



# Christmas Day

9:00 - 10:00 a.m.  
December 25, 2022

**St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
400 N. Broadway Street + Medina, OH 44256  
330-725-8885 + [office@stmatthewmedina.org](mailto:office@stmatthewmedina.org)

## **Introduction**

*This worship service has been designed to offer you a break from the hustle and bustle, and instead allow you the opportunity to focus on the greatest gift the world has ever received, the gift of Emmanuel, God with us. As you pray, read, reflect, commune, and pause to listen to the Christmas music playing in the background, may you experience the true joy of Christ's presence. Take as much time as you need. Soak in the sounds and the quiet. Obtain the gift of peace experienced when we take time to surround ourselves with God's Word. Blessings to you this Christmas morning!*

## **Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, † one God, the Word made flesh, our life and our salvation.  
Amen

Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior, let us confess our sin.

God of life, 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.

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. Amen.

## **Proclamation of the Birth of Christ**

Many ages from the time when God created the heavens and the earth and then formed man and woman in his own image; long after the great flood, when God made the rainbow shine forth as a sign of the covenant; twenty-one centuries from the time the promise was given to Abraham and Sarah; thirteen centuries after Moses led the people of Israel out of Egypt and Miriam danced in freedom; eleven hundred years from the time of Ruth and the judges; one thousand years from the anointing of David as king, in fulfillment of the times and years and months and days discerned by the prophets; in the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad; the seven hundred and fifty-second year from the foundation of the city of Rome; the forty-second year of the reign of Octavian Augustus; while the whole world enjoyed a span of peace, Jesus Christ, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father, desiring to sanctify the world by his most merciful coming, being conceived by the Holy Spirit and nine months of growth in the womb of his mother — now in our own times is the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, God made flesh.

## **Prayer of the Day**

All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into our world has brightened weary hearts with peace. Call us out of darkness, and empower us to proclaim the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

## Hymn

*“Rejoice, Rejoice This Happy Morn”*

Rejoice, rejoice this happy morn,  
A Savior unto us is born,  
The Christ, the Lord of Glory!

His lowly birth at 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!

## Scripture Readings and Reflections

### Luke 1:39-56

<sup>39</sup>In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup>where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup>When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup>and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup>And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup>For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup>And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.”

<sup>46</sup>And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, <sup>47</sup>and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, <sup>48</sup>for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; <sup>49</sup>for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. <sup>50</sup>His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. <sup>51</sup>He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. <sup>52</sup>He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; <sup>53</sup>he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. <sup>54</sup>He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, <sup>55</sup>according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.” <sup>56</sup>And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

### Reflection by Paul E. Walters

#### *Food for the Hungry*

Mary’s song connects the dots between the God she knows and has always known, and the God who is orienting her future through her son. Her song foreshadows the life-changing experiences of characters who will encounter Jesus as the story unfolds. In a profound way, Mary realizes that God’s favor of her will be experienced by others because of Jesus. Reading from the prophet Isaiah, Jesus in his first sermon establishes the connection between what God has done in the past and what God is now doing: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of

the Lord's favor" (4:18-19). Further along in Luke's Gospel, Jesus says, "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh" (6:20-21). What God has done, Jesus will do as well.

We hear in Mary's song that God's mercy and favor satisfy her every hunger and need. God reaches out to fill those who hunger due to lack of food. How might we bring God's mercy and favor to people facing hunger, poverty, oppression, or grief? Mary points also to the hungers or needs we have because we are human. We hunger for sustenance, for belonging, for worthiness, for acknowledgment, for regard. We hunger too for companionship, for intimacy, for love. What might it mean to be filled with "good things" in these cases? How might we bring God's mercy and favor to people suffering from these types of hunger?

### **Luke 2:1-7**

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>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.

### **Reflection of Martin Luther translated by Roland Bainton**

A Christmas Sermon in *Here I Stand*

Think, women, there was no one there to bathe the Baby. No warm water, nor even cold. No fire, no light. The mother was herself midwife and the maid. The cold manger as the bed and the bathtub. Who showed the poor girl what to do? She never had a baby before. I am amazed that the little one did not freeze. Do not make of Mary a stone. For the higher people are in favor of God, the more tender they are.

