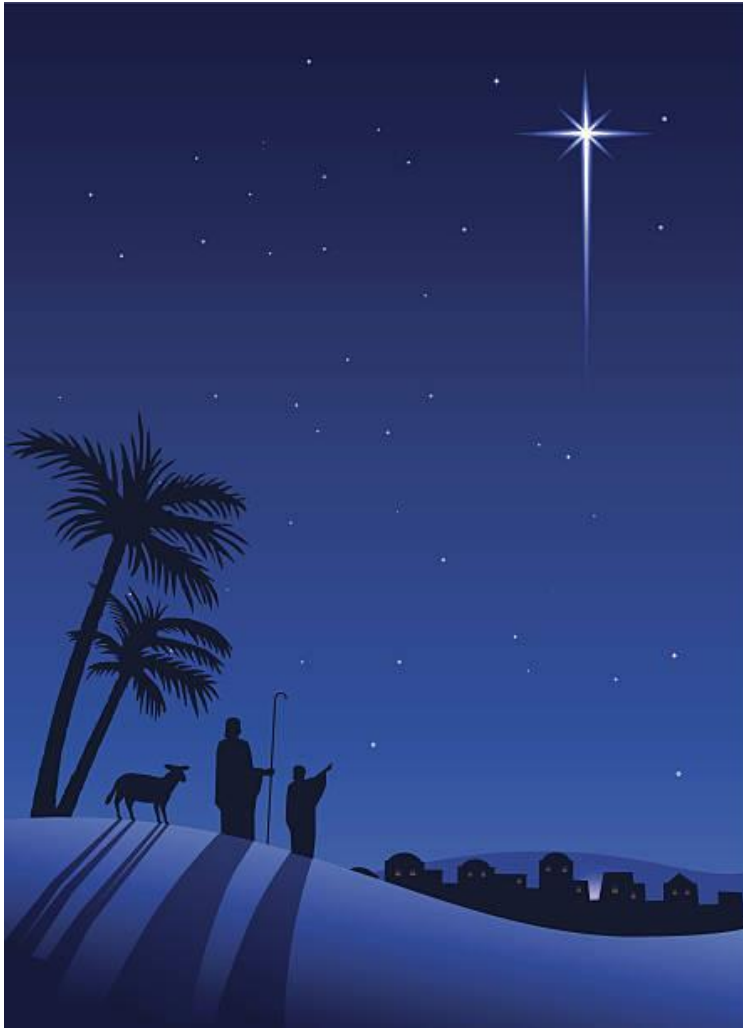


*The Evangelical Lutheran Church
of the Holy Trinity
206 Cocoa Avenue
Hershey, Pennsylvania 17033
(717) 533-2467*

*Holy Trinity Website: htluth.org
Email Address: htluth@comcast.net*



*Longest Night
Service
of
Prayer,
Scripture
and
Hymns*

*December 18, 2024
7:00 p.m.*

In the Northern Hemisphere, December 21 is the longest night, the winter solstice, which means literally “standing still.” It marks the shortest day of the year, the official start of winter, when the sun is the farthest distance from the earth. Tradition says that nature and all her creatures stop and hold their breath to see if the sun will turn back from its wanderings in hope that the days will lengthen and the earth will once again feel the sun’s warmth.

We gather tonight in the darkness of December and anticipate the coming again of the Light of the world, Jesus Christ. As we worship, we celebrate the light of Christ that gives us hope. The candles of the advent wreath will be lit during worship as we anticipate the birth of Christ and the coming of his light of love. Candles are available for you to light in memory of lost loved ones or to represent your prayers for peace and comfort. Please feel free to light the candles as you gather for worship, during the prelude or hymns, or as you come forward to share Holy Communion.

