

### EPISTLE READING

Hebrews 1:1-12 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup>Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup>but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom also He created the world. <sup>3</sup>He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature, and He upholds the universe by the word of His power. After making purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, <sup>4</sup>having become as much superior to angels as the name He has inherited is more excellent than theirs. <sup>5</sup>For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are My Son, today I have begotten You”? Or again, “I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son”? <sup>6</sup>And again, when He brings the firstborn into the world, He says, “Let all God’s angels worship Him.” <sup>7</sup>Of the angels He says, “He makes His angels winds, and His ministers a flame of fire.” <sup>8</sup>But of the Son He says, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Your kingdom. <sup>9</sup>You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness beyond Your companions.”

<sup>10</sup>And, “You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of Your hands; <sup>11</sup>they will perish, but You remain; they will all wear out like a garment, <sup>12</sup>like a robe You will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will have no end.”

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## HOLY GOSPEL

John 1:1-18 (ESV)

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

**C** Glory to You, O Lord.

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. <sup>4</sup>In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. <sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness, to bear witness about the Light, that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He was not the Light, but came to bear witness about the Light. <sup>9</sup>The true Light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world did not know Him. <sup>11</sup>He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. <sup>14</sup>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. <sup>15</sup>(John bore witness about Him, and cried out, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because He was before me.’”) <sup>16</sup>And from His fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup>For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, He has made Him known.

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C** Praise to You, O Christ.

## **“A Great and Mighty Wonder”**

LSB 383

- 1 A great and mighty wonder,  
A full and holy cure:  
The virgin bears the infant  
With virgin honor pure!

### **Refrain**

**Proclaim the Savior’s birth:  
“To God on high be glory  
And peace to all the earth!”**

- 2 The Word becomes incarnate  
And yet remains on high,  
And cherubim sing anthems  
To shepherds from the sky. **(refrain)**
- 4 Since all He comes to ransom,  
By all be He adored,  
The infant born in Beth’em,  
The Savior and the Lord. **(refrain)**
- 5 All idols then shall perish  
And Satan’s lying cease,  
And Christ shall raise His scepter,  
Decreeing endless peace. **(refrain)**

“A Great and Mighty Wonder”, Text: Germanus, c. 634–c. 734; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–66, alt., Text: Public domain

## **SERMON “IN THE FLESH”**

Pr. Jim Sprengle  
John 1:1-18

## **“What Child Is This”**

LSB 370

- 1 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!

- 2    Why lies He in such mean estate  
       Where ox and ass are feeding?  
 Good Christian, fear; for sinners here  
       The silent Word is pleading.  
 Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,  
 The cross be borne for me, for you;  
       Hail, hail the Word made flesh,  
       The babe, the son of Mary!
- 3    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!

"What Child Is This", Text: William C. Dix, 1837–98, Text: Public domain

## **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.)*

### **"When Love Was Born"**

B. Herms, M. Schultz, S. Lewis

**Alexa Sprengle, solo**

## **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

- P** Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Father in heaven, with great joy and humble awe we acknowledge Your dear Son to be the Word made flesh. We rejoice that because He is now our Brother, we have become Your sons and daughters through Baptism. Keep us, Your children, in true faith in You and in fervent love for one another. Lord, in Your mercy,

- C** **hear our prayer.**



**P** Merciful God, as our families gather in this holy season, give us patience, that we may be slow to judge and quick to forgive. Comfort the lonely with Your presence, and help us extend the welcome of our homes and the friendship of Your grace. Make us mindful of those less fortunate, who celebrate this blessed feast in poverty and want, and teach us to be generous. Accept with our offerings the living sacrifice of our bodies to Your service and our voices in praise and thanksgiving. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C** **hear our prayer.**

**P** God of peace, look on the nations of this world. Give them a spirit of peace so that conflicts would cease, and reveal through the birth of Jesus Your great salvation. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C** **hear our prayer.**

**P** Hear us, O Lord, for the sake of Your Son, the Word become flesh, the Savior of the nations, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, ever one God.

**C** **Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER (sung)**

(tune: "It Came Upon A Midnight Clear")

**Our Father, Lord on Heav'n's high throne,**

**Most holy be Your name.**

**Your kingdom come. Your will be done**

**On earth—in Heav'n the same.**

**Give us this day the food we need;**

**Forgiven may we be;**

**Into temptation do not lead;**

**From evil set us free.**

**Yours is the kingdom; unto You**

**In grateful love we bow;**

**And Yours the pow'r; Lord, let us view**

**Your mighty presence now.**

**The glory Yours; Your praise be sung**

**By angel hosts and men**

**In ev'ry land, by ev'ry tongue**

**Forevermore! Amen.**

## SENDING

- P** And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.
- C** **For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.**
- P** And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,
- C** **Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.**
- P** Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
- C** **Come, adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.**
- P** For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called:
- C** **Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.**
- P** Let us go forth and share the gift of Christ that is not just for a nation, or a people, or a specific tongue or race, but Good News for the whole world.
- C** **Joy to the world, the Lord has come!**

## BENEDICTION

- P** Christmas peace and joy through God's infinite love given in Christ, His only-begotten Son, be yours; and the blessing of God Almighty—Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit—be with you and abide with you forever.
- C** **Amen.**

## “Good Christian Men, Rejoice”

Good Christian men, rejoice  
With heart and soul and voice!  
Give ye heed to what we say:  
Jesus Christ is born today!  
Ox and ass before Him bow,  
And He is in the manger now.  
Christ is born today!  
Christ is born today!

Good Christian men, rejoice  
With heart and soul and voice!  
Now ye hear of endless bliss:  
Jesus Christ was born for this!  
He hath opened heaven's door  
And man is blessed forevermore.  
Christ was born for this!  
Christ was born for this!

Good Christian men, rejoice  
With heart and soul and voice!  
Now ye need not fear the grave:  
Jesus Christ was born to save!  
Calls you one and calls you all  
To gain His everlasting hall.  
Christ was born to save!  
Christ was born to save!

## **DISMISSAL**

**P** Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**G** Thanks be to God!

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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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.

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