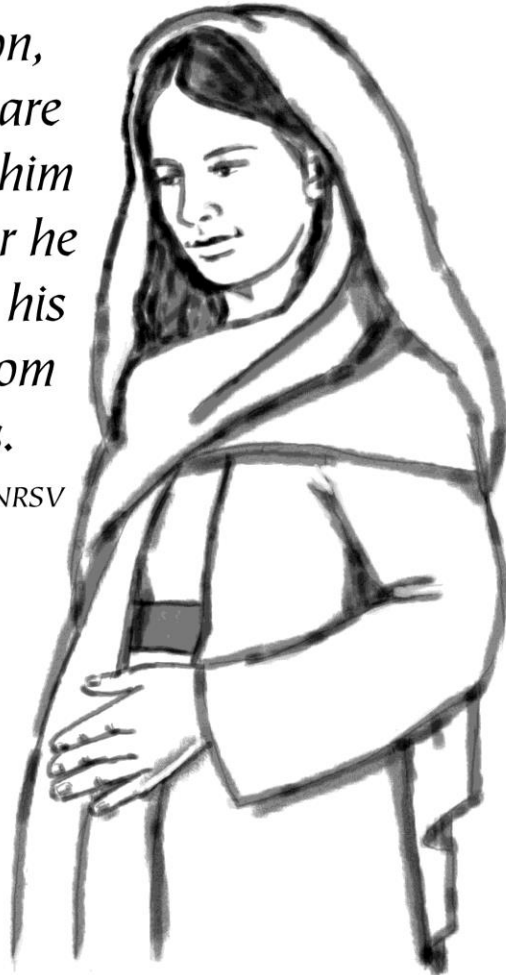


WELCOME TO WORSHIP!

*She will
bear a son,
and you are
to name him
Jesus, for he
will save his
people from
their sins.*

Matthew 1:21, NRSV



Imminent Arrival of Emmanuel

Fourth Sunday in Advent

December 21, 2025



Welcome To Worship

If you are a visitor to our church, we extend you a warm welcome. We are happy you are here. Please fill out a Connect Card to let us know how we might continue to serve you.

It's encouraging to see parents bring their families to worship the Lord. If your child becomes restless, you can use the Family Room to calm them. Quiet bags and children's bulletins are also available to keep little ones busy. Restrooms are located in the hallways along either side of the worship space. For those with special needs, large print copies of the service folder and listening devices are available from the ushers. One of our ushers can help you find the restrooms or family room and answer any other questions.

Service Notes For This Service



Emmanuel is an important person. "Emmanuel" means "God with us." It was a special name given to Jesus already 700 years before he was born. Who is with us when Jesus is with us? God himself. God became a human being in a special way, becoming truly human but remaining God.

God is still with us. We encounter him in a special way when we gather with two or three others in worship. He is so near to us that the thrill of anticipation is almost unbearable. Let it wash over you as you celebrate Christmas this week.

Today's service includes a celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. For personal preparation, consider using the Questions for Examination on page 9 of this service folder or Christian Questions on page 295 of the blue hymnal.

Those Serving in Worship

Pastor Peter Plagenz; Accompanist: Marilyn Foley; Special Music: Emma Schroeder

Acknowledgements

Setting One from Christian Worship. Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the Holy Bible, Evangelical Heritage Version® (EHV®) © 2017 Wartburg Project. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Liturgical and musical settings of Scripture based on text from The Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide.

The Service

Welcome

Hymn

320 As Angels Joyed with One Accord

Stand

In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Confession

God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.

Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

James 4:6,10

Dear friends, the season of Advent is a time of preparation as we await Christ's second coming on the Last Day. We prepare our hearts to meet him as we humbly seek his forgiveness.

Holy God, gracious Father,

I am sinful by nature

and have sinned against you

in my thoughts, words, and actions.

I have not loved you with my whole heart;

I have not loved others as I should.

I deserve your punishment both now and forever.

But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins

with his innocent suffering and death.

Trusting in him, I pray:

God have mercy on me, a sinner.

Silence for meditation and reflection

If you, Lord, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand?

But with you there is forgiveness; therefore, you are feared.

Psalm 130:3,4

Lord, Have Mercy

959 Trisagion
Please join in sts. 2 & 3.

2 *st.1 - Solo*

Ho - ly God. Ho - ly and
might - y. Ho - ly im - mor - tal One, have
mer - cy, have mer - cy on us.

st.2 - All

Ho - ly God. Ho - ly and
might - y. Ho - ly im - mor - tal One, have
mer - cy, have mer - cy on us.

st.3 - All

Ho - ly God. Ho - ly and
might - y. Ho - ly im - mor - tal One, have
mer - cy, have mer - cy, have mer - cy.

