

Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church



CHRISTMAS EVE DECEMBER 24, 2024

FAMILY CANDLELIGHT SERVICE 10:30 p.m.

**PASTORS - The Rev. Daniel P. Smail & The Rev. Ellen S. Lundie
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC - Laura M. Henri**

**1719 Mt. Royal Boulevard
Glenshaw, Pennsylvania 15116
412-486-0550 E-Mail: office@belc.org
Web Page: www.belc.org**

COMMUNION SERVICE

10:30 p.m.

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Preludes

Simon Cummings and Nicole Myers, cello

SENIOR CHOIR

with Violinist Josef Mueller and Cellists Simon Cummings and Nicole Myers

Cradle Hymn, (Senior Choir Ladies) Kim André Arnesen

Silent Night, arr. Dan Forrest

Of the Father's Love Begotten Prudentis, setting- Crosier

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

* HYMN #283 “O Come, All Ye Faithful”

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

INVOCATION

P Who are these angels who come to earth,

C bearing the news of the Christ child's birth?

P Who are these shepherds who run to see,

C and worship the babe on bended knee?

P Who is this child, so small, so slight,

C of whom the angels sang that night?

P Who is this king, a manger his throne,

C: who humbles himself to make us his own?

P: Who is this God who sends a Son

C into our midst, the promised one?

GREETING

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God
sent from heaven above, be with you all.

C And also with you.

A Christmas Gloria

Paul Gibson
from the traditional French carol

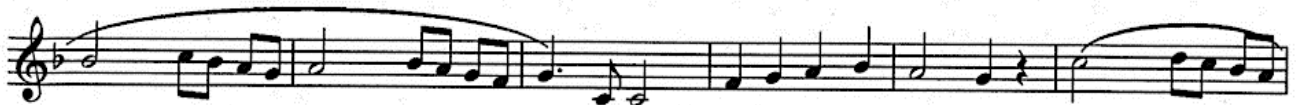
Joyous, but not too fast



Glo-ry to God in the high - est, peace to his



peo-ple on earth. Lord God heav'n-ly King, might-y God and Fa - ther, Glo -



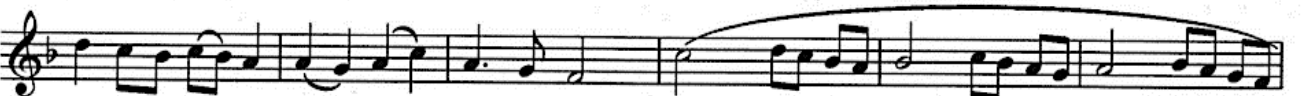
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- ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o. We



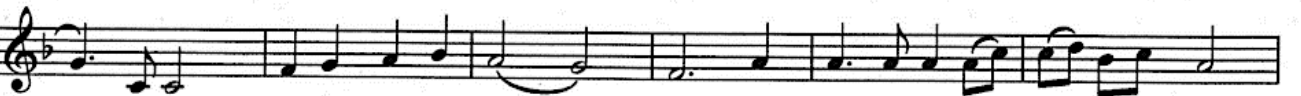
wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry. Lord Je - sus Christ on - ly



Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God Lamb of God. Glo - - - - -



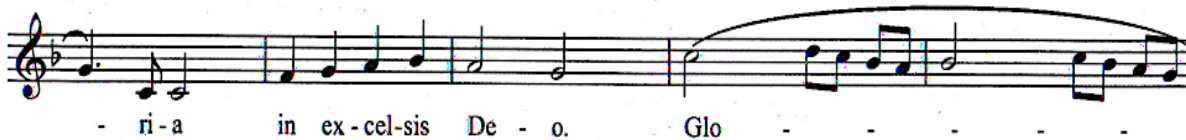
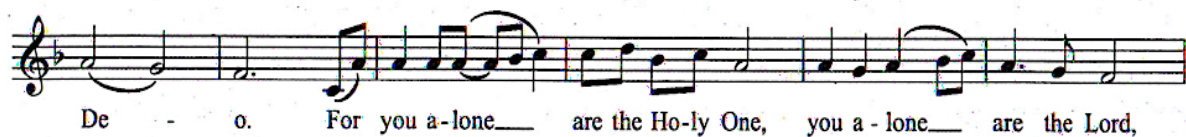
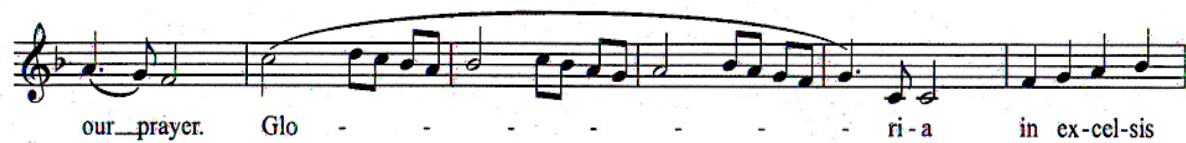
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- ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o. You take a - way the sin_ of the world:



have mer - cy on_ us; you are seat - ed at the Fa - ther's right hand: re - ceive



