

**Christmas Eve**  
**December 24, 2023**  
**8:00 p.m. Worship**

**Our Mission is to share the life, love and joy of Jesus Christ with others**

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**St. Peter's Staff**

Pastor: The Rev. Jonathan Suloff  
Office Administrator: Lisa Zinar  
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# ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2023

**Prelude:**

*“Wexford Carol”*

**Traditional Irish Carol**

*Please Stand*

## INVOCATION

*Pastor:* Shout aloud, O daughter of Zion;  
*Assembly:* **rejoice and exult with all your heart.**  
*Pastor:* The Lord, your God, is in your midst;  
*Assembly:* **He will renew you with all his love.**  
*Pastor:* Arise, shine; for your light has come,  
*Assembly:* **and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.**  
*Pastor:* They shall bring gold and frankincense,  
*Assembly:* **and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.**  
*Pastor:* We have seen his star in the East  
*Assembly:* **and have come to Worship the Lord.**

## THE CONFESSION

*Pastor:* Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, the Word made flesh, our life and our salvation.  
*Assembly:* **Amen.**  
*Pastor:* Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior,  
let us confess our sin.

*Please Kneel or be Seated*

*(Silence for reflection and self-examination.)*

*Pastor:* God of life,  
*Assembly:* **you promise good news of great joy for all people, and call us to be messengers of your peace.**  
**We confess that too often we hoard our joy, our resources, and our security.**  
**We nurture conflict and build barriers.**  
**We neglect the needs of our neighbors and ignore the groaning of creation.**  
**Have mercy on us.**  
**Where we are self-centered, open our hearts.**  
**Where we are reluctant, give us courage.**  
**Where we are cynical, restore our trust.**  
**Renew us with your grace and give us again the hope of eternal life in you.**  
**Amen.**  
*Pastor:* 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.  
*Assembly:* **Amen**

*Please Stand*

**Opening Hymn:**

**“O Come All Ye Faithful”**

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!

Text: arr. John Francis Wade, 1711 - 1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802 - 1880, sts. 1, 3 - 4; tr. unknown, st. 2  
 Music: ADUSTE EDELEIS, arr. John Francis Wade

*Pastor:* The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

*Assembly:* **And also with you.**

*Please be seated*

### **Lighting of the Advent Wreath**

*Choir:*

*“The Wonder of Christmas”*

*J. Raney*

*Pastor:* During Advent, we have journeyed in faith toward God’s wondrous gift.

*Assembly:* **O come, let us adore Him.**

*Pastor:* During Advent, we stood in awe of God’s saving grace.

*Assembly:* **O come, let us adore Him.**

*Pastor:* During Advent, we recalled the promise of God’s spoken word.

*Assembly:* **O come, let us adore Him.**

*Pastor:* During Advent, we waited for the time of God’s glorious arrival.

*Assembly:* **O come, let us adore Him.**

*Pastor:* Tonight our waiting is over, our eyes are open, and the gift is given.

*Assembly:* **O come, let us adore Him.**

*Pastor:* Tonight we light all the candles. The first candle reminds us to recapture the wonder of the season. In the midst of repeated refrains and familiar stories, Advent is a time to be awed by the God who came to restore our world. The second candle calls us to remember the promises of old, that from the dawn of creation all things have unfolded according to God’s redemptive plan. The third candle calls us to listen to the God who still speaks to us today. Advent is a time to hear afresh the joy of God’s reconciling love that beckons us homeward. The fourth candle calls us to reawaken our sense of expectation and behold the miraculous in our day and time. Tonight we light the Christ candle, rejoicing in the Good News of the holy birth, the hope of humanity and the light of the world.

*The candles of Advent are lit*





There is won - der in the hope of the birth of a  
 King, there is won - der in the sound of the an - gels as they  
 sing. O — come, O come, Em - man - u -  
 el, and join us here.

*Pastor:* Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Gracious God, thank you for guiding us throughout this season of wonder. We stand amazed at the promise now fulfilled and awed by your humble birth. Help us receive, again, the joy and wonder of the greatest gift offered to the world. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our newborn King.

*Assembly:* **Amen.**

*Pastor:* The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

*Assembly:* **And also with you.**

Please stand



# Hymn of Praise:

## “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, “Glo - ry to the new - born king;  
2 Christ, by high - est heav’n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,  
3 Hail the heav’n - born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righ - teous - ness!

peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled.”  
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin’s womb.  
Light and life to all he brings, ris’n with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;  
Veiled in flesh the God - head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!  
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

with an - gel - ic hosts pro - claim, “Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!”  
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!  
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

*Refrain*  
Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, “Glo - ry to the new - born king!”

