



*I am bringing you  
good news  
of great joy*

LUKE 2:10





# ***Gathered By the Cross at St. Peter Christmas Eve – The Nativity of Our Lord A Festival of Lessons and Carols***

*December 24, 2025*

*IN-PERSON and LIVESTREAM WORSHIP at [splcm.org/worship](https://splcm.org/worship)*

*Video streamed in Sunday School Wing*



## **AS WE ARE GATHERED BY THE CROSS**

*Welcome to this special service. We are privileged to share together in this great occasion which is an act of worship for us here and for the millions of Christians who join in worship around the world on this holy night. In the familiar account of Christ's birth, the evening sky is bright with the heavenly host singing, "Glory to God in the highest." Sometimes we forget that none of us makes this night holy. The Lord makes this night holy. We gather to listen to the familiar story, receiving once again its truth and promise, and like stars in the night we reflect what God has done to save us. In this winter's deepest night, we welcome the holy light of the Christ child who illumines the world and brings peace within fragile flesh and blood by forgiving all who call to Him for grace and mercy. We cannot make this night holy, but we can keep it holy with faith that kneels at the manger where the Christ child is laid, heads bowed in prayer and adoration, and voices raised in a joyful song of thanksgiving and praise.*

**P**—PASTOR; **C**—CONGREGATION; **A**—CANTOR/CHOIR; **L**—LECTOR/LEADER

## **⌘ In the Name of Jesus ⌘**

### **PRE-SERVICE MUSIC**

*Please remain seated*

### **BLESSING AND LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE**

- P** God of Adam and Eve, God of all our ancestors, we praise You for the tree of life. Let this Christmas tree point us to that tree. Stir in us a memory of paradise, and bring us a glimpse of heaven. Send Your Son, Jesus, the shoot sprung from the root of Jesse, to restore us and Your good earth to the freshness of Eden. On the day of His coming, every tree of the forest will clap its hands in joy and all creation will bless You from these shining branches. Glory in heaven and peace on earth, both now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**



## PROCESSIONAL HYMN

## Once In Royal David's City

(SOLO) *Once in royal David's city  
stood a lowly cattle shed,  
Where a mother laid her baby  
in a manger for His bed:  
Mary was that mother mild,  
Jesus Christ her little Child.*

(CHOIR) *He came down to earth from heaven,  
who is God and Lord of all,  
And His shelter was a stable,  
and His cradle was a stall;  
With the poor and mean and lowly  
lived on earth our Savior holy.*

(WOMEN) *And through all His wondrous childhood He would honor and obey,*

(CHILDREN) *Love and watch the lowly maiden in whose gentle arms He lay;  
Christian children all must be mild, obedient, good as He.*

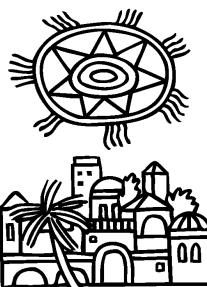
(ALL) **For He is our childhood's pattern, day by day like us He grew;  
He was little, weak, and helpless; tears and smiles like us He knew;  
And He feels for all our sadness, and He shares in all our gladness.**

(ALL) **And our eyes at last shall see Him through His own redeeming love.  
For that Child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heav'n above;  
And He leads His children on to the place where He is gone.**

*Stand*

(ALL) **Not in that poor, lowly stable with the oxen standing by  
Shall we see Him, but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high;  
Then like stars His children, crowned,  
All in white, His praise will sound!**

Text: Cecil F. Alexander; Tune: IRBY; from Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 376 (v. 3 added)



## GREETING AND LORD'S PRAYER

☐ Beloved in Christ... These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the Throne of Heaven in the words which Christ Himself hath taught 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.**

Sit

**CAROL** (CHOIR AND CONGREGATION)

**I Wonder as I Wander**

(SOLO) *I wonder as I wander, out under the sky,  
How Jesus the Savior did come for to die  
For poor ord'n'ry people like you and like I.  
I wonder as I wander, out under the sky.*