Let us, then, meditate upon the Nativity just as we see it happening in our own babies. Behold Christ lying in the lap of his young mother. What can be sweeter than the Babe, what more lovely than the mother! What fairer than her youth! What more gracious than her virginity! Look at the Child, knowing nothing. Yet all that is belongs to him, that your conscience should not fear but take comfort in him. Doubt nothing. To me there is no greater consolation given to mankind than this, that Christ became a man, a child, a babe, playing in the lap and at the breasts of his most gracious mother. Who is there whom this sight would not comfort? Now is overcome the power of sin, death, hell, conscience, and guilt, if you come to this gurgling Babe and believe that he is come, not to judge you, but to save.

## **Luke 2:8-20**

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>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: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” <sup>15</sup>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.” <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

### **The First Visitors**

Do you enjoy a large gathering on Christmas Day? Or are you isolated this year by work, finances, weather, or for some other reason? You are not alone. It is certainly possible that Mary and Joseph came into the first Christmas feeling the same way, huddled together and all alone with their newborn baby.

God didn't leave them alone for long. When He sent an angel with the first Christmas invitation He didn't choose a mighty emperor or king, prominent priests or Levites, or even wealthy, powerful people. Instead He sent His angel to poor shepherds watching over their flock at night. The angel told them the exceedingly good news that God had kept His promise—a Savior had been born! Because Jesus would take their sins and pay the full price we all owe God, they could leave their flocks and hurry into the presence of their God and King.

Suddenly the sky was filled with a multitude of angels praising God. The overjoyed shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they hurried and found Mary, Joseph, and Jesus. And so began the first Christmas gathering.

Can you imagine the joy Mary and Joseph felt when this unexpected company arrived? We continue this wonderful tradition by hurrying from our homes to “go over to Bethlehem” and gathering together with our Christian brothers and sisters in church to “see this thing that has happened.”

On this day as you gather with family, friends, and your Christian brothers and sisters, don't forget your eternal home where Jesus no longer lays in a manger, but sits on His

royal throne at the Father's right hand. Mary and Joseph no longer wear their poor clothing but shine in the glorious righteousness of Jesus with which they are robed in paradise. The shepherds are before the throne of God, worshipping the Son of God who saved them from their sins.

And if there is an empty spot at your Christmas gathering because a loved one has left this world in faith, then take heart. Like the shepherds, they have gone to see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord had told them about. One day you and I will gather with them because God's Son became human, took our sins upon Himself, and died in our place on the cross. Through His glorious resurrection He has guaranteed we will rise again and live with Him forever in paradise.

### **Nicene Creed**

There is one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. United in Christ, let us confess the faith we hold in common:

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

### **The Prayers**

With wonder and thanksgiving for Christ's coming into the world, we pray for the church, the life of the earth, and the whole human family.

The church in every land makes a joyful noise to herald your coming, O God. We give thanks for poets, musicians, and hymn writers who give voice to our praise, and for all who lead the church's worship. God of grace, hear our prayer.

This day dawns with new hope for all living things, and from ocean depths to mountain peaks the earth rejoices. Inspire in us an urgent zeal to protect the planet and renew its resources. God of grace, hear our prayer.

Bring heavenly peace to this world and an end to armed conflict. Raise up leaders in every nation who will honor human rights and establish equal justice for all people. Give courage to all who speak out against oppression and advocate for the powerless. God of grace, hear our prayer.

Guard the lives of any in danger, especially those who work to protect others. Lead any who are in desperate circumstances to sanctuary, help, and safety. Grant rest to the weary and soothe those who are troubled especially Marge Murray, Sandi, Bob Madey, Arline, Judy McLaughlin, Peggy, Pat, Steve Combs, and those we hold silently in our hearts. God of grace, hear our prayer.

Bless all who gather to worship on this holy day. Be present at our tables and celebrations, and watch over those who travel. Sustain charities, outreach ministries, and food pantries that give generously to people in need. God of grace, hear our prayer.