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*PRAYER OF THE DAY

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

This poem promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth of a royal child with a name full of promise. While Judah's king will practice justice and righteousness, the real basis for faith lies in God's passion for the people: The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this!

A reading from Isaiah,

²The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness —
on them light has shined.

³You 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.

⁴For 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.

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

⁶For 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.

⁷His 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.
A: The word of the Lord.
C: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 96 – Congregation Refrain:

TODAY IS BORN OUR SAVIOR

Psalm 96 James Chepponis

To - day is born our Sav-ior, our
Sav - ior Christ the Lord.

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* HYMN #270 “*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*” (verses 1-2)

1 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!"

2 Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail, incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel! *Refrain*

***HOLY GOSPEL**

Luke 2:1-20

P: The holy gospel according to Luke,

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph 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. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And 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. ⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth 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 heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" ¹⁵When 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." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The 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.

HYMN #270 “*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*” (verse 3)

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*

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.

SERMON – The Rev. Ellen S. Lundie

HYMN OF THE DAY #300 The First Noel

***NICENE CREED**

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation

**he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven**

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

***PRAYERS**

Filled with good news of great joy, let us offer our prayers for the church, the earth, and all people.

A brief silence.

Angels sing with praise, and shepherds run with haste. As we glorify and praise you in this place, send us into the world, proclaiming the salvation you have revealed this night. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

The seas roar, and the trees of the forest sing for joy. As creation resounds with praise, inspire us with awe, reverence, and a renewed care for all that fills the fields, skies, and seas. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

The nations declare your glory. Uphold the leaders of the earth with your justice and righteousness. Break the rod of the oppressor in every land, and bring peace where there is conflict. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

The holy family finds shelter around the animals' manger. Draw near to persons experiencing homelessness, those who are alone this holiday season, and all for whom this world makes no room. Wrap all your children in bands of love and mercy. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

A child is born for us and light shines on the weary. Watch over those who give birth this night and attend to those who are dying. Be present in our joys and in our sorrows. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

The heavenly host praises you. With thanksgiving for Mary, Joseph, and all your saints, sustain us in the blessed hope revealed this night. Fashion us by their example into a people zealous for good deeds, sharing your love and mercy with all. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

We commend these prayers to you, O God, trusting your grace made known to all, through the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

*SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always

C: And also with you.

SENIOR CHOIR – *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*, Neil Harmon

OFFERING *Offering boxes are located in the narthex and back of the sanctuary.*

*OFFERTORY PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

C: **God of heaven and earth,
from the beginning, you have called forth life,
in which you take delight.**

**The trees, the fields, and the seas sing for joy.
Bless now these gifts, received from your bounty,
that we may join the chorus of creation
to tell of your salvation from day to day.
Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