(WOMEN) **When Mary birthed Jesus, all in a cow's stall,  
Came wisemen and farmers and shepherds and all,  
And high from the heavens a star's light did fall;  
The promise of the ages it then did recall.**

(MEN) **If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing,  
A star in the sky or a bird on the wing,  
Or all of God's angels in heav'n for to sing,  
He surely could have had it, 'cause he was the king.**

(SOLO) *I wonder as I wander, out under the sky,  
How Jesus the Savior did come for to die  
For poor ord'n'ry people like you and like I.  
I wonder as I wander, out under the sky.*

Text: Appalachian carol, collected by John Jacob Niles, 1892-1980

Tune: I WONDER, Appalachian folk tune, adapt. John Jacob Niles, 1892-1980 Source: WOV 642

**First Lesson**

**LESSON – Genesis 3:1-19**

*The lesson is read.*

- ☐ This is the Word of the Lord.
- ☒ Thanks be to God.



**CAROL** (CONGREGATION)

**What Child Is This**

**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 ox and ass 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!**

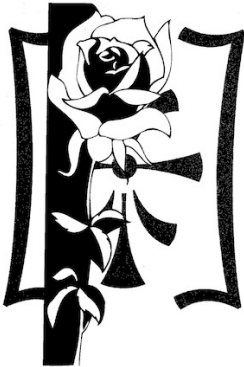
**So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh; come peasant, king, to own Him.  
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone Him.  
Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby;  
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!**

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-98; Tune: GREENSLEEVES; English, 16<sup>th</sup> cent.;  
Setting: John Stainer, 1840-1901, alt.; from LSB 370

## Second Lesson

**CAROL** (*CHOIR*)

*Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming – Hugo Distler*



*Lo! how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung,  
Of Jesse's lineage coming, as men of old have sung.  
It came a Flow'ret bright amid the cold of winter,  
when half-spent was the night.*

*Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind.  
With Mary we behold it, the Virgin Mother kind.  
To show God's love aright, she bore to men a Savior,  
When half-spent was the night.*

*This Flow'r whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air,  
Dispels with glorious splendor the darkness ev'rywhere.  
True man, yet very God! From sin and death he saves us,  
and lightens ev'ry load.*

Text: German carol, 15th cent.

**LESSON – Isaiah 9:2-7**

*The lesson is read.*

- L** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** Thanks be to God.



**It came upon the midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,  
From angels bending near the earth  
to touch their harps of gold:  
“Peace on the earth, goodwill to all,  
from heav’n’s all-gracious king.”  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
to hear the angels sing.**

**Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled,  
And still their heav’nly music floats o’er all the weary world.  
Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hov’ring wing.  
And ever o’er its babel sounds the blessed angels sing.**

**All you, beneath your heavy load, by care and guilt bent low,  
Who toil along a dreary way with painful steps and slow:  
Look up, for golden is the hour, come swiftly on the wing.  
The prince was born to bring you peace; of Him the angels sing.**

**For lo, the days have come to pass by prophets seen of old,  
When down into the circling years came Christ as was foretold.  
His word of peace shall to the earth God’s ancient promise bring.  
And all who take this gift will hear the song the angels sing.**

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810-1876, alt.