In Christ we have beheld your glory, full of grace and truth. We give thanks for those in every generation who reflect the light of Christ. May their witness shine forth in our time. God of grace, hear our prayer.

Pondering the mystery of eternal love made flesh in Christ Jesus, we commend all for whom we pray to the mercy of God. Amen.

### **Celebration of Holy Communion**

#### **Philippians 2:5-11**

<sup>5</sup>Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, <sup>7</sup>but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, <sup>8</sup>he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross.

<sup>9</sup>Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup>and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

#### **Reflection by Philippe Ruge-Jones**

##### *Humming Along*

“If” was a word I dreaded as a child. Before I had taken a single class in grammar, I understood what “if” meant. I understood its conditional nature. I could go to my friend’s house *if* I cleaned my room. I would get a ride to the event *if* someone was available to take me. We would go to the movie *if* we could demonstrate that we could get along. I knew that *if* signaled a big maybe, and when the conditions looked all but unlikely, it could be taken as a “No!” The sense of give-and-take implied in that tiny word is important. I have passed it on to my own children, even though I know that *if* is shaky ground upon which to build a foundation.

Paul begins Philippians 2:1-5 with a series chock full of that little word. The NRSV is gentle with us; perhaps the translators had heard Paul's call to gentleness in Philippians 4:5. They reduce Paul's repetition of "if" from four times to only one. But the Greek text forces readers to wonder if they should hope against hope: If there is encouragement, if there is consolation, if there is sharing, if there is compassion and sympathy .... Sometimes I look around at faith communities in all our imperfection, and the absence of encouragement, sharing, and sympathy drives me to despair. In these real-world situations, Paul's conditionals seem less like maybe and more like an outright no. Yet Paul believes his joy will be made complete by the Philippians. What is the source of this untamed hope?

While we cannot by our own reason or effort come up with encouragement, consolation, sharing, and compassion, Paul declares that we have already been shown and given these gifts in Christ. In fact, he reminds us to remake our minds. When we remember that Christ came to us while we were deep in despair, we find ourselves equipped to encourage others. When we remember the consolation poured out upon us in Christ's descent, we find consolation flowing through us toward those who grieve. When we remember that Christ came down to share our lot in life and even in death, we know the freedom that breaks down barriers and allows us to share with other members of our community. When we recall that Christ has shown us compassion, we find ourselves humming along with his song sympathetically. When we have Christ making our minds new, we find our minds shaped by his cross after his pattern. Nothing is more important than the one who went down lower than all else so that we might have peace, salvation, and life.

This morning, we celebrate Christ's descent to be with us. Let us set our hearts on his gift of himself, that we may find ourselves members of a community that conforms to his pattern. We will not agree upon every point; in fact, we will disagree about things each of us believes matter a great deal. But if we set our minds and hearts on what is true, excellent, and worthy of praise, that is, if we stake our lives on Christ Jesus, we will share encouragement, compassion, and love—no ifs, maybes, or buts about it.

### **Eucharistic Prayer**

Holy God, Creator of all and Source of life, at the birth of time your Word brought light into the world. In the fullness of time, you sent your Word, born of Mary, to shine in our darkness and to make us your daughters and sons.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his birth and life among us, his death and resurrection, we await his coming again when all things will be restored in him.

By your Spirit bless us and this bread and cup, that, held and nourished by you, we may live as your children, shining with the light of your Son.

Through Him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever. Amen

### **The 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

### **Invitation to Holy Communion**

Glory to God in the highest! Come to the table of peace.

*You are invited to come forward at this point and kneel along the railing. If you are with family, you may want to wait for them to reach this point as well so that you may come forward together to commune. Grape juice is available in the center of the trays for those who prefer or have health needs concerning wine. Once you have received Holy Communion, you may return to your seats to finish the worship service.*

### **Post Communion Prayer**

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. Amen.

### **John 1:1-14**

<sup>1</sup>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>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. <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.

## **Reflection from Emmy Arnold**

### *Christmas Joy*

To become like Children! The most beautiful childhood memory that comes to my mind is that of celebrating Christmas and the joy of Christmas.