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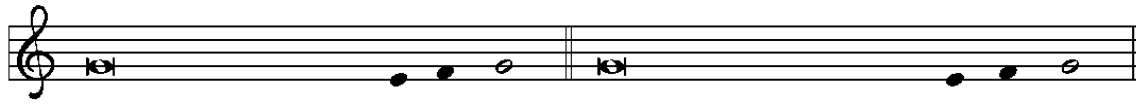
+ ORDER OF WORSHIP +

**PRELUDE:** *Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel* ..... Laura E. Wasson  
*Come Now, O Prince of Peace* ..... Anne Krentz Organ  
*The King Shall Come* ..... Anne Krentz Organ  
*I Wonder As I Wander*..... Lynette Maynard  
*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear* ..... Lynette Maynard  
*Light Dawns on a Weary World*..... Nancy M. Raabe

**WELCOME**

*The congregation stands.*

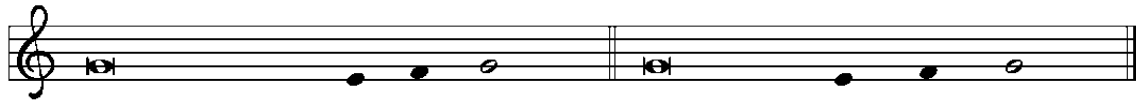
**ADVENT DIALOGUE**



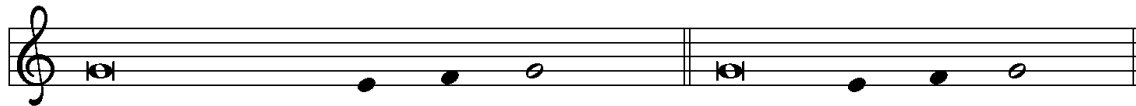
Jesus Christ is the light of the world, **the light no darkness can o - ver - come.**



Stay with us, Lord, for it is evening, **and the day is al - most over.**



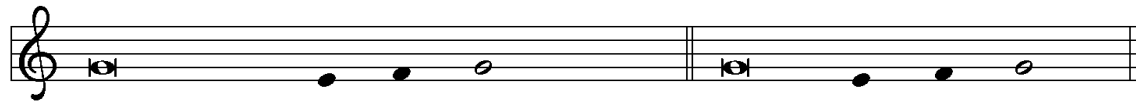
Let your light scat - ter the darkness **and illu - mine your church.**



The Spirit and the church cry out: **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**



All those who await his ap - pear - ance pray: **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**



The whole cre - a - tion pleads: **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

## CALL TO WORSHIP (from Isaiah 9)

**P:** The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;  
Those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them a light has shined.

**All:** For the yoke that was weighing upon them, and the burden upon their shoulders, thou hast broken in pieces O God, our Savior.

**HYMN:** *Christ, Mighty Savior* ..... **ELW 560**



1 Christ, might-y Sav - ior, Light of all cre - a - tion, you make the  
2 Now comes the day's end as the sun is set - ting, mir - ror of  
3 There - fore we come now eve - ning rites to of - fer, joy - ful - ly  
4 Give heed, we pray you, to our sup - pli - ca - tion, that you may  
5 Though bod - ies slum - ber, hearts shall keep their vig - il, for - ev - er



day - time ra - diant with the sun - light and to the night give  
day - break, pledge of res - ur - rec - tion; while in the heav - ens  
chant - ing ho - ly hymns to praise you, with all cre - a - tion  
grant us par - don for of - fens - es, strength for our weak hearts,  
rest - ing in the peace of Je - sus, in light or dark - ness



glit - ter - ing a - dorn - ment, stars in the heav - ens.  
choirs of stars ap - pear - ing hal - low the night - fall.  
join - ing hearts and voic - es, sing - ing your glo - ry.  
rest for ach - ing bod - ies, sooth - ing the wea - ry.  
wor - ship - ing our Sav - ior now and for - ev - er.