Tune: CAROL; Richard S. Willis, 1819-1900; from LSB 366

### **Third Lesson**



*Before the marvel of this night, adoring, fold your wings and bow,  
Then tear the sky apart with light and with your news the world endow.  
Proclaim the birth of Christ and peace, that fear and death and sorrow cease:  
Sing peace, sing peace, sing gift of peace, Sing peace, sing gift of peace!*

*Awake the sleeping world with song, this is the day the Lord has made.  
Assemble here, celestial throng, in royal splendor come arrayed.  
Give earth a glimpse of heav’nly bliss, a teasing taste of what they miss:  
Sing bliss, sing bliss, sing endless bliss, Sing bliss, sing endless bliss!*

*The love that we have always known, our constant joy and endless light,  
Now to the loveless world be shown, now break upon its deathly night.  
Into one song compress the love, that rules our universe above:  
Sing love, sing love, sing God is love, Sing God is love!*

## **LESSON – Luke 1:26-35, 38**

*The lesson is read.*

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

### **Fourth Lesson**

*Stand*

**CAROL** (CONGREGATION)

**O Come, All Ye Faithful**

**O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!**

**O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;**

**Come and behold Him born the king of angels: REFRAIN**



**REFRAIN:**

**O come, let us adore Him,**

**O come, let us adore Him,**

**O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!**

**Highest, most holy, Light of Light eternal,**

**Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;**

**Son of the Father now in flesh appearing! REFRAIN**

**Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,**

**Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!**

**Glory to God in the highest: REFRAIN**

**Yea, Lord we greet Thee, born this happy morning;**

**Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n!**

**Word of the Father now in flesh appearing! REFRAIN**

Text: John F. Wade, c. 1711-86; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-80, alt.;

Tune: ADESTE FIDELES; from LSB 379

*Sit*

## **LESSON – Luke 2:1-7**

*The lesson is read.*

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.



**CAROL** (CHOIR)

*Away in a Manger – arr. Reginald Jacques*

*Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.  
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,  
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.*

**Fifth Lesson**

**CAROL** (CONGREGATION)

**Angels from the Realms of Glory**△

**Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o’er all the earth;  
Ye who sang creation’s story, now proclaim Messiah’s birth.**



**REFRAIN:**

**Come and worship, come and worship;  
Worship Christ, the newborn King.**

**Shepherds in the field abiding, watching o’er your flocks by night,  
God with us is now residing, yonder shines the Infant light. REFRAIN**

**Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar;  
Seek the great Desire of nations, ye have seen His natal star. REFRAIN**

**Saints before the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear,  
Suddenly the Lord, descending, in His temple shall appear. REFRAIN**

*Stand*

**△ All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son,  
Evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One. REFRAIN**

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, sts. 1-4, alt.;

Salisbury Hymn Book, Salisbury, 1857, st. 5, alt.

Tune: REGENT SQUARE; Henry T. Smart, 1813-79; setting: *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 1941; from LSB 367

**LESSON – Luke 2:8-20**

*The lesson is read.*

- L** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** Thanks be to God.



## Sixth Lesson

### CAROL (CHOIR AND CONGREGATION)

**We Three Kings** – arr. Michael Burkhardt

(CHOIR) 1. *We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star. REFRAIN*



(ALL) **REFRAIN:**

**O star of wonder, star of night,  
Star with royal beauty bright;  
Westward leading, still proceeding,  
Guide us to thy perfect light!**

(SOLO) 2. *Born a King on Bethlehem's plain; gold I bring to crown him again;  
King forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign. REFRAIN*

(SOLO) 3. *Frankincense to offer have I; incense owns a deity nigh;  
Prayer and praising, gladly raising, worshiping God on high. REFRAIN*

(SOLO) 4. *Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom;  
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb. REFRAIN*

(ALL) 5. **Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice:  
Alleluia! Alleluia! sounds through the earth and skies. REFRAIN**

Text: John Henry Hopkins, Jr., 1820-1891, alt.; Tune: THREE KINGS OF ORIENT; from WOV 646

### LESSON – Matthew 2:1-12

*The lesson is read.*

☐ This is the Word of the Lord.

☑ Thanks be to God.

