



A SAVIOR IS BORN

TO Dwell Among Us

Christmas Day 2022

December 25, 2022



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



For centuries on Christmas Day the Church has read chapter one of St. John's Gospel. There, in just a few simple words, Scripture describes the indescribable: "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us" (John 1:14). The word God had spoken in the Garden, promising to send a Savior who was part of mankind, came true. God himself became flesh and blood—to be born under law, to suffer, and to die that he might redeem us.

The Greek word translated "made his dwelling" can also be translated "pitched his tent." That word describes a temporary dwelling place. God came into our broken world to dwell for a time, so that one day we might go to God's perfect home and dwell for all eternity.

Unlike those Christmas Eve shepherds, we cannot see Christ with our eyes. Yet still he dwells among us. For he is the Word made flesh. As we listen to the Word today, we truly are hearing the voice of Christ. As we celebrate the Lord's Supper, we partake of his true body and blood. In Word and sacrament, still today, our Savior dwells among us, feeding our faith, preparing us for our true home.

Acknowledgements

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NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

Welcome

Hymn

347 Angels from the Realms of Glory

Stand

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

Amen.

Responsive Prayer

Litany of the Incarnation

O Lord, the ruler of ages eternal, you are without beginning or end:

Yet you chose to be born an infant in time.

O Lord, the invisible, you are the One no one has seen or can see:

Yet you assume the face of the son of Mary.

O Lord, the all-powerful, you hold the mountains in the palm of your hand:

Yet you let yourself be wrapped in the blankets of an infant.

O Lord, the eternal glory, innumerable angels acclaim you endlessly:

Yet you chose to be rocked to sleep by the songs of the daughter of David.

O Lord, the universal provider, you feed every creature:

Yet you chose to hunger for the milk of your mother.

O Lord, the infinite, heaven and earth cannot contain you:

Yet you rest in the arms of Mary.

O Lord, the perfect joy, you are the source of happiness of heaven and earth:

Yet you cry like a little child.

O Lord, the eternal Word, you are the light of all created intelligence:

Yet you are laid in a manger and cannot even speak.

O Lord, we confess that we do not deserve the wonder of your love. We have not loved you or one another as you desire. We have sinned against you by what we have done and what we have left undone. We deserve judgment and punishment instead of joy and peace.

Forgive us, Lord Jesus. Deliver and restore us.

Silence for meditation and prayer

You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. Because of his great love, you are forgiven.

Hymn of Praise

332 *Let Us All with Gladsome Voice*



1 Let us all with glad-some voice praise the God of heav - en,
3 We are rich, for he was poor; is not this a won - der?



who, to bid our hearts re - jice, his own Son has giv - en.
There - fore praise God ev - er - more here on earth and yon - der.

Text: tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.; German, 17th cent. Tune: *Ander Theil Des Dreszdenischen GesangBuchs*, Dresden, 1632, alt. Text and tune: Public domain

The Word

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Almighty God, grant that the birth of your only Son in the flesh may set us free from our old bondage under the yoke of sin; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

First Reading

Isaiah 52:7–10

A Savior is born to comfort the Lord's people.

⁷How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of a herald,
who proclaims peace and preaches good news,
who proclaims salvation,
who says to Zion, “Your God is king!”

⁸The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voices.
Together they shout for joy,
because with both eyes they will see it
when the LORD returns to Zion.



⁹ Break out, shout for joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem,
because the LORD is comforting his people.

He is redeeming Jerusalem.

¹⁰ The LORD lays bare his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation from our God. (EHV)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm of the Day

98B Joy to the World

- 1 Joy to the world, the LORD is come! Let earth receive her King;
let ev'ry 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.**
- 2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**
- 3 No more let sins and sorrows 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.**
- 4 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.**

Text: Isaac Watts, alt. Text: Public domain

Second Reading

Hebrews 1:1–9

A Savior is born to show the radiance of God's glory to mankind.