Perhaps my experiences of Christmas came from the fact that I was born on Christmas Day. A hundred days before each Christmas we children would begin to count the days. Only a hundred times more I will wake up in the morning, and then, hurrah! It's Christmas Day! When at six o'clock on the eve of the First Sunday of Advent the bells rang in the Advent season, it seemed as though the angels were exulting, and we little earthly children joined in. "O welcome, thou blessed Christmas time!"

From then on, the joy and eagerness for what was to come mounted with each day. Sometimes in the evening, when I was looking out into the darkness of the still night, I would think I saw God's angels coming down to proclaim the Christmas message to us. The breath of Christmas peace blew down like a greeting from heaven; all the sounds that were part of this time turned into Christmas music.

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates;  
Behold, the Lord of glory comes!

Even though the celebration of Christmas is exploited for business profit and used for selfish purposes; even though the meaning of Christmas is often corrupted; in spite of all this, we all feel the impulse at this time to think of others, to show love to others, to be there for others. This itself shows what this joy of anticipation is. It is the feeling of human solidarity, the exulting joy in one another, the certainty of mutual love. The brightness and fragrance of the living Christmas tree under which Christmas gifts are laid — here is light and warmth symbolizing life and love.

A child, thinking of these Christmas symbols and Christmas gifts, might ask himself, "Is all this something that can go away? Can this be just an excitement that soon fades away?" No, is the answer within him; for all this is not yet the best, and the best cannot pass. "To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given." "God so loved the world that He gave His only Son." Of all gifts there is none so precious as this one. Therefore we ask only for this one gift: Stay with us, Lord Jesus Christ!

When as a child I stood before the lighted crib scene, I often fell into a deep reverie. I saw the Christ Child in his eternal light; I felt the same that the shepherds felt when they came to the crib to worship the little Child. It was there that I first realized what the joy of worship means. God's greatness came in the smallness of the Child in the crib.

When in awe my heart is still  
And tries to grasp this miracle,  
All I can do is pray to God  
And feel how endless is His love.

God became man for our own sake;  
God's Child, with us in flesh united.  
How could God hate us, when He gives  
Us what He, past all measure, loves?

Love Him who with love is burning,  
See the Star who on us pours  
Light and comfort!

Anyone who as a child has looked into God's loving heart can never despair of his life, however hard it may be.

Joy radiates peace. Love brings peace. "I proclaim to you great joy that shall come to all peoples — peace on earth!" The true Christmas experience is to feel that this Christmas peace is the greater power; that even now on earth it overcomes all unpeace. That this peace shall come to all — that is the expectation and the faith of Christmas!

The Christmas Star in the night sky, the shining of the Christmas light in the night — all this is the sign that light breaks into the darkness. Though we see about us the darkness of unrest, of family discord, of class struggle, of competitive jealousy and of national hatred, the light shall shine and drive it out. "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined."

Jesus is the light. Nobody else is the light; others can only witness to the light.

The eternal light shall come to earth  
And give it a new radiance;  
It shines into the midst of night  
And makes us children of the light.

Only those who are reborn as children shall become children of the light. Wherever the Christmas Child is born in a heart, wherever Jesus begins his earthly life anew — that is where the life of God's love and of God's peace dawns again.

### **Hymn**

*"From Heaven Above"*

From heav'n above to earth I come  
To bring good news to ev'ry one!  
Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
To all the world, and gladly sing:

To you this night is born a child  
Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;  
This newborn child of lowly birth  
Shall be the joy of all the earth.

This is the Christ, God's Son most high,  
Who hears your sad and bitter cry;  
He will himself your Savior be  
And from all sin will set you free.

The blessing which the Father planned  
The Son holds in his infant hand,  
That in his kingdom, bright and fair,  
You may with us his glory share.

These are the signs which you will see  
To let you know that it is he:  
In manger-bed, in swaddling clothes  
The child who all the earth upholds.

How glad we'll be to find it so!  
Then with the shepherds let us go  
To see what God for us has done  
In sending us his own dear Son.

Look, look, dear friends, look over there!  
What lies within the manger bare?  
Who is that lovely little one?  
The baby Jesus, God's dear Son.