### OFFERTORY CAROL (CHOIR)

*Alleluia! Gloria! Magnificat! Nowell! — David W. Music*

*Alleluia! Gloria! Magnificat! Nowell! Jubilate! Hodie natus Emmanuel!  
(Now sing we all Noel! Oh, be joyful! On this day is born Emmanuel!)*

*Children 'round the manger sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"  
as the shepherds once adored, kneeling to creation's Lord.  
Sing a gentle lullaby for the Son of God most high.*

*On Christmas night all Christians sing to hear the news the angels bring,  
News of great joy, news of great mirth, news of our merciful King's birth.*

*From out of darkness, we have light, which made the angels sing this night:  
"Glory to God and peace to men now and forevermore. Amen."*



*Note: Offerings are received at the entrance.*



*Lighting of the candles: The acolytes will light the candle of the first worshiper in each pew. Each worshiper will in turn light the candle of the person next to them. Please tip the unlit candle into the lit candle when lighting your candle. Lighted candles should always remain in an upright position. The candles will remain burning until after the reading of John 1:1-14.*

## Seventh Lesson

**CAROL** (CONGREGATION)

**Silent Night – Franz Grüber**



**Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht! Alles schläft, einsam wacht  
Nur das traute, hochheilige Paar.  
Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,  
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh, Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh.**

**Silent night, Holy night! All is calm, all is bright  
Round yon virgin mother and child.  
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.**

**Silent night, Holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;  
Glories stream from heaven afar, heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!  
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!**

**Silent night, Holy night! Son of God, love's pure light  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.**

Text: Franz Joseph Mohr, 1792-1848; tr. John F. Young, 1820-85;

Tune: STILLE NACHT, Franz Xaver Gruber, 1787-1863; setting: Traditional; from LSB 363

**LESSON – John 1:1-14**

*The lesson is read.*

- L** This is the Word of the Lord.
- G** Thanks be to God.

*Please extinguish candles. Place candles in the basket in the narthex as you leave.*

**CHRISTMAS MESSAGE**



## HYMN (*CONGREGATION & CHOIR*)

## Of the Father's Love Begotten

(SOLO) *Of the Father's love begotten  
Ere the worlds began to be,  
He is Alpha and Omega,  
He the source, the ending He,  
Of the things that are, that have been,  
And that future years shall see,  
Evermore and evermore.*

(WOMEN and CHILDREN) ***Oh, that birth forever blessed,  
When the virgin, full of grace,  
By the Holy Ghost conceiving,  
Bore the Savior of our race,  
And the babe, the world's Redeemer,  
First revealed His sacred face  
Evermore and evermore.***

(CHOIR) *This is He whom seers in old time  
Chanted of with one accord,  
Whom the voices of the prophets  
Promised in their faithful word.  
Now He shines, the long-expected;  
Let creation praise its Lord  
Evermore and evermore.*

(ALL) ***O ye heights of heav'n adore Him;  
Angel hosts, His praises sing.  
Pow'rs, dominions, bow before Him  
And extol our God and King.  
Let no tongue on earth be silent,  
Ev'ry voice in concert ring  
Evermore and evermore.***

*Stand*

(ALL) △ ***Christ, to thee, with God the Father,  
And, O Holy Ghost, to Thee  
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving  
And unending praises be,  
Honor, glory, and dominion,  
And eternal victory  
Evermore and evermore. Amen.***



Text: Aurelius Prudentius Clemens, 348-c. 413; tr. composite; Tune: DIVINUM MYSTERIUM; from LSB 384

## **Eighth Lesson**

*Sit*

### **LESSON – 1 John 4:7-11**

*The lesson is read.*

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**G** Thanks be to God.

*Stand*

### **CAROL (CONGREGATION)**

### **Hark! The Herald Angels Sing**

**Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;  
With the angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”** *REFRAIN*



#### **REFRAIN:**

**Hark! The herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the new-born King!”**

**Christ, by highest heav’n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
Late in time behold Him come, offspring of a virgin’s womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail the incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel!** *REFRAIN*

**Hail, the heav’n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings, ris’n with healing in His wings.  
Mild He lays His glory by, born that man no more may die,  
Born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.** *REFRAIN*

Tune: MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn, 1809-47

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-88, alt.