2
Have mer - cy, have mer - cy on us.

God's promise to Abraham and his descendants was fulfilled in the coming of his Son. Jesus Christ humbled himself by submitting to God's law. He humbled himself by becoming obedient to death on a cross. God promises to lift up the humble and fill the hungry with good things because of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor,
so that we through his poverty might become rich.**

2 Corinthians 8:9

Even as we await Christ's second coming, he comes to us here and now in the words he gives his messengers to speak: I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

We light four Advent candles remembering Jesus, the Son of God and Son of Mary.
He came to share our humanity.

We remember Jesus, whose name means Savior. He came to save his people from their sins.

We hear his call to give him a place in our hearts.

We light four Advent candles as a sign of our joy and hope.

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.

Through your Word and Spirit may our souls be blessed.

The Word

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Take away the burden of our sins, and make us ready for the celebration of your birth, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

First Reading

Isaiah 7:10–14

Isaiah prophesies that a virgin would give birth to God in the flesh.

¹⁰The LORD spoke to Ahaz again. He said, “Ask for a sign from the LORD your God. Ask for it either in the depths below or in the heights above.”

¹²But Ahaz responded, “I will not ask. I will not test the LORD.”

¹³So Isaiah said:

Listen now, you house of David. Is it not enough for you to test the patience of men? Will you test the patience of my God as well? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give a sign for all of you. Look! The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and name him Immanuel. (EHV®)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

O Antiphons

325 My Soul in Stillness Waits

Please join in the refrain.



For you, O Lord, my soul in still-ness waits; tru-ly my hope is in you.

- 1 O Lord of Light, our only hope of glory,
your radiance shines in all who look to you;
come, light the hearts of all in dark and shadow.
(Refrain)
- 2 O Spring of Joy, rain down upon our spirits;
our thirsty hearts are yearning for your Word;
come, make us whole, be comfort to our hearts.
(Refrain)
- 3 O Root of Life, implant your seed within us,
and in your advent draw us all to you,
our hope reborn in dying and in rising.
(Refrain)
- 4 O Key of Knowledge, guide us in our pilgrimage;
we ever seek, yet unfulfilled remain;
open to us the pathway of your peace.
(Refrain)

The Great O Antiphons of Advent are ancient prayers sung in the final days before Christmas, each addressing Christ with a prophetic title and expressing the church's longing for the Savior to come. Together they proclaim the fullness of who Jesus is as foretold in Scripture. This hymn is a modern alternate presentation of the O Antiphons.

Second Reading

Romans 1:1–7

After thousands of years of God's promises, Paul looks back and sees every one of them kept when God became man.

¹Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ²which he promised in advance through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures. ³This gospel is about his Son, who in the flesh was born a descendant of David, ⁴who in the spirit of holiness was declared to be God's powerful Son by his resurrection from the dead—Jesus Christ, our Lord. ⁵Through him we received grace and the call to be an apostle on behalf of his name, to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles, ⁶including you, who were called by Jesus Christ.

⁷To all those loved by God who are in Rome, called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (EHV®)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

Gospel Acclamation

Matthew 1:23

Alleluia. The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son,
and they will call him Immanuel. Alleluia.

Gospel

Matthew 1:18–25

Joseph knew full well that Mary would give birth to a son who would be Emmanuel, God with us.

¹⁸This is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. His mother, Mary, was pledged in marriage to Joseph. Before they came together, she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Joseph, her husband, was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her. So he decided to divorce her privately. ²⁰But as he was considering these things, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

²²All this happened to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³"Look, the virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son. And they will name him Immanuel," which means, "God with us."

²⁴When Joseph woke up from his sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him. He took Mary home as his wife, ²⁵but he was not intimate with her until she gave birth to her firstborn son. And he named him Jesus. (EHV®)

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

Children's Message

Hymn of the Day

327 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Sermon

Stand

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

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

Be seated

Special Prayers This Week

† For the safety of those traveling this holiday season.

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Prayer of the Church

Today, the prayer will be offered by individual petitions. Each petition will end this way:
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

The final petition will end this way:

...who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Connect Card and Offering

Please take a moment to fill out a Connect Card. After a few moments, the ushers will come forward to collect the offering. You may place your Connect Card and any offering you brought in the plate as it is passed. Moved by God's love in Christ, we offer him our first and best gifts, purely out of thanks to him. If the gospel message has moved you to give and you would like an electronic option, you can scan this QR code with your mobile phone. It will connect you with our website's giving page.



