Christmas Day

**CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH** | Lodi, California

*December 25, 2023*

**WELCOME TO WORSHIP**

Welcome to Christ Lutheran Church. We pray that your soul will be strengthened by the good news about God’s grace, love, and forgiveness given to us. If you would like to learn more about our church, please speak with our pastor or one of our members after the service.

* **Bathrooms** are located in the fellowship hall. A changing table is located in the women’s bathroom.

**WORSHIP THEME**

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. In simple phrases, John explains for us this profound mystery: that the Word was with God, and yet was God in the beginning. That this Word, the one true God, took on human flesh and lived as one of us. That through him we have new birth into God’s family. Simple words and phrases, yet their meaning is a mighty wonder and a glorious mystery. May God give us hearts to believe and find comfort in this truth today and always.



**Opening Hymn** *Oh Come, All Ye Faithful|* **CW 55**

Confession of sins

P: Sing to the Lord, praise his name,

**C: Proclaim his salvation day after day;**

P: Declare his glory among the nations,

**C: His marvelous deeds among all people.**

P: Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness

**C: Tremble before him, all the earth.**

P: Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad,

**C: For God comes to judge the world in righteousness and truth.**

P: Therefore, since God comes to judge, but also has sent his Son to save us—let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

**C: Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

P: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

**SONG OF PRAISE CW 49**

**Rejoice, rejoice this happy morn!**

**A Savior unto us is born,**

**The Christ, the Lord of glory.**

**His lowly birth in Bethlehem**

**The angels from on high proclaim And sing redemption’s story.**

**My soul, extol God’s great favor;**

**Bless him ever for salvation.**

**Give him praise and adoration.**

**THE PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you**

P: Let us pray:

 Almighty God, grant that the birth of your one and only Son in the flesh may set us free from our bondage under the yoke of sin; May the brightness of his light give us wonder and may it lead us to see his glory in the life to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

**GOD’S WORD** *Isaiah 52:7–10*

**7**How beautiful on the mountains
    are the feet of those who bring good news,
who proclaim peace,
    who bring good tidings,
    who proclaim salvation,
who say to Zion,
    “Your God reigns!”
**8**Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices;
    together they shout for joy.
When the Lord returns to Zion,
    they will see it with their own eyes.
**9**Burst into songs of joy together,
    you ruins of Jerusalem,
for the Lord has comforted his people,
    he has redeemed Jerusalem.
**10**The Lord will lay bare his holy arm
    in the sight of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth will see
    the salvation of our God.

**PSALM 98** *Sing a New Song to the Lord |* **CW 245**

**GOD’S WORD** *Hebrews 1:1–9*

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

For to which of the angels did God ever say,

“You are my Son;
    today I have become your Father”?

Or again,

“I will be his Father,
    and he will be my Son”?

And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says,

“Let all God’s angels worship him.”

In speaking of the angels he says,

“He makes his angels spirits,
    and his servants flames of fire.”

But about the Son he says,

“Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever;
    a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.
You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
    therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions
    by anointing you with the oil of joy.”

**VERSE OF THE DAY** *Galatians 4:4,5*

**Alleluia. When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law. Alleluia.**

**GOSPEL** *John 1:1–14*

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. 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 testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

 The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.

 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

**HYMN OF THE DAY** *Of the Father’s Love Begotten|* **CW 35**

**SERMON** *John 1*

**OFFERTORY** *Now Sing We, Now Rejoice**|* **CW 34**

**OFFERING**

*In response to God’s love and forgiveness, we give back a portion of what he has given us. The members of Christ Lutheran Church have joined to proclaim the gospel to this community. These offerings support that work. While our guests are welcome to participate, they should not feel obligated to do so.*

**CONFESSION OF FAITH** *Selections from the Athanasian Creed*

**It is necessary for eternal salvation truly to believe**

**that our Lord Jesus Christ also took on human flesh.**

**Now this is the true Christian faith.**

 **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 are one human being,**

 **so God and man are 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.**

 **Whoever does not faithfully and firmly believe this cannot be saved.**

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

P: On this holy day, dear Father, we rejoice to hear the good news of great joy that a Savior has been born for us. For fulfilling your prophecies and in the fullness of time sending your Son to be our Savior, we give you our heartfelt thanks and praise.

**C: Unto us a child is born! Unto us a Son is given!**

P: What a great mystery of our faith this is: that God has become fully human for our salvation! Even though he is the all-powerful Lord of all, he is wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger.

**C: Help us always believe that this precious child was born as our substitute to be our Savior.**

P: In the midst of our joy, we grieve for the many people in our world who do not know that Jesus has come to bring them forgiveness and healing. As the shepherds spread abroad the good news of the birth of the Savior born for all the world, may we also make use of the unique opportunities this holiday presents to tell others of what we have seen and heard concerning the child.

**C: Grant that the true peace between God and fallen mankind may comfort all people.**

P: Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

 ***Silent prayer.***

P: As the angels sang out their praise, move us also to sing out our praise to you, today and every day, as the joy of Christmas remains in our hearts.

**C: Glory to God in the highest! Amen.**

**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**

P: 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.

**C: Amen.**

**CLOSING HYMN** *Joy to the World |* **CW 62**

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Pastor Timothy Leistekow

**WELCOME TO CHRIST EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH!**

We preach a message of forgiveness, hope and peace

through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Families and individuals of all ages will find opportunities

both to grow and to serve.

Our mission statement:

**Look what Christ is doing!**

He binds us together in fellowship

He gathers us in for worship

He builds us up for service

He sends us out with the gospel

*“Now you are the body of Christ,*

*and each one of you is a part of it.”*

*(1 Corinthians 12:27)*