**The Salutation:**

*Pastor:*       The Lord be with you.

*Assembly:*    **And also with you.**

**Prayer of the Day:**

*Pastor:*       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.

*Assembly:*    **Amen.**

*Please be seated*

**First Reading:                                   Isaiah 9:2-7**

The people who walked in darkness  
  have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—  
  on them light has shined.  
You 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.  
For 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.  
For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
  and all the garments rolled in blood  
  shall be burned as fuel for the fire.  
For 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.  
His 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.

*Lector:* The Word of the Lord.

*Assembly:* **Thanks be to God.**

**Second Reading: Titus 2:11-4**

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

*Lector:* The Word of the Lord.

*Assembly:* **Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand*

*Pastor:* The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the second chapter.

*Assembly:* **Glory to you, O Lord.**

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And 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.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”



When 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.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

*Pastor:* The Gospel of the Lord.  
*Assembly:* Praise to you, O Christ.

Please Be Seated

Message:

Pastor Suloff

Please Stand



Hymn of the Day:

*“The First Noel”*  
(Verses 1, 2, 4 only)



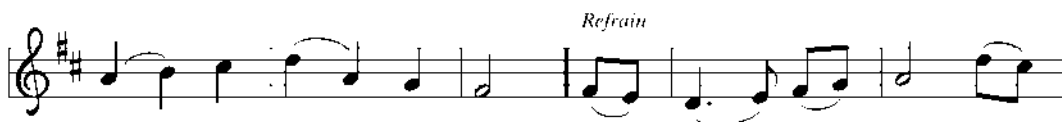
1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to  
2 They look - ed up and saw . . . a star shin - ing  
3 And by the light of that . . . same star three . . .  
4 This star drew near to the . . . north - west, o'er . . .  
5 Then en - tered in those wise . . . men three, full . . .



cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where  
in . . . the east . . . be - yond . . . them far; and to the  
wise . . . men came . . . from coun - try far; to seek for a  
Beth - le - hem . . . it took . . . its rest; and there it  
rev - 'rent - ly . . . up - on . . . their knee, and of - fered



they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's  
earth it gave . . . great light, and . . . so it con -  
king was their . . . in - tent, and to fol - low the  
did both stop . . . and stay right . . . o - ver the  
there in his . . . pres - ence their . . . gold, . . . and



night that was so deep.  
tin-ued both day and night.  
star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -  
place where Je - sus lay.  
myrrh, and frank - in - cense.



el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

## The Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried.

He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

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

## Prayers of Intercession:

*Pastor:* 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.

*(The Prayers of the Church are said)*

*Pastor:* Hear us, O God;

*Assembly:* Your mercy is great.

*Pastor:* Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace.

*Assembly:* Amen.

### Please stand

*Pastor:* The peace of the Lord be with you.

*Assembly:* And also with you.

### Please be seated



## Offering:

### Musical Offering:

*“O, Holy Night”*

by Adolphe Adam

### Please Stand

### Offering Hymn:

*“What Child Is This” (verse 3)*

So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh;  
come, peasant, king, to own Him.  
The King of kings salvation brings;  
let loving hearts enthrone Him.  
Raise, raise the song on high,  
the virgin sings her lullaby;  
joy, joy, for Christ is born,  
the babe, the Son of Mary!

## Offering Prayer

**Pastor:** 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.

**Assembly:** Amen.

## The Great Thanksgiving

*Pastor:* The Lord be with you.

*Pastor:* Lift up your hearts.

*Pastor:* Let us give thanks to the Lord  
our God.

**Assembly:** And also with you

**Assembly:** We lift them to the Lord.

**Assembly:** It is right to give God  
thanks and praise.

*Pastor:* It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. 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. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

### *“Angels We Have Heard on High” (verse 1)*

*Angels we have heard on high,  
sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply,  
echoing their joyous strains.*

#### Refrain

*Gloria in excelsis Deo;  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

## Words of Institution

*Pastor:* 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:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.