¹ In the past, God spoke to our forefathers by the prophets at many times and in many ways. ² In these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. ³ The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact imprint of the divine nature. He sustains all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he took his seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

⁴ The Son became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. ⁵ For to which of the angels did God ever say:

You are my Son. Today I have begotten you?

And again:

I will be his Father, and he will be my Son.

⁶ And again, when he brought his firstborn into the world, he said:

Let all God's angels worship him.

⁷About the angels he says:

He makes his messengers winds and his ministers flaming fire.

⁸But about the Son he says:

God, your throne is forever and ever,

and the scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your kingdom.

⁹You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness.

Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of joy
beyond your companions. (EHV)



The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

Gospel Acclamation

Galatians 4:4,5

Alleluia! But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son,

born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law. Alleluia!

Gospel

John 1:1-14

A Savior is born in our flesh.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ³Through him everything was made, and without him not one thing was made that has been made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind. ⁵The light is shining in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶There was a man, sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as an eyewitness to testify about the light so that everyone would believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light.

⁹The real light that shines on everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, yet his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. ¹³They were born, not of blood, or of the desire of the flesh, or of a husband's will, but born of God.

¹⁴The Word became flesh and dwelled among us. We have seen his glory, the glory he has as the only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. (EHV)

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

Children's Message

Hymn of the Day

358 Of the Father's Love Begotten

Sermon

Stand

Confession of Faith

Excerpts from the Athanasian Creed

We believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, is both God and man.

He is God, eternally begotten from the nature of the Father,

and he is man, born in time from the nature of his mother,

fully God, fully man, with rational soul and human flesh;

equal to the Father as to his deity, less than the Father as to his humanity;

and though he is both God and man, Christ is not two persons but one:

one, not by changing the deity into flesh, but by taking the humanity into God;

one, indeed, not by mixture of the natures, but by unity in one person;

for just as the rational soul and flesh is one human being,

so God and man is one Christ.

He suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose the third day from the dead.

He ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty,

and from there will come to judge the living and the dead.

This is the true Christian faith.

Be seated

Connect Card

Please take a moment now to fill out a Connect Card.

Prayer of the Church

Eternal Father, we give you thanks on this holy day for sending your one and only Son to share our humanity, carry our guilt, and become for us the perfect Lamb who takes away the sin of the world. Keep our faith in your Son alive and strong. Nourish us with your Word and sacraments and by your Holy Spirit give us strength to overcome Satan's empty promises. Help us to withstand the temptations the world and our sinful nature put in our path.

Give us faith and courage so that we may praise you all our days.



Remember ministers of the gospel throughout the world who on this day are proclaiming that a Savior has been born. We especially commend to your care the missionaries we have called as members of the Wisconsin Synod. Since they cannot enjoy the fellowship of their extended families this Christmas, grant to them the inner joy that comes with service in your kingdom.
Protect all those who proclaim the gospel in our place.

We pray for our city and countryside, for our neighborhoods and subdivisions, and for all who live and work and find delight here. Give to the leaders of government wisdom to make and uphold laws that promote the good of society. Grant our nation peace, health, and prosperity that we may have the opportunity and resources to spread the good news to all people.
Govern and prosper your people.

Fill us with kindness to do good to all people, especially those who are less fortunate than we. Bring your healing to those who are sick or diseased in body or mind and comfort those who are mourning the death of someone they love. We especially pray for brothers and sisters who are setting aside their celebration today to care for the sick and stand at the side of the dying.
Sustain those who endure the troubles of life.

Be a source of strength to all your people and fill them with your power and peace. If any are among us today who have lost the true meaning of this festival, let them rediscover the joy that comes from Christ alone.
Let your peace reign in the hearts of all.

Special prayers and intercessions

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

As you sent your Son to bring peace to all people on earth, so we pray for all people, those known and those unknown to us.

We pray through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Offering

The loose offerings from today's service (those not in envelopes) will be given to our pastors and staff minister as a thank you for their dedication and service to the Lord.

Guests, please don't feel obligated to take part in the offering. We're just happy you're here as our guest to hear and take to heart the message of Jesus. 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.



