

# ***St. Stephen Lutheran Church***

***West & East Bay, Central Valley, and Southern California***

Member congregations of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (clclutheran.org)

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**Websites: ststephenclc.org (East Bay) - sslcwest.org (West)**

**Church Office: (650) 964-5915**

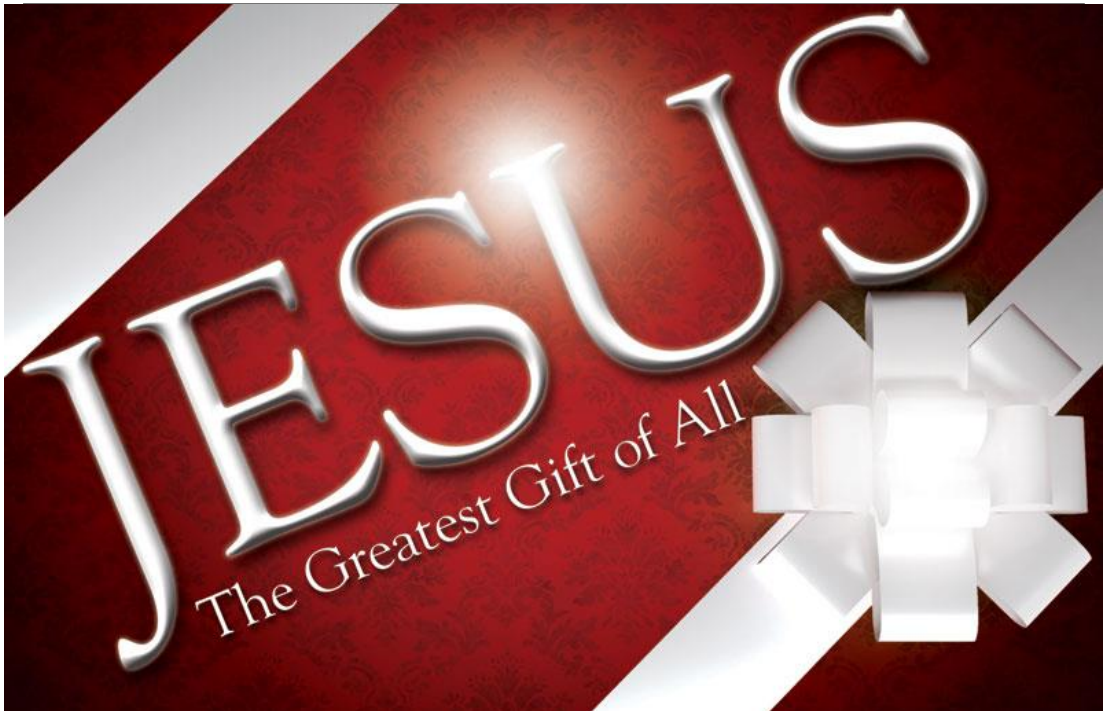
St. Stephen Lutheran School Staff: Mikkela Hammond (Principal), Julia Bernthal (Administrator)

**School Office: (650) 961-2071**

**School Website: ssls.org**

**December 25, 2022 ✝ Christmas Day**

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## Opening Hymn: 383 *A Great and Mighty Wonder*

LSB 383



1 A great and might - y won - der, A full and ho - ly cure:  
 2 The Word be - comes in - car - nate And yet re - mains on high,  
 3 While thus they sing your Mon - arch, Those bright an - gel - ic bands,  
 4 Since all He comes to ran - som, By all be He a - dored,  
 5 All i - dols then shall per - ish And Sa - tan's ly - ing cease,



The vir - gin bears the in - fant With vir - gin hon - or pure!  
 And cher - u - bim sing an - thems To shep - herds from the sky.  
 Re - joice, O vales and moun - tains, And o - ceans, clap your hands.  
 The in - fant born in Beth - l'em, The Sav - ior and the Lord.  
 And Christ shall raise His scep - ter, De - cree - ing end - less peace.

*Refrain*



Pro - claim the Sav - ior's birth: "To God on high be



glo - ry And peace to all the earth!"

