

A Service of Lessons and Carols

December 31, 2023



Masks are optional but available in the narthex for anyone who feels more comfortable taking that precaution for themselves or on behalf of others.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Before The Manger

Roger C. Wilson

OPENING DIALOG...

P We hear again the good news the angels proclaimed: God has come for all people through the birth of the one named Jesus. Through Bethlehem's manger God comes into the chaos, messiness, and vulnerability of the world. In all things and at all times, we rejoice that God comes to save us and reigns in love. We come to adore Jesus who is Savior, Christ, and Lord.

<i>Hymn</i>	<i>Once in Royal David's City</i>	<i>(vs 1 & 2) ELW #269</i>
1 st Reading	Genesis 1:1-5	
<i>Hymn</i>	<i>Love Has Come</i>	<i>(vs 1 & 3) ELW #292</i>
2 nd Reading	Isaiah 9:2, 6-7	
<i>Hymn</i>	<i>Lo, How a Rose Is Growing</i>	<i>(vs 1 & 2) ELW #272</i>
3 rd Reading	Micah 5:2-5a	
<i>Hymn</i>	<i>O Little Town of Bethlehem</i>	<i>(vs 1 & 4) ELW #279</i>
4 th Reading	Luke 1:26-35, 38	
<i>Hymn</i>	<i>Hark! The Herald Angels</i>	<i>(vs 1 & 2) ELW #270</i>
5 th Reading	Luke 2:1, 3-7	
<i>Hymn</i>	<i>From the Realms of Glory</i>	<i>(vs 1, 2,3) ELW #275</i>
6 th Reading	Luke 2:8-16	
<i>Hymn</i>	<i>In the Bleak Midwinter</i>	<i>(vs 1 & 3) ELW #294</i>
7 th Reading	Matthew 2:1-12	
<i>Hymn</i>	<i>We Three Kings</i>	<i>(vs 1 & 5) WOV #646</i>
8 th Reading	John 1:1-14	
<i>*Hymn</i>	<i>Good Christian Friend, Rejoice</i>	<i>(vs 1 & 2) ELW #385</i>

***APOSTLES' CREED**

P: Let us confess our faith through the words of the Apostles' Creed.

C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.* On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

***THE PRAYERS**

A With wonder and thanksgiving for Christ's coming into the world, we pray for the church, the life of the earth, and the whole human family.

A The church in every land makes a joyful noise to herald your coming, O God. We give thanks for poets, musicians, and hymn writers who give voice to our praise, and for all who lead the church's worship. God of grace, **C hear our prayer.**

A This day dawns with new hope for all living things, and from ocean depths to mountain peaks the earth rejoices. Inspire in us an urgent zeal to protect the planet and renew its resources. God of grace, **C hear our prayer.**

A Bring heavenly peace to this world and an end to armed conflict. Raise up leaders in every nation who will honor human rights and establish equal justice for all people. Give courage to all who speak out against oppression and advocate for the powerless. God of grace, **C hear our prayer.**

A Guard the lives of any in danger, especially those who work to protect others. Lead any who are in desperate circumstances to sanctuary, help, and safety. Grant rest to the weary and soothe those who are troubled. God of grace, **C hear our prayer.**

A Bless all who gather to worship on this holy day. Be present at our tables and celebrations, and watch over those who travel. Sustain charities, outreach ministries, and food pantries that give generously to people in need. God of grace, **C hear our prayer.**

A In Christ we have beheld your glory, full of grace and truth. We give thanks for those in every generation who reflect the light of Christ. May their witness shine forth in our time. God of grace, **C hear our prayer.**

P Pondering the mystery of eternal love made flesh in Christ Jesus, we commend all for whom we pray to the mercy of God. **C Amen**

***THE PEACE**

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

C: And also with you.

*Please share the peace with those around you using a greeting
that is comfortable for both you and them.*

***OFFERTORY PRAYER**

*An offering plate is located near the entrance to the nave;
we offer thanks for the abundance God has first shown us:*

*A: Let us pray... God our provider, by your merciful hand abundance springs up from
the earth. Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty. Let them be a sign of
your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior.*

C: Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.

PROPER PREFACE

*P It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer
thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everliving God. You
comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will
also make all things new in the day when he comes again to judge the world in
righteousness.*

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER & WORDS OF INSTITUTION

*P Holy God, the Beginning and the End, our Salvation and our Hope, we praise you
for creating a world of order and beauty.*

*When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair, you sent the prophets to proclaim
your justice and mercy.*

*At this end of the ages your Son Jesus came to bring us your love and to heal all the
suffering world.*

*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 life, death, and resurrection, we await his coming again in righteousness and peace.

Send your Spirit on us and on this bread and wine we share: strengthen our faith, increase our hope, and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son.

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

LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

C Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

INVITATION

P Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God, who has come to save you.

COMMUNION HYMN

What Child Is This

ELW # 296

BLESSING

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

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A *Let us pray...* Faithful God, in this meal you have remembered your mercy, bringing heaven to earth in the body and blood of Christ. As we wait for the day when all your promises will be fulfilled, sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery.