*GREAT THANKSGIVING Page 107

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

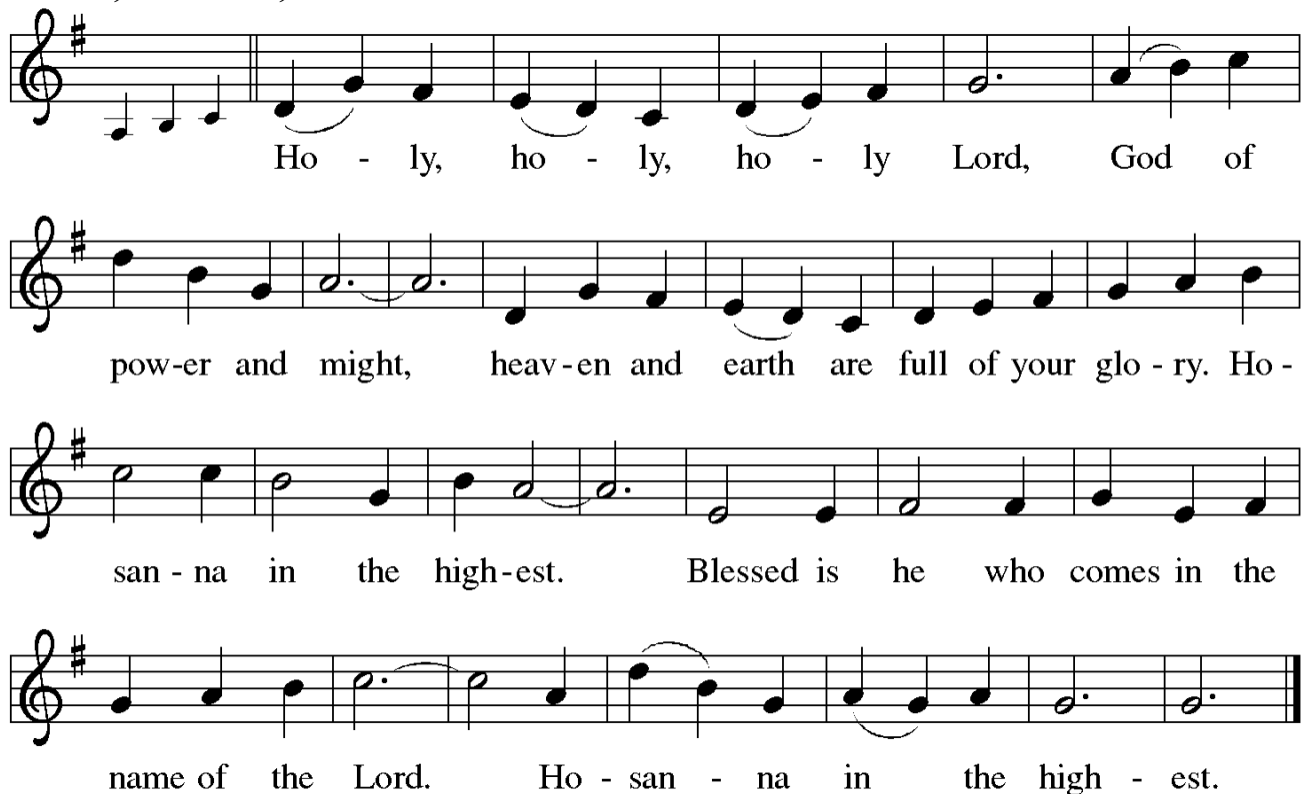
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

THE PROPER PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy... and join their unending hymn.

*HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of
pow - er and might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high - est. Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Holy God,
Creator of all and Source of life,
at the birth of time
your word brought light into the world.
In the fullness of time,
you sent your Word, born of Mary,
to shine in our darkness
and to make us your daughters and sons.

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.

Remembering, therefore,
his birth and life among us,
his death and resurrection,
we await his coming again
when all things will be restored in him.

By your Spirit bless us and this bread and cup,
that, held and nourished by you,
we may live as your children,
shining with the light of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church,
both now and forever.

Amen

LORD'S PRAYER

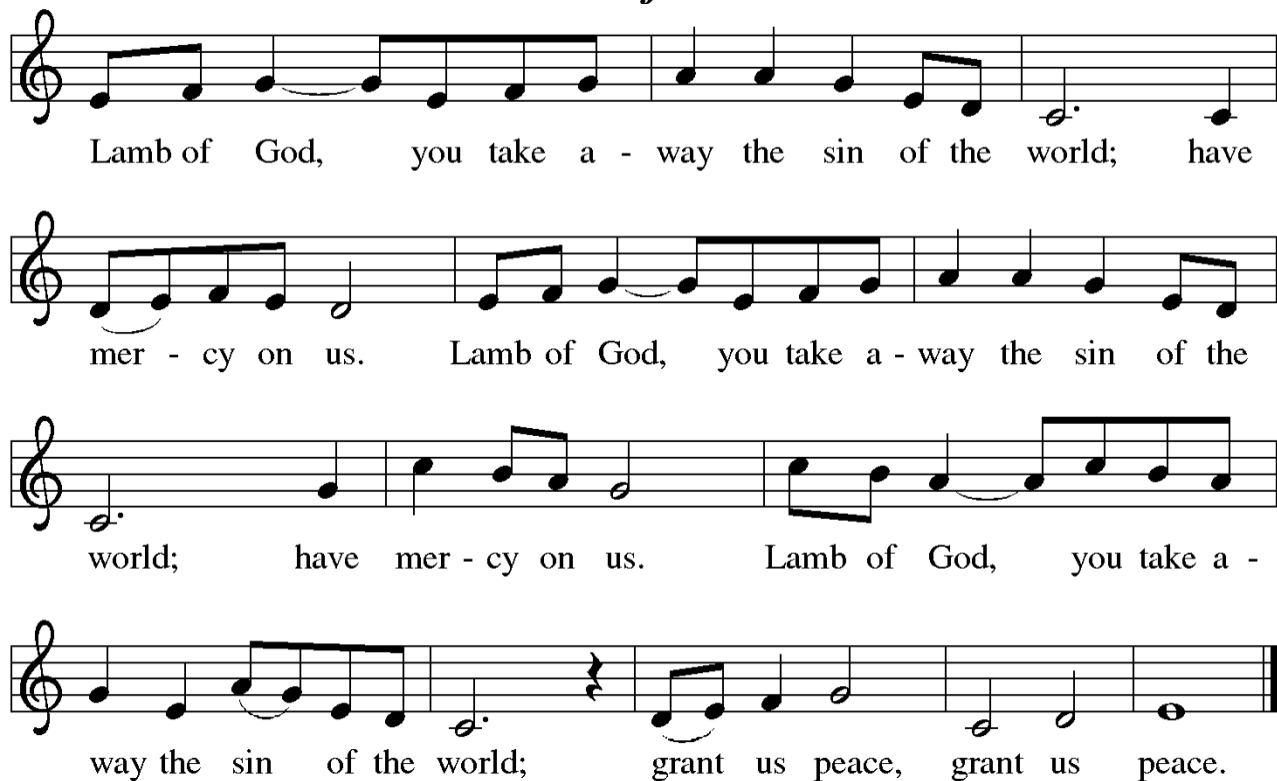
**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**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.**