Text: Germanus, c. 634–c. 734; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–66, alt.  
 Tune: Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengeseng, 1599, Köln  
 Text and tune: Public domain

## **CHRISTMAS INVOCATION**

- P** Unto us a Child is born, Hallelujah!
- C** **Unto us a Son is given, Hallelujah!**
- P** The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.
- C** **And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.**

- P** Oh, come, let us worship Him, Christ, the Lord:  
**C** **Let us kneel before our Savior in the manger. Hallelujah!**
- P** Let us now celebrate His birth.  
**C** **And tell of His coming to the ends of the earth.**

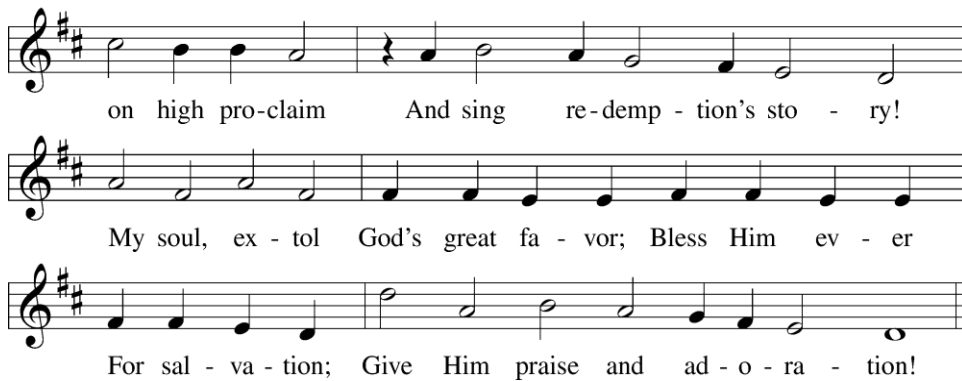
### **CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

- P** Dear Heavenly Father, having come into Your presence, we are moved to confess our sins to You:
- C** **O most merciful God, we confess to You all of our sins.  
 We have sinned against You by what we have thought, said, and done.  
 Yet You have given Your only begotten Son to die for us.  
 Have mercy on us we pray, and for His sake grant us forgiveness of all our sins. By the power of Your Holy Spirit cause us to know Your holy will and to obey it willingly, and in the end, by Your grace, through faith, bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**
- P** Our Father in Heaven has been good and merciful to us. In His love He has given us, His children, the greatest Gift: He sent His Son Jesus, whose birth in Bethlehem so long ago we celebrate today. Jesus came as a lowly servant to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. By His shed blood on the cross we are forgiven! In peace and joy let us sing of our salvation!

#### **391 Rejoice, Rejoice This Happy Morn**

Re - joi - ce, re - joi - ce this hap - py morn, A Sav - ior un -  
 to us is born, The Christ, the Lord of glo - ry!  
 His low - ly birth in Beth - le - hem The an - gels from

*(hymn continues on next page ->)*



Text: Birgitte Katerine Boye, 1742–1824; tr. Carl Döving, 1867–1937  
 Tune: Philipp Nicolai, 1556–1608  
 Text and tune: Public domain

## **THE PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P** Let us pray...

Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in human flesh may set us free from the sin that held us in bondage. We pray this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord and Savior, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

## **Luke 2:1-20 (KJV) - *The Christmas Account***

(with verses from various Christmas hymns)

**Pastor:** And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

*(O Little Town of Bethlehem - 361 v. 1 LSB)*

**♪ O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep And dreamless sleep The silent stars go by;  
Yet in thy darkness shineth The everlasting Light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in Thee tonight.**

**Pastor:** And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

**CONGREGATION:** And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them,

**Pastor:** Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

*(What Child is This - 370 LSB)*

**♪ What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet  
While shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the king, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The babe, the son of Mary!**

**Why lies He in such mean estate Where oxen now are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here The silent Word is pleading.  
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,  
The cross be borne for me, for you;  
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The babe, the son of Mary!**

