

Christmas Eve Candle-Light- “The Light of God’s Love Shines”
Immanuel Lutheran Church
at 10:00 p.m. 2025

Opening Prayer **Solo - Jeremy Racine:** *“O Holy Night”*

Invocation: *In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. C: Amen.*

Candle-Light Litany:

P: In the beginning, God proclaimed: **C:** *Let there be light; and light was created.*

P: God saw the light was good **C:** *God separated the light from the darkness.*

P: God placed the sun, moon, and stars into the sky **C:** *He brought light to His creation.*

P: There was the true Light **C:** *Which came into the world to enlighten all mankind.*

P: Jesus said, “I Am the Light of the World” **C:** *He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of Life”.*

P: The Father placed a Star into the Sky **C:** *A Star whose light pointed to the Messiah; who brought heavenly Light into the world.*

Hymn: *“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” 357*

O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to You, O Israel!

O Come, You Dayspring from on high, And light our hearts by drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, And bring the hope found in Your Light!
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to You, O Israel!

O Come, You Light of Nations come Enlighten every heart and home;
Bring righteousness and peace ev’rmore Your Light of Life will now restore.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to You, O Israel!

1. John 1: 1- 9 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the Light, that all might believe through Him. He was not the Light, but came to bear witness to the Light. The true Light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world did not know Him.

A Light started to Shine- The promise in Genesis, “Abraham”

God’s Promise was given to Abraham. He would have a son by the will and work of the Father. God was following through with the promise made to Abraham that he would be the father of many nations. Though Sarah was 90 and Abraham was 100, God made it possible, by His grace and will, for them to be blessed with a child whom God would use to be in the line to the Savior. The Light of Life and the miracle birth of Isaac; point us to God’s hand guiding all things, so His Light would come into the world.

2. Genesis 12: 1-3 Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land I show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and Him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

3. Genesis 17: 15-19 And God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her, I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.” Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, “Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old bear a child? And Abraham said to God, “Oh that Ishmael might live before you!” God said, “No, but Sarah your wife shall bear a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him.”

Hymn: *Tune 374 “God the Father”*

God the Father gave His Word, Sarah would be given
A child who would bring new worth God’s blessing from heaven.
God said a child would be born Isaac would be his name
God will bind Himself to him, So His name he would proclaim.

God’s loving hand would be shown Through His care and blessing
He would grant the miracle Through one of His “offspring”.
God was pointing Abraham To the Promised Savior
Who would be born from his own By the Lord’s own favor.

A Light that opened the eyes of the blind: Gentiles

The Light, illumined the minds and the hearts of those, who were not of His chosen people. He gave a Light to the Gentiles to enable them to see and receive His grace and the hope He sent into the world. Jesus came as the Lord of all and His light was sent to open the eyes of all people, all sinners. His light brings the gift of eternal life to those who are lost in sin.

4. Isaiah 9: 2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness on them has light shined.

5. Isaiah 9: 6-7 For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.

Hymn: "O Come, All Ye Faithful" 379 vs. 1-3

God's Light of Salvation- Promised of Old

There was a Light coming into the world. It was unlike any other light that had ever been upon the earth. It was the Light of God, in the form of a Child. It was the Christ-Child, Immanuel, God in the midst of His own people to bring them the only means by which all men could be saved. He came to accomplish the work and plan of the Father to save mankind from their sinfulness and iniquities. It was a promise from of old, but a promise that never wavered or changed. It was in the hands of the loving and gracious Father: which He carried out through His Son.

6. Isaiah 60: 1 – 3 Arise, shine, for your light has come and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you and His glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to Your light, and kings to the brightness of Your rising.

7. Micah 5: 2-5a But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the tribes of Judah, from you shall come forth for me One who is to be the ruler of Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore, He shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people Israel. And He shall stand and shepherd His flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord His God. And they shall dwell secure, for now He shall be great to the ends of the earth. And He shall be their peace.

8. Micah 7: 7-8, 9c But as for me, I look to the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me. Rejoice not over me, O my enemy; when I fall, I shall rise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light to me..... He will bring me out to the light; I shall look upon His vindication.

Hymn: “*O Little Town of Bethlehem*” 361 vs. 1-3

A Light of love given: Joseph

Joseph was a righteous man, a man of faith, which God chose to care for His Son on earth. Joseph was placed into an impossible situation with Mary being pregnant and it was not his own. So God visited him in a dream through an Angel of the Lord and brought the wisdom he needed in order to follow through with his promise of marriage. Joseph’s gift of faith enabled him to accomplish what was being asked of him by the Father. He was blessed with seeing the birth of the Son of God!

9. Matthew 1: 18-25 Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call His name, Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.

10. All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophets: “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel” (which means, “God with us”). When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him: he took her as his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called His name Jesus.

Hymn: “*Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming*” 359 vs. 2, 4

Isaiah was foretold it, The rose I have in mind;
With Mary we behold it, The virgin mother kind,
To show God’s love aright, She bore to us a Savior When half spent was the night.

