



St. Matthew Lutheran Church
Christmas Eve Holy Communion Candlelight Service
December 24, 2023
7:00 p.m.

E-mail: stmatthewmartinsburg@gmail.com

Website: www.STMATTHEWLC.com

Pastor Traci Marriott 814-935-9267

9:30 Sunday School

10:30 a.m. Worship

NOTES ON THE SERVICE

- At the end of the service please return the candle and candleholder to an Usher as you leave.
- Individual candles will be lit following the Post Communion Prayer
- Safety Precaution: When lighting candles, tilt the *unlighted* candle over the burning one.

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

AN * INDICATES TO STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*INVOCATION AND ABSOLUTION

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

*HYMN

O, Come, All Ye Faithful

ELW # 283



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!

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P *Let us pray . . .* 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. **C Amen**

THE FIRST LESSON *Isaiah 9:2-7*

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.

THE GOSPEL

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

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

The Reading of the Gospel of St. Luke 2:1-20

¹In 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.

THE HOMILY

Pastor Traci Marriott

*HYMN

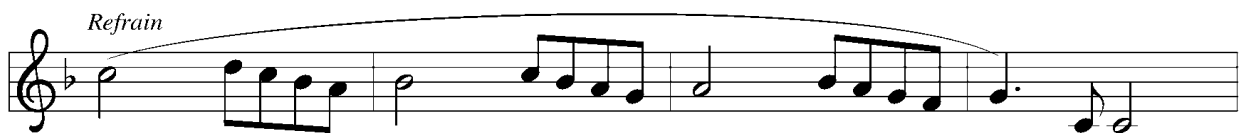
Angels We Have Heard on High



1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
 2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;



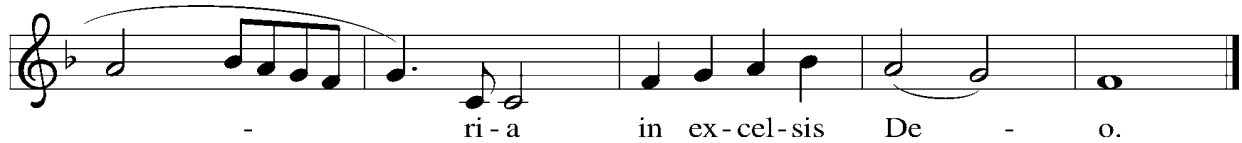
and the moun - tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
 What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
 come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.



Glo - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o; glo -



Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864
Music: GLORIA, French carol

THE NICENE CREED

P Let us confess our faith through the words of the Nicene Creed.

C 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; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man.

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. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He 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

*THE PRAYERS

P 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.

P 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.**

P 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.**

P 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.**

P 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. Hear us, O God. **C Your mercy is great.**

P 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.

P 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.**

P Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace. **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 of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. **C: Amen.**

***THE 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 him thanks and praise.

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, through Christ our Lord.

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.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER & WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P Holy God, Creator of all and Source of life, in the beginning your word brought light into the whole 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: 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. **C Amen**

***LORD'S PRAYER**

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

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

***INVITATION TO THE TABLE**

P Glory to God in the highest! Come to the table of peace.

C Amen

***THE POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

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

P *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. **C Amen**

(INDIVIDUAL CANDLES WILL BE LIGHTED DURING THE READING.)

***HYMN**

Silent Night, Holy Night!



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,



Hold - er 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: STILLE NACHT, Franz Gruber, 1787–1863

***BENEDICTION**

P God bless you and keep you, ✚ Jesus grant you grace and truth, and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts, now and forever. **C Amen**

(INDIVIDUAL CANDLES ARE EXTINGUISHED.)

***SENDING SONG**

Joy to the World

ELW # 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



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.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792-1872

***THE DISMISSAL**

P Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.

C Thanks be to God.

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Also, please be advised that our parking lot has surveillance cameras and
that our worship service is video recorded.

Today's Altar Flowers are placed to the Glory of God and in honor of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Happy Birthday Jesus! from Tina Harclerode.

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 Financial Bookkeeper – Laura Orczeck

Our Sexton – Phil Claar

Our Assisting Minister – TBD

Our Lector – A J Hoenstine

Our Acolytes – Jay Hoenstine, Mace Baker, Max Baker

Our Usher – TBD

Our Altar Guild – Jean Sinal, Cindy Snyder and Jane Fagans

Our Audio/Video Tech – Jay Hoenstine

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

No Regular Office Hours

Pastor Traci can be reached at 814-935-9267

This Week Events

- Today –** Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7:00 p.m.
- Monday –** Christmas Day
Office Closed
Fellowship Hall in use 8 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- Sunday –** Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Service of Lessons & Carols with Communion 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

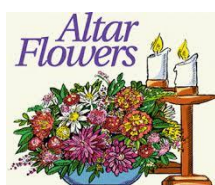
A Memorial Service will be held for Pastor Ed Harshbarger here at St. Matthew Lutheran Church, on January 13, 2024 at 11AM. Family will receive visitors starting at 10AM. In lieu of flowers, a monetary donation may be made to Camp Sequanota, PO Box 245, Jennerstown, PA 15547.

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*On behalf of the Social Ministry Committee and the Fellowship Committee, thank you to everyone who donated cookies, snacks, and candy for the treat boxes that were prepared for the shut-ins. There was a nice variety and plenty to go share. Also, thank you to everyone who helped to prepare the boxes and make the deliveries. I am sure the folks who are unable to get out much were appreciative of the treats and the visits.*

*Jane Fagans*

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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.

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Mitten Tree Thank You!



Many thanks to everyone who contributed generously to the "Mitten Tree" by bringing colorful home-made, bought items, and financial gifts for needy elementary school children! Because of your kindness, these children will have a Warmer Winter!



These items were distributed to Martinsburg and Spring Cove Elementary Schools. The total items received were: 11 pairs mittens, 17 hats/mittens or gloves sets, 8 pairs socks for a total of 36 items.

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



May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ child this Christmas Season.

*From the staff of
St. Matthew Lutheran Church:
Pastor Traci, Jen, Laura, Phil, Mary, De, Camden and Jay.*

Snow Camp 2024

"Sabbath in the Snow"

Friday-Sunday, February 2-4

Camp Sequanota, Jennerstown PA

6th - 12th Grade

Games, Crafts, Food, Sledding, Worship, & Learning
Accommodations in Sequanota's Winterized Cabins

Register from December 15 to January 20 at www.sequanota.com

Families are asked to pay \$10; St. Matthew will cover the rest.

Please contact Pastor Traci with any questions.

****Adult Helper(s) Welcome!****



2024 ELCA Youth Gathering



Please speak with Pastor Traci if you have any interest in attending the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering July 16-20, 2024 in New Orleans.