***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!***

Text: William C. Dix, 1837–98  
Text: Public domain

**Pastor:** And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

**ALL:** “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!”

**“Angels We Have Heard on High”** *LSB 368 v. 1*

1 An - gels we have heard on high, Sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,  
And the moun - tains in re - ply, Ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.  
*Refrain*  
Glo - - - - ri - a  
in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

Text and tune: Public domain

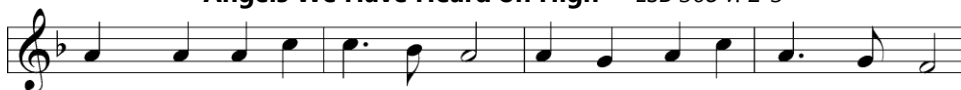
**Pastor:** And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another,

**CONGREGATION:** “Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.”

**Pastor:** And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

**ALL:** And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

**"Angels We Have Heard on High" LSB 368 v. 2-3**



2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro-long?  
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;



What the glad - some tid - ings be Which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?  
Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.

*(hymn continues on next page ->)*



Glo - - - - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - -



ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

Text and tune: Public domain

## CONFESSION OF FAITH

### **“The Christmas Creed”**

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,  
Who sent His Son as my Savior on Christmas Day.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,  
Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,  
Born of the Virgin Mary,  
Announced by the Angels,  
Worshiped by the shepherds,  
Adored by the Wise Men,  
Who lived to suffer, die, and rise again,  
To free me from sin, death, and the power of the devil.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
Who has brought me to faith in the Christ of Christmas,  
And by whose continuous work in my heart,  
I am ever led to show Christ my love and live under Him as my King,  
Both now and forevermore. Amen.**

### **Hymn: 373 *See Amid the Winter Snow***

*LSB 373*

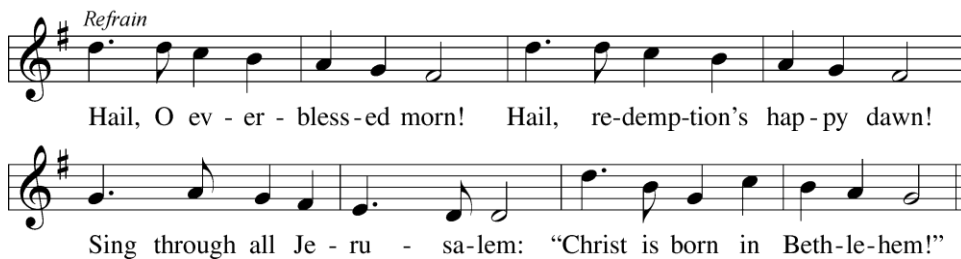


1 See a - mid the win - ter's snow, Born for us on earth be - low,  
2 Lo, with - in a sta - ble lies He who built the star - ry skies,  
3 Sa - cred In - fant, all di - vine, What a ten - der love was Thine,  
4 Teach, O teach us, ho - ly Child, By Thy face so meek and mild,



See, the gen - tle Lamb ap - pears, Prom - ised from e - ter - nal years.  
He who, throned in height sub - lime, Sits a - mid the cher - u - bim.  
Thus to come from high - est bliss Down to such a world as this!  
Teach us to re - sem - ble Thee In Thy sweet hu - mil - i - ty.





Text and tune: Public domain

## THE SERMON

### Luke 2:15-20 (NKJV)


<sup>15</sup> So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup> And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. <sup>17</sup> Now when they had seen *Him*, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. <sup>18</sup> And all those who heard *it* marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. <sup>19</sup> But Mary kept all these things and pondered *them* in her heart. <sup>20</sup> Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

### Sermon Theme: "Christmas Traditions" – Worship!

- ✠ What are some reasons why worshipping Jesus the most important and best of all our "Christmas Traditions?"

## Offertory

LSB 956



Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new  
a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way  
from Thy pres - ence; and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it  
from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va - tion;  
and up - hold me with Thy free spir - it. A - men.