Text: Mozarabic, 10th cent.; tr. Alan McDougall, 1895-1964; para. Anne LeCroy, b. 1930  
Music: Richard W. Dirksen, 1921-2003  
Text © 1982 The United Methodist Publishing House, admin. The Copyright Company  
Music © 1984 Washington National Cathedral Music Program

INNISFREE FARM  
11 11 11 5

Alternate tune: CHRISTE SANCTORUM

## PRAYER

**P:** Let us pray...Merciful God, in the stillness of our souls we listen for your voice to know that you are God. Rekindle our faith and light the lamp of hope within our hearts. Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give. We pray in the name of Christ, your son, our Emmanuel, God with us.

**All:** Amen.

*The congregation is seated.*

## **CANDLE LIGHTING LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE AND THANKSGIVING**

*Worshippers are invited to light candles in memory of loved ones or as prayers for peace and hope.*

P: We light the first candle to remember those whom we have loved and lost. We pause to remember their name, their face, their voice, and all the memories that binds them to us in this season.

**All: May God's eternal love surround us and them.**

(Pause for reflection as the first candle is lit.)

P: We light the second candle to ask for help in the pain of loss; the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs, the loss of health. We offer the pain of past and the pain of present to God, asking that we are able to recognize God's grace and peace in our lives.

**All: Refresh, restore, renew us O God, and grant us your peace.**

(Pause for reflection as the second candle is lit.)

P: We light the third candle to remember the kindness of others who help us during difficult or dark times in our lives. We give thanks for all the kindness and words of support we have known.

**All: Help us recognize your loving presence around us, O God, to give us strength and courage whenever we feel alone, discouraged or afraid.**

(Pause for reflection as the third candle is lit.)

P: We light the fourth candle to remember our faith and the gift of hope which the Christmas story offers to us. We give thanks that nothing can separate us from the love of God, including any pain, suffering or even death.

**All: We give thanks for Jesus Christ, the babe in a manger, who shows the way, who brings the truth and who bears the light.**

(Pause for reflection as the fourth candle is lit.)

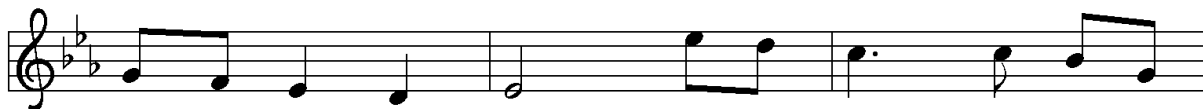
HYMN: *Joyous Light of Heavenly Glory*..... ELW 561



1 Joy - ous light of heav'n-ly glo - ry, lov-ing glow of God's own  
2 In the stars that grace the dark - ness, in the blaz - ing sun of  
3 You who made the heav-en's splen - dor, ev-'ry danc - ing star of



face, you who sing cre - a - tion's sto - ry, shine on  
dawn, in the light of peace and wis - dom, we can  
night, make us shine with gen - tle jus - tice, let us



ev - 'ry land and race. Now as eve - ning falls a -  
hear your qui - et song. Love that fills the night with  
each re - flect your light. Might - y God of all cre -



round us, we shall raise our songs to you. God of day - break,  
won - der, love that warms the wea - ry soul, love that bursts all  
a - tion, gen - tle Christ who lights our way, lov - ing Spir - it



God of shad - ows, come and light our hearts a - new.  
chains a - sun - der, set us free and make us whole.  
of sal - va - tion, lead us on to end - less day.

Text: Greek hymn, 3rd cent., para. Marty Haugen, b. 1950  
Music: JOYOUS LIGHT, Marty Haugen  
Text and music © 1987 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.  
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**SCRIPTURE READING: ISAIAH 9:2-7**

<sup>2</sup>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.

<sup>3</sup>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.

<sup>4</sup>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.

<sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup>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.

<sup>7</sup>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.