Welcome to earth, O noble Guest,  
Through whom this sinful world is blest!  
You turned not from our needs away!  
How can our thanks such love repay?

O Lord, you have created all!  
How did you come to be so small,  
To sweetly sleep in manger-bed  
Where lowing cattle lately fed?

Were earth a thousand times as fair  
And set with gold and jewels rare,  
Still such a cradle would not do  
To rock a prince so great as you.

For velvets soft and silken stuff  
You have but hay and straw so rough  
On which as king so rich and great  
To be enthroned in humble state.

O dearest Jesus, holy child,  
Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled,  
A holy shrine, within my heart,  
That you and I need never part.

My heart for very joy now leaps;  
My voice no longer silence keeps;  
I too must join the angel-throng  
To sing with joy his cradle-song:

“Glory to God in highest heav’n,  
Who unto us his Son has giv’n.”  
With angels sing in pious mirth:  
A glad new year to all the earth!

*Text by Martin Luther*

### **Blessing**

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. Amen

### **Dismissal**

Glory to God in the highest! Peace to God’s people on earth!  
Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus. Thanks be to God.

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*If you brought an offering with you this morning, there is an offering plate on a table at the back of the sanctuary where you may place it on your way out.*

*You are welcome to take this bulletin home with you. If you don’t wish to keep it, please return it to the podium to be used again.*



## PRAYERS

**Prayers for Healing:** Marge Murray, Sandi, Bob Madey, Arline, Judy McLaughlin, Peggy, Pat, and Steve Combs.

## TODAY'S WORSHIP & EVENTS

**Today, Christmas Day,** open from 9:00-10:00 a.m. Drop in to pray, read, reflect, commune, and pause to listen to Christmas music playing in the background.

**No Sunday School.**

## NEW YEAR'S EVE, DECEMBER 31, AT ST. MATTHEW

**New Year's Eve,** we will Worship at 5:00 p.m., with Holden Evening Prayer and healing litany. *In-person only.*

## NEXT SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, AT ST. MATTHEW

**Next Sunday, New Year's Day,** we worship at 10:00 a.m. with Lessons and Carols and communion. *In-person and livestream.*

**No Sunday School.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Senior Happy Hour** is on winter break and will resume on Monday, January 9 at 10:30 a.m. Beginning that day, we will start watching season 3 of "The Chosen".

**Bible & Brews** will meet again, Thursday, December 29 at Forest Meadows at 7:00 p.m.

**Annual Reports** - Executive Council members and Five-Star Ministry Chairs, please have your annual reports in to the office by January 15, 2023.

**Book Club** - The next book that we will be reading is *Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah. We will read the book on our own and see the movie when it comes out in January. We will gather together to discuss at Wingz after the movie. Watch for additional details. Happy reading!

**For Sale! Sound Mixer** - We are selling our Mackie SR24-4 analog mixer. It's 25 years old and still in good working condition. Asking \$280. Contact Larry Mohler at 330-391-0130 with questions or interest in buying. (Still on premises if you are interested in purchasing and want to see it first.)

### **The church office will be closed:**

Monday, December 26

Friday, December 31

Monday, January 2

## St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church Staff

The Rev. Steven Mahaffey	Pastor
Deacon Lindsay Bailey	Director of LGL Ministries
John Burke	Organist
Deb Musil	Office Administrator
Joyce Davis	Custodian
Brenda Disbrow	Parish Nurse
Nancy McNeal	Luther Choir Director
Kaitlyn Taraschke	Nursery Attendant

### **Pastor Steve's Contact Information**

Email: [pastorsteve@stmatthewmedina.org](mailto:pastorsteve@stmatthewmedina.org)

Cell Phone: 740-525-6149

### **Deacon Lindsay's Contact Information**

Email: [lindsay@stmatthewmedina.org](mailto:lindsay@stmatthewmedina.org)

Cell Phone: 440-376-8338

### **St. Matthew invites you to join us in celebration of Holy Communion!**

The Lord's table is open to all who believe and are baptized.

Please join us as we receive the means of grace, where Jesus promises to meet us in the bread and the wine.



Hearing Loop  
System available.