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## THE OFFERING OF THANKFUL HEARTS

*In tangible evidence of our gratitude, we offer the Lord the gift of our money, remembering that He has first given to us that we might have to give to Him.*

**(† If you have an offering to give today, please place it in the plate in the church entryway. †)**

## **Sermon Hymn: 367 Angels from the Realms of Glory** (please stand for last verse)



1 An - gels from the realms of glo - ry, Wing your flight o'er  
2 Shep - herds in the field a - bid - ing, Watch - ing o'er your  
3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, Bright - er vi - sions  
4 Saints be - fore the al - tar bend - ing, Watch - ing long in  
△ 5 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God the Fa - ther,

all the earth; Ye who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry,  
flocks by night, God with us is now re - sid - ing,  
beam a - far; Seek the great De - sire of na - tions,  
hope and fear, Sud - den - ly the Lord, de - scend - ing,  
Spir - it, Son, Ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing

Now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth.  
Yon - der shines the In - fant Light.  
Ye have seen His na - tal star.  
In His tem - ple shall ap - pear.  
To the e - ter - nal Three in One.

*Refrain*

Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship;

Wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.

Text (sts. 1, ref, 2-4): James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt.; (st. 5): Salisbury Hymn Book, 1857, Salisbury, alt.  
Tune: Henry T. Smart, 1813-79  
Text and tune: Public domain

## **THE GENERAL PRAYER**

(Pastor)

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

(All)

- ☐ 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.**

## THE BENEDICTION

*The blessing given by God for the blessing of His people (Numbers 6:24-26).*

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.  
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

**C**  **Amen, Amen, Amen.**

### Closing Hymn: 387 *Joy to the World* (please stand for last verse)

LSB 387



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive her  
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their songs em -  
3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow Nor thorns in - fest the  
4 He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the na - tions

King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare Him  
ploy, While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
ground; He comes to make His bless - ings  
prove The glo - ries of His righ - 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

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.

Text and tune: Public domain

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**A Blessed & Merry Christmas to You All!** – Thank you for all the cards, gifts, treats, and expressions of love and support that you have given to Julia and me during this Christmas season. It has been a joy and a privilege to serve you and to share the Good News of our Savior with all of you in this ministry! May the Joy of the birth of our Savior Jesus fill your hearts, minds, and lives this Christmas Day and always. Praise be to God for His wonderful gift! ***“Oh Come, Let Us Adore Him, Christ the Lord!”***

- Pastor Luke Bernthal

**This Week:** No School @ SSLS (resumes on Mon. Jan. 9<sup>th</sup>)

Monday – Pastor Luke leaves for vacation in Wisconsin (returns Thurs. Jan. 5<sup>th</sup>)

**Next Sunday - January 1<sup>st</sup>** – **St. Stephen – West** (Mt. View): **Worship – 10am**

(Sermon: Mark Gullerud; Liturgy: Scott Mueller)

**St. Stephen – East Bay** (Hayward): **Worship – 1pm**

(Conducting Worship: Timothy Blank)

**Online Worship Service - <https://www.sslcwest.org/worship.html>**

*Note: Our Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services will be posted online, but it could take a bit longer than normal to get the services uploaded, edited, and posted.*

*We will send out an email notification when the services are posted online.*

## ***The Advent Wreath***



The Advent wreath is rich in symbolism, and as such it aids our worship as it reinforces our hope in the ultimate coming of our Lord. The wreath is covered with evergreen. Just as this species of tree is always green, so our hope for eternity is always alive because it rests upon the living Christ. The wreath is also in the form of a circle, which has no beginning and no end. What better way to picture that our life with God is everlasting.

The lighted candles are symbolic of the light of Christ and His Gospel, which alone can lift us out of our sin & spiritual darkness. The 4 Advent candles remind us of the 4000 years of waiting for Christ by the Old Testament world. The 3 purple candles are the color for repentance. The rose candle is the color for **joy**. Each of the 4 candles has been assigned a special name with special significance: **Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.**

**The Christ Candle** is the white candle in the center, and is lit on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. It signals that He Who is the Light of the world has been born.

The light these candles put forth seems small; so does the gospel at times. But to those in lonely darkness, it is the powerful light which shows the way to Heaven.