Musical Offering

Peace Came to Earth

Questions for Examination

- † Do I believe that I am a sinner in need of forgiveness?
- † Do I believe that Jesus died on the cross to win forgiveness for me?
- † Do I believe that Jesus offers his true body and blood with the bread and wine in this sacrament?
- † Do I believe this sacrament strengthens my faith and strengthens me to live a God-pleasing life?
- † Am I a member of a church that belongs to the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) or Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS)?
- † If you answered “no” to any of these questions, please hold off on communing with us today. Following worship, the pastor would be happy to explain why we ask you to do this.

The Sacrament

Stand

Preface

CW 165

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared when he called people to repentance and pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

Holy, Holy, Holy

CW 167



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of heav - en - ly hosts:
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na, ho -
san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he,
bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Words of Institution

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my T body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my T blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

O Christ, Lamb of God

CW 169

The musical score is written on five staves in a single system. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is simple and repetitive. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The final note of the piece is a double bar line.

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

Be seated

Distribution

Distribution Hymn

331 *From Heaven Above to Earth I Come*

Stand

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and T give you peace.

Amen.

Be seated.

Hymn

343 Once in Royal David's City



Take Home Questions

Isaiah 7:10-14

1. Read all of chapter 7 along with 1 Kings 16 and 2 Chronicles 28. Discuss the historical setting of King Ahaz's reign and the specific situation behind this prophecy.
2. For what reasons is it striking that God offers Ahaz a sign even when Ahaz refuses to ask for one?
3. In what ways do you experience the temptation to trust in yourself, your control over situations, or other solutions to your problems over and above the promise of "God with us"?

Romans 1:1-7

1. According to Paul in these verses, who is Jesus according to his human nature? Who is he according to his divine nature?
2. For what reasons is it essential for our faith and salvation that Jesus is both fully human and fully God?
3. In what ways does knowing who Jesus truly is deepen the anticipation we feel during Advent and Christmas?

Matthew 1:18-25

1. What fears or concerns do you imagine Joseph wrestling with in this account?
2. How does the angel's message reframe Joseph's situation—and his understanding of what God is doing?
3. What does this account teach us about how God often works quietly, humbly, and through ordinary people?

News & Announcements



This Sunday's Bible Study Hour: Fellowship in Practice

Join us in the cafeteria at 10:30 AM

Holiday Schedule

The church office will be closed Dec. 24, 25, and Jan. 1. It will be open limited hours the remainder of the Christmas break. Our regular schedule will resume Jan. 5. If you need to reach the pastor during this time, please use the contact information on the back page of the bulletin. Also note that there is no Sunday School or Sunday Bible Class on Dec. 28.

Offering Envelopes for the New Year

2026 offering envelopes have been placed in member mailslots. Please DO NOT use them until the new year as you may have been assigned a different number for the new year. More people are giving electronically and do not use envelopes. However, if you did not receive envelopes and would like a box, please contact the church office.

Scrip for the Holidays

Northland Scrip Users, today we are selling from what we have in stock only. You will not be able to order anything extra. No NLHS scrip will be sold on Dec. 28. Orders will resume as usual on Jan. 4. Thank you for supporting Northland by buying scrip!

Last Minute Gift Ideas

Buy tickets for the second **WELS Night at the Bucks** of this basketball season. Join other WELS members on Friday, Jan. 2 for an evening of fellowship, fun, and basketball. Discount tickets are available at www.gofevo.com/WELS2526.

Give a woman in your life an opportunity to rest and be renewed in their faith. Pay the registration fee for the **Pathways to Christ Women's Retreat**. The conference is March 6-8. Learn more at pathwaystochrist.org.

Send your 20-something to the **Awake & Alive Winter Retreat** on Feb. 13-14. Help them grow personally and spiritually. Learn more at awakealive.com.

Buy scrip. Both scrip programs have **gift cards** you can purchase today.

Sunday	9:00 AM	Sunday Worship
	10:30 AM	Bible Study in the cafeteria
	10:30 AM	Sunday School (Grades 3K-5 th)
Monday	1:30 PM	Spiritual Health Group in the chapel at Wisc Rapids Health Services
	6:00 PM	Choir Practice in the balcony
Tuesday	6:45 AM	Men's Bible Study at From the Ground Up Coffee Shop
	6:30 PM	Stephen Ministers in the Resource Center
Wednesday	6:30 PM	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
Thursday	9:00 AM	Christmas Day Worship
Sunday	9:00 AM	Sunday Worship

Attendance Report

Last Week's Attendance: 137

Next Sunday

Theme: Christ the Savior Is Born: Son of God

Readings: Isaiah 63:7-9, Galatians 4:4-7, Matthew 2:13-23



HOLIDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve Service at 6:30 PM

Christmas Morning Service at 9:00 AM

New Year's Eve Service at 6:30 PM



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