1 As the dark a - waits the dawn,  
 2 As the blue ex - pec - tant hour  
 3 As the moon re - flects the sun  
 4 Shine your fu - ture on this place,



so we a - wait your light. O Star of  
 be - fore the sil - v'ring skies, we long to  
 un - til the night's de - crease, may we your  
 en - light - en ev - 'ry guest, that through us



prom - ise, scat - ter night, lov - ing bright, lov - ing  
 see your day a - rise, whole and wise, whole and  
 heal - ing light re - lease, liv - ing peace, liv - ing  
 stream your ho - li - ness, bright and blest, bright and



bright, till shades of fear are gone.  
 wise, O lu - cent Morn - ing Star.  
 peace, un - to your ho - ly dawn.  
 blest; come dawn, O Sun of grace.

Text: Susan Palo Cherwien, b. 1953  
 Music: LUCENT, Carl F. Schalk, b. 1929  
 Text © 1996 Susan Palo Cherwien, admin. Augsburg Fortress.  
 Music © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

**SCRIPTURE READING: ISAIAH 58:8-9**

<sup>8</sup>Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,  
 and your healing shall spring up quickly;  
 your vindicator shall go before you,  
 the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

<sup>9</sup>Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;  
 you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.



## SCRIPTURE READING: REVELATION 21:1-6

<sup>1</sup>Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup>And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them;  
they will be his peoples,  
and God himself will be with them;  
<sup>4</sup>he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;  
mourning and crying and pain will be no more,  
for the first things have passed away."

<sup>5</sup>And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." <sup>6</sup>Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.



There shall be no more death,  
*neither sorrow, nor crying,*  
neither shall there be  
*any more pain:*  
for the former things  
are passed away.

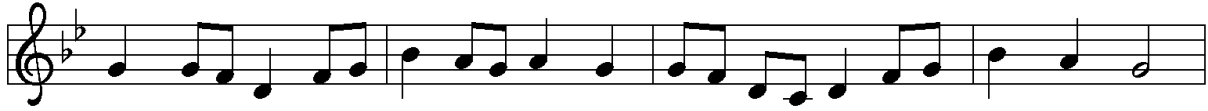
Revelation 21:4, KJV

## SCRIPTURE READING: MATTHEW 11: 28-32

<sup>28</sup>Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup>For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;  
 2 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.  
 born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,  
 By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long-ing heart.  
 by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788  
 Music: JEFFERSON, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

**SCRIPTURE READING: JOHN 1:1-5, 10-14**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.  
<sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and  
 without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was  
 life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the  
 darkness did not overcome it. <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world came into being  
 through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and  
 his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in  
 his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood  
 or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. <sup>14</sup>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.



1 Love has come— a light in the dark - ness! Love shines forth in the  
 2 Love is born! Come, share in the won - der. Love is God now a -  
 3 Love has come and nev - er will leave us! Love is life ev - er -



Beth - le - hem skies. See, all heav - en has come to pro - claim it;  
 sleep in the hay. See the glow in the eyes of his moth - er;  
 last - ing and free. Love is Je - sus with - in and a - mong us.

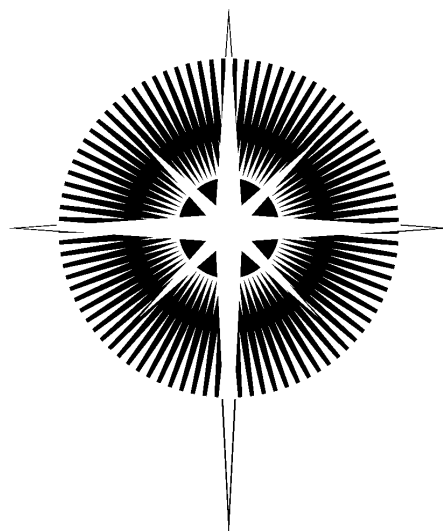


hear how their song of joy a - ris - es: Love! Love! Born un - to  
 what is the name her heart is say - ing? Love! Love! Love is the  
 Love is the peace our hearts are seek - ing. Love! Love! Love is the



you, a Sav - ior! Love! Love! Glo - ry to God on high.  
 name she whis - pers; Love! Love! Je - sus, Im - man - u - el.  
 gift of Christ - mas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Text: Ken Bible, b. 1950  
 Music: UN FLAMBEAU, F. Seguin, *Recueil de noëls composés en langue provençale*, 1856  
 Text © 1996 Integrity's Hosanna! Music (ASCAP), c/o Integrity Media, Inc., 1000 Cody Road, Mobile, AL 36695.