Hymn

342 O Jesus Christ, Your Manger Is
Please join to sing after the first verse.

Stand

O Lord, our heavenly Father, of whose love the angels sang when Jesus was born in Bethlehem and through whom we have learned to sing, "Glory to God in the highest," accept our worship and hymns of joy this day; and as we celebrate the birth of your Son, grant that in him we may learn to know your love, to follow you in obedience, and to offer our hearts and lives to you as we show ourselves to be your children; through Jesus Christ, your Son, 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 give you peace.

Amen.

Be seated

Hymn

355 Let All Together Praise Our God



News & Announcements



Holiday Worship Schedule

Dec. 31 ~ New Year's Eve Service at 6:30 pm

Jan. 1 ~ Sunday Service at 9:30 am

Jan. 5 ~ Epiphany Service at 6:30 pm



(Please note that there is only one Jan. 1, even though it is a Sunday.)

Our regular Sunday schedule resumes on Jan. 8 with worship services at 8:00 & 10:30 am. Bible study and Sunday School (for 3K-6th grade) are at 9:15-10:15 am. Bring the whole family!

Principal Called

Last week, we called Mr. Justin Vilski to serve as our principal beginning next year. He currently serves as principal for Crown of Life Lutheran School in West St. Paul, MN. Please keep Mr. Vilski and his family in your prayers as he deliberates this call.

Foundations of the Faith Workshops

Jan. 21 | 8:30 AM

In an effort to reach more busy people, we are holding our *Foundations of the Christian Faith* course workshop-style over four Saturday mornings. The “workshops” will be spaced, so you aren’t committing to every weekend. The dates are January 21, February 4, February 18, and March 4 from 8:30 am – 12:30 pm. Multiple lessons will be covered each session. We hope to provide onsite childcare. Plus there will be snacks and a lunch each day. This course is essential for those interested in joining our church family. To register, please contact Pastor Plagenz at pastorplagenz@stpaulswr.org or 920-689-3036.

Men’s Devotional Basketball Begins

Dec. 27 | 5:30 PM

Start burning off those holiday calories this Tuesday. Men’s Devotional Basketball will be held from 5:30-8:30 pm. Enjoy some friendly competition and a little bit of God’s Word. The group will meet every Tuesday through early March.

Holiday Office Hours

The church office will be opened limited hours this week, so our staff can enjoy the holidays. If you have an emergency and need a pastor, you can call them on their cell phones. The numbers are always printed on the back of our service folders.



2023 Offering Envelopes

The 2023 offering envelopes have been placed in member mailslots. Remember not to use them until 2023! If you use them early, your offering may mistakenly be credited to someone else's account. Also keep in mind that the deadline to make a gift for 2022 is Dec. 31. Gifts given after New Year's Eve will be counted as 2023 offerings.

Holiday Scrip Schedule

No scrip will be sold today. Some stock cards may be available from the office during the week. The NLHS program will resume sales on Jan. 1, and St. Paul's on the following Sunday.

Christmas Cantata Broadcast

The K-8 School Christmas Service will be shown on Wisconsin Rapids Community Media public access Solarus channel 3 and Spectrum channel 985 on the following dates: Tuesday, Dec. 27 at 3:00 pm, Wednesday; Dec. 28 at 7:00 pm; and Saturday, Dec. 31 at noon. The service is also archived on our Youtube channel.

Special Epiphany Service

Jan. 5 | 6:30 PM

We will celebrate Epiphany with a special service on Thursday, Jan. 5 at 6:30 pm. Pastor Wayne Oblender, who serves at St. Peter's in Marshfield and is our circuit pastor, will preach the sermon. Other WELS area congregations have been invited to join us for this worship service. We hope you add it to your schedule.

Attendance & Offering Report

Last Week's Attendance: 213

Anticipated offerings YTD: \$ 444,115

Actual offerings YTD: \$ 331,269



Special Prayers This Week:

- Linda Pollnow's father-in-law, Milton Pollnow, turned 104 on Dec. 23
- Mr. Justin Vilski was called to be our principal
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