AGNUS DEI

“Lamb of God”



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a -
way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION

SOLO

O Holy Night *Bach/Gounod, arr. Steven Sharp Nelson & Jon Schmidt*
Lexie Hellinger, soprano and Nicole Myers, cello

SENIOR CHOIR – *Lo, How a Rose*, M. Praetoris

Hymn #277 *Away in a Manger*

Text: North American, 19th cent.

SENIOR CHOIR – *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, arr. Dan Forrest

*POST COMMUNION BLESSING

*POST COMMUNION PRAYER

L: Let us pray. God our redeemer,
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**

* Distribution of the Candles

The pastor lights a candle from the altar candles the ushers light their candles from the pastor's candle. The ushers then light the candle of each worshiper nearest the aisle. Lighted candles should not be dipped to avoid wax dripping on the floor. The unlighted candles should be dipped when lighting it from a neighbor's candle.

POST COMMUNION HYMN #281 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,
heavenly hosts, sing alleluia!

Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, Loves pure light
radiant beams from your holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace.

Jesus, Lord at your birth. Jesus, Lord, at your birth!

* **BENEDICTION**

P: The God of love,
Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
lavish you with grace,
illumine your path,
and increase your joy,
today and always.

HYMN NO. 267 Joy to the World

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king: let every 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.

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, far as the curse is found, far as, 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, and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.

***DISMISSAL**

A: Go in peace. The Word of God dwells in you richly.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE - *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring

Josef Mueller, violin

*Standing +Kneeling

WE CORDIALLY WELCOME those who are guests to share the joys of our Christmas Worship. We hope you will come and visit with us again.

Nativity Scene in the Sanctuary

After being displayed for two weeks in the Narthex to be shared with all visitors to our congregation, our beautiful Nativity Scene has been moved into the Sanctuary for the Christmas services. By way of keeping our history alive, this complete Nativity set including the Holy Family, shepherds, wisemen and all the animals was gifted to Bethlehem in 2014 in Memory of Lois Huddleston.

The Stable background to display the Nativity was hand-crafted the following year by Ron D'Alessandro.

Weekend Worship

Please plan to join us for Lessons & Carols

Saturday, Dec. 28th at 6:00pm or Sunday, Dec. 29th at 9:30am

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

Using their holiday and vacation time available to our staff, the church office will be closed on the following days for the holidays:

The office will be closed Dec. 25th, 26th, Dec. 27th and Dec. 31st.

**The office will be open regular hours (with limited staff)
Monday, Dec. 30th**

**Jan. 2, 2024 we begin our regular schedule M-F 8:30am-3:30pm
with lunch from 12:30-1:30pm. (with full staff)**

2024 OFFERING INFORMATION

Offerings that you want counted for income tax purposes in 2024 must arrive in the church office in your **2024** envelopes by **Sunday, Dec. 29th**. Anything received after this date or that gets put in the offering the following week will get counted as offerings for 2025.