**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

P: Lord in your mercy,

All: *Wait for the Lord (sung)*

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

**TABLE SETTING SONG: *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence (Verses 1 & 2) ..... ELW 490***

1 Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and trem - bling stand;  
 2 King of kings, yet born of Mar - y, as of old on earth he stood,  
 3 Rank on rank the host of heav - en spreads its van-guard on the way;  
 4 At his feet the six - winged ser - aph, cher - u - bim with sleep - less eye,

pon - der noth - ing earth - ly - mind - ed, for with bless - ing in his hand  
 Lord of lords in hu - man ves - ture, in the bod - y and the blood,  
 as the Light of light, de - scend - ing from the realms of end - less day,  
 veil their fac - es to the pres - ence, as with cease - less voice they cry:

Christ our God to earth de - scend - ing comes full hom - age to de - mand.  
 he will give to all the faith - ful his own self for heav'n - ly food.  
 comes, the pow'rs of hell to van - quish, as the dark - ness clears a - way.  
 "Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia, Lord Most High!"

**DIALOGUE FOR HOLY COMMUNION**

P: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

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

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

**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.**

**SHARING OF THE SACRAMENT**

**COMMUNION SONG: *What Feast of Love* ..... ELW 487**



1 What feast of love is of - fered here, what ban-quet come from heav - en?  
2 What light of truth is of - fered here, what cov - e - nant from heav - en?  
3 What wine of love is of - fered here, what crim-son drink from heav - en?



What food of ev - er - last-ing life, what gra - cious gift is giv - en?  
What hope of ev - er - last-ing life, what won-drous word is giv - en?  
What stream of ev - er - last-ing life, what pre - cious blood is giv - en?



This, this is Christ the king, the bread come down from heav - en.  
This, this is Christ the king, the sun come down from heav - en.  
This, this is Christ the king, the sweet - est wine of heav - en.



Oh, taste and see and sing! How sweet the man - na giv - en!  
 Oh, see and hear and sing! The Word of God is giv - en!  
 Oh, taste and see and sing! The Son of God is giv - en!

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939  
 Music: GREENSLEEVES, English ballad, 16th cent.  
 Text © 1993 Delores Dufner OSB. Published by OCP Publications. All rights reserved.

*The congregation stands.*

**COMMUNION BLESSING**

P: The body and blood of Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P: Let us pray . . . God for whom we wait; you come to us in the broken bread and the cup we share. Make us ready always to welcome Christ into our hearts and send us forth to be your people in the world, announcing your coming among us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

**BENEDICTION**

P: The holy Three in One, Almighty God, + Father, Son and Holy Spirit increase your hope, strengthen your faith, deepen your love, and grant you peace.

**All: Amen.**

**DISMISSAL**

A: Go in Peace, remembering God is with us.

**All: Amen.**

**POSTLUDE:** *Silent Night* ..... Fred Flowerday

**SERVING TONIGHT**

**Assisting Minister:** ..... JoEllen Myers  
**Communion Assistant:** ..... Rodney Gross  
**Reader:** ..... Jane Ebersole  
**Livestream:** ..... Kirk Sponaugle



**Christmas Eve Services  
Tuesday, December 24, 2024**

3 PM Christmas Eve Service with Holy Communion

2:45 PM Musical Prelude

5 PM Family Service with Holy Communion and candle lighting

4:45 PM Musical Prelude

9 PM Festival Service of Holy Communion and candle lighting

8:45 PM Musical Prelude

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*“...they will call him  
Immanuel”  
— which means,  
“God with us.”*



*Matthew 1:23*