Guide us toward your promised future, coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. **C Amen.**

BLESSING

P God the eternal Word, who dwells with us in Jesus, and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit, ✠ bless you now and forever. **C Amen.**

Hymn

Go Tell It on the Mountain

ELW #290

***THE DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace. Rejoice in Christ our Savior. **C Thanks be to God.**

***POSTLUDE**

Tell The Good News

Lani Smith

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Also, please be advised that our parking lot has surveillance cameras and
that our worship service is video recorded and/or live-streamed on social media.

Today's Altar Flowers are placed to the Glory of God and in memory of my husband, parents and my 3 sisters by Ginny Sell and Family.

Serving God and Us

Our Ministers - the People of St. Matthew
Our Pastor – Rev. Traci Marriott
Our Organists – Mary Nelson, DeAnna Cree
Our Missionary Family – Robin Abrol, On Eagle's Wings
Our Administrative Assistant – Jen Ripka
Our Assistant Administrative Assistant – Laura Orczeck
Our Sexton – Phil Claar
Our Assisting Minister – Tina Harclerode
Our Lectors – Mary Baker, Olivia Day
Our Usher – Tina Harclerode
Our Altar Guild – Jean Sinal, Cindy Snyder and Jane Fagans
Our Audio/Video Tech – Camden Kuster
Our Offering Counters – Jim Barley, Beth Garner

Fourth Quarter Ventures in Faith to “United Lutheran Seminaries”

This Week at St. Matthew:

814-793-2413: Office Hours

Pastor Traci – Wed. 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Jen – Tues. – Fri. 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

This Week Events

Today – Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Service of Lessons & Carols with Communion 10:30 a.m.

Monday – New Year's Day
Office Closed

Thursday – Food Pantry, Allegheny St. 9:00-11:00 a.m.

Sunday – Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.

Prayers are needed for our homebound: Carl Alexy, Vivian Beach, Fred Brandenburg, Linda Claar, Mary Creps, Gerry Girolami, Betty Helsel, Ruth Johnson, Audrey & Dan Kensinger, Janet Kreider, Ginny Sell, Bill Stahl.

Prayer Concerns: Amy & Family, Randy Barrett, Caleb, Diane Cappel, Ted Chipperfield, Phillip Claar, Dave Clayton, Greg Comer, Terry & Cathy Creek, Greg Dick, Brian Fleck, Ron Focht, Jim Fritz, Brenda Harley & Family, Rodger Hoover, Marilyn Horton, Baby James, Darren Kreutzer, Linda Lehman, Carrie Lively, Kristen Malloy, Ruth Marshall, Karrie McCall & Family, Betty McDowell, Rick McIntyre, Aunt Mica, Carl Miner, Charles Minnick & Family, Nathan, Deb Peters, Bob & Annette Ritchey, Paul Ruth, Dennis Smith (Lock Mtn.) Denny Smith (Shelly Hill), Linda Smith, Cindy Thomas, Tiffany Townsend, Lyndsay Tremmel, Drew Wenzel, Craig Werner, Jean White, Joel Widmann, Pete Williams, Pat Winston, Tom Woodrow, Jody Zelanko, and for our **Missionaries: Robin Abrol, On Eagle's Wings.**

Away at School: Christopher Bush, Olivia Day, Camryn Gates, Elizabeth Haffling, Jeff Hoenstine.

Those Serving in our Armed Forces: Bradley Buchart, Melody Estep, Colin Guyer, Nathan Smith (Germany).

Pastor Ed's Memorial Service

A Memorial Service will be held for Pastor Ed Harshbarger here at St. Matthew Lutheran Church, on January 13, 2024 at 11AM. Family will receive visitors starting at 10AM. In lieu of flowers, a monetary donation may be made to Camp Sequanota, PO Box 245, Jennerstown, PA 15547.

Martinsburg Food Pantry

Volunteers from St. Matthew will be helping and assisting in the distribution of food on Thursdays, January 4 and January 18 from 9:00 until 11:00 a.m. If you would like to help, please let Elaine Buchart know for any of these dates.



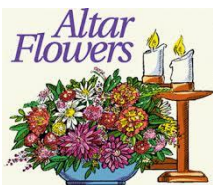
January items most needed are: Sunny D—40 Oz Drink, Ravioli, Pasta Sides, Personal Items (Toothpaste), Cleaning Supplies (Detergent)

Our thanks to all who have contributed food, supplies, or monetary donations during this past year! We ask for your continued support and prayers in serving needy families in 2024.

Linda K. Smith

Church Messenger

The January 2024 *Messenger* is now available at the St. Matthew **Website** (stmatthewlc.com), and on your recent **Email** message from St. Matthew by using the link listed in the body of the message. A paper copy of the *Messenger* is available in the news rack in the church Narthex. By calling the church office at (814-793-2413), you can request a paper copy to be sent by mail to your home. Do not hesitate to call the church office if you need help in securing a copy of the *Messenger*. Your readership and articles are always appreciated.



The 2024 Altar Flower chart is posted on the Narthex bulletin board. Altar Flowers are a perfect way to remember loved ones. Please sign up now for the Sunday you wish to place flowers on the Altar. Price - \$40.00