O Savior, child of Mary, Who felt our human woe;
O Savior, King of Glory, Who does our weakness know;
Bring us at length we pray To the bright courts of heaven And to the endless day.

Light of love: Mary

Mary- *was young, honorable, and a servant of her Lord. God sent the Angel Gabriel to prepare her and help her understand what was going to take place in the coming year. She, the most blessed of all women, was going to conceive and fulfill the Plan of the Father to bring His Son into the world. There is no way anyone could understand how she felt or what she faced. Yet Mary, through the gift of faith, walked the path given her and she was able to “carry” the Son of God, and rejoiced over the wonder of His love and the anticipation of His birth.*

11. Luke 1: 26- 33 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, “Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”

12. Luke 1: 34-38 And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?” And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was barren. For nothing will be impossible with God. And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

Hymn: *“I Gabriel Was Sent to Earth”* Tune 358

I Gabriel was sent to earth To bear good news, the precious birth
I came to see a maiden fair To bring her news so ever rare.

I came to her from God’s own throne My Words were gifts, from Him alone.
His Son was to be born on earth Mary was chosen to give birth.

Mary asked how this e’er could be A man has not been close to me
I told her God alone could bring This life, His Gift, His own offspring.

He was to be the Light of all He would bring glory to a stall
His Light of love would never dim The Light of hope shines forth from Him.

God's Light – Jesus is born as the Light of the world

Mary and Joseph were the most highly blessed of any couple on earth. They shared the birth of their Lord and they looked upon the face of their salvation. His Light was life. He came as a Child, the Christ-Child; the only Son of the Father. The One true Messiah who would bring redemption for His people.

Jesus came into this world as a Jew, born of a Virgin, and declared by God as the King of all people. He came as the humble Child, born in a manger, born as a descendant of David, born in a cattle stall, and laid on hay in a manger. God Almighty- the Light of the World, came into the world in the most humble of means to save His people.

13. Luke 2: 1-7 In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Hymn: “Joy to the World” 387 vs. 1-3

A Heavenly Choirs Sings of the Light that has Come

The Shepherds, raising sheep for temple sacrifice, were chosen by the Father to hear the long promised Messiah had been born. They were chosen to hear the Angels of heaven proclaim the wonder of His birth. They were chosen to help point us to the truth of Christ being the “Shepherd of His Sheep” who had come into the world to care for His people. No other group of human beings has ever experienced anything as awesome as what they were given the blessing of seeing.

14. Luke 2: 8-14 And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angels a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!”

Hymn: “*Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light*” tune 370

Break forth O beauteous heav’nly light And usher in the morning
You shepherds, shrink not with af-fright The day of grace is dawning
This Child is Christ the King Whom Mary holds so lovingly
He, He, is Light Divine, The babe, the son of Mary.

Oh dearest Child, whom we adore Whose grace surpasses measure
Our Sa-vior whom we cherish more Than earth and all its treasure
This Child is Christ the King Whom Mary holds so lovingly
He, He is Light Divine, The Babe, the son of Mary.

All blessing thanks, and praise to Thee Lord Jesus Christ, be given:
Im-man-u-el God’s only Son The Lord of earth and heaven.
This Child is Christ the King Whom Mary holds so lovingly
He, He is Light Divine, The Babe, the son of Mary.

Sermon:	Prayers	Lord’s Prayer
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Confession of Sins *C: Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, have mercy upon us. Forgive us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.*

Absolution: Upon this your confession, I by virtue of my office as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Admonition to Communicants: I exhort you in Christ, that you give attention to the Testament of Christ in true faith, and above all take to heart the Words with which Christ presents His body and blood to us for forgiveness. That you take note of, and give thanks for, the boundless love that He showed us when He saved us from the wrath of God, sin, death, and hell by His blood; and that you then externally receive the bread and wine, that is, His body and blood, as a guarantee and pledge. Let us then in His name, according to His command, and with His own Words administer and receive His Sacrament.

Blessing of the Elements

Distribution- *continuous flow- please come forward, receive the bread and wine, (take the time before the Lord you need)* and then return to your pew. There will be one final blessing for the congregation!

Distribution Hymns: *“Angels We Have Heard on High” 368 ;*

Tune: *“The First Noel”*

The Light of Grace Came down to earth In the form of a baby A miracle birth
God’s Light had come upon the earth To remove the darkness through His birth
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel!

God placed a Light into the sky The miracle star that shown so bright.
And to the earth it gave its light Announcing His birth throughout the night.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel!

The Light of God was in a stall He came to live amongst us all
His light of hope was for mankind To grant new life by His design.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel!

God’s star moved on 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.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel!

Closing Hymn: *“Silent Night, Holy Night” 363 (sung acapella)*

Benediction: *(Sung to tune “Hark the Herald”)*

The Lord bless and keep you near The Lord make His face to shine
On you and be grac-ious to you By His light that is divine
The Lord lift up His fa-vor Now upon you ev-er-more
And give you peace, His true peace, His own gift for all who see.
May He bless you ever more! In His Son, whom we adore. Amen!

Kirk Horstmeyer, Pastor
Beth Vance, Organist