*Pastor:* Let us pray in confidence in the words our Savior gave us:  
**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.**

### *“Infant Holy, Infant Lowly” (verse 1)*

*Infant holy, infant lowly,  
for his bed a cattle stall;  
oxen lowing, little knowing  
Christ the child is Lord of all.  
Swiftly winging, angels singing,  
bells are ringing, tidings bringing:  
Christ the child is Lord of all!  
Christ the child is Lord of all!*



### **The Distribution:**

*All those who believe in the presence of the Lord at the table, are invited to share in the sacrament. If you would like to receive Communion or a blessing from the pastor please join the line in the middle aisle of the sanctuary, receive the bread, and then move to the chalice and dip your wafer in the wine. If you prefer to remain in your pew or are joining us for worship online please take the individual Communion Cup or the elements of your choosing and share them with one another and with the community. If young children are present who have not yet received their First Communion please bring them forward or take a moment and share a blessing with them. All are welcome at the table of the Lord.*

*Pastor: The body of Christ, given for you.*

*(At this time receive the bread, cracker, or that which you are using as the body of Christ)*

*Pastor: The blood of Christ, shed for you.*

*(At this time receive the wine, juice, water, or that which you using as the blood of Christ)*

### **Communion Music:**



Please Stand

*Pastor:* May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

*Assembly:* **Amen.**

The Post-Communion Prayer:

*Pastor:* 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.

*Assembly:* **Amen.**

Post-Communion Song: “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice and Sing!” (verse 1)



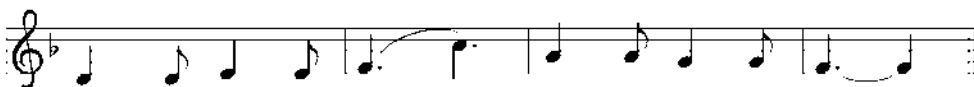
1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;  
2 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;  
3 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;



give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;  
now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!  
now ye need not fear the grave; Je - sus Christ was born to save!



ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.  
He has o - pened heav - en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.  
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.



Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!  
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!  
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Text: Medieval Latin carol; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866  
Music: IN DULCI JUBILO, German carol, 14th cent.

## CANDLE LIGHTING

*Pastor:* The Word was made flesh, and we beheld His glory.  
*Assembly:* **Oh come, let us worship Him.**  
*Pastor:* The people who walk in darkness have seen a great light.  
*Assembly:* **The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**  
*Pastor:* Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness, on them light has shined.  
*Assembly:* **We have beheld Christ's glory. Glory as of the only Son from the Father.**  
*Pastor:* For unto us a child is born, to us a Son is given.  
*Assembly:* **In Him was life, and the life was the light of humanity!**  
*Pastor:* Today Christ is born! Today salvation has appeared!  
*Assembly:* **Today the just exult and say, "Glory to God in the highest! Alleluia!"**

*(The Pastor gives the light to the acolytes who pass it to the ushers. The ushers will distribute the light to the first worshipper in each pew, who will pass it on.  
Please do not tilt the lit candle.)*

*Pastor:* 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 came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.





## “Silent 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,

*Hol - der 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.

## **The Benediction**

*Pastor:* May Christ, who by His incarnation  
has filled us with grace and truth,  
give you peace this Christmas and always.  
Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,  
bless you now and forever.

*Assembly:* **Amen.**



## **SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR CHRISTMAS EVE MUSICIANS!**

### **4 PM Christmas Eve**

Caroline Van Pelt  
Sheridan Seyfried

### **8 PM Christmas Eve**

Sarah Shoff  
William Czartoryski  
Kristen Kammerle Hyde  
Andrew Kammerle

*Today's special music and musicians are given in loving memory of  
Rachelle Shollenberger by her family.*

**Closing Hymn:**

**“Joy To The World”**

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 rich - 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  
and heav'n and na ture sing. and

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.  
heav'n and na - ture sing.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

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

*Pastor:* Go in peace to share the life, love, and joy of Jesus with all.

*Assembly:* Thanks be to God.

# Worship has ended, let the service begin!



## St. Peter's Statement of Welcome

All people are created by God. We affirm with the apostle Paul, that in Christ “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female” (Galatians 3:28). Christ has made us one. In keeping with our mission statement “to share the life, love and joy of Jesus Christ with others”, we welcome all people regardless of characteristics which might cause exclusion or discrimination outside of St. Peter's.

We affirm that all people share the worth that comes from being unique individuals created by God. All people are welcome within the membership of this congregation upon making the same affirmation of faith as all other members make. Members of this congregation are expected and encouraged to share in the sacramental and general life of this congregation.