Setting: William H. Cummings, 1831-1915; from LSB 380

### **COLLECT FOR CHRISTMAS EVE**

**P** Let us pray. O God, who makes us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Thy only Son, Jesus Christ: Grant that as we joyfully receive Him for our Redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold Him when He shall come to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

**G** Amen.

## BENEDICTION

- P** Let us bless the Lord.
- C** **Thanks be to God.**
- P** May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ child. Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

## CAROL (*CONGREGATION*)

## Joy to the World



**Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let ev'ry heart prepare him room  
And heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.**

**Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ,  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.**

**No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make His blessings flow  
Far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,  
Far as, far as the curse is found.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove  
The glories of His righteousness  
And wonders of His love, and wonders of His love,  
And wonders, wonders of His love.**

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748; Tune: ANTIOCH, George Frideric Handel, 1685-1759, adapt.;  
setting: Lowell Mason, 1792-1872; from LSB 387

## POSTLUDE (*ORGAN*)

☩ **Glory to God Alone** ☩



## THOSE WHO SERVE TODAY:

Preacher:	The Rev. Dr. Adam Clark, Senior Pastor	Lectors:	Andrew Deliyannides, Jackie Homann, Amy Smessaert, Brian Reedstrom,
Liturgist:	The Rev. Bryan G. Borger, Associate Pastor		David Seitz, John Schroeder, Pastor Borger, and Anne Mangelsdorf
Music Director and Organist:	Emily Ruch <i>St. Peter Adult Choir &amp; Ensemble</i>	Crucifer:	Cooper Rockwell
		Usher:	Matt Rockwell
Soloists:	Nora Ruch Emma Clark Dave Homann Joel Krueger Chuck Ryan	Greeters:	TBD
		Sound Board:	Sam Homann
		Video Streaming:	Sam Homann
		Doorkeeper:	Cindy Matthews

## A SPECIAL THANKS TO:

*Adult Choir;  
Emily Ruch, Music Director and Organist;  
all who shared their musical gifts during the service;  
and Liturgical Arts for the appointments which proclaim  
and enliven the messages of the Advent and Christmas seasons in the worship space.*

*Also, a special thank you to all who helped make our sanctuary and church so beautiful this Christmas season: those who helped cut down and set up the tree on November 29<sup>th</sup>, those who prepared the tree by stringing the lights, and those who decorated the tree and prepared the sanctuary space for Christmas.*

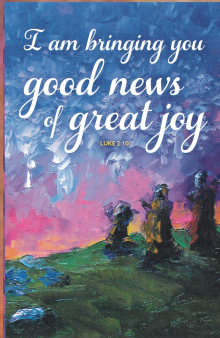
*We also thank the St. Peter Altar Guild and Women of St. Peter  
for coordinating and providing poinsettias this year and all who donated funds for the poinsettias:*

*Cameron and Ashton Behey, Steve and Judy Bubanovich, Mike Fonck, Sandy Holland,  
Martin Kerwin, Joel Krueger, Kathy Levy, Dave and Nancy Luppess, Anne Mangelsdorf,  
Cindy Matthews, Dan and Laurie Miner, Tim and Laura Nye, Brian and Jill Reedstrom,  
Chuck and Paula Ryan, Annette Winterrowd.*



# Christmas Worship Schedule

IN-PERSON AND LIVESTREAM AT [SPLCM.ORG/WORSHIP](http://SPLCM.ORG/WORSHIP)



Thursday, December 25<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 am

*Christmas Day Worship – The Nativity of Our Lord*

Sunday, December 28<sup>th</sup>, at 10:15 am

*1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Christmas – Feast of the Holy Innocents*

**NOTE: NO EDUCATION HOUR**

Sunday, January 4<sup>th</sup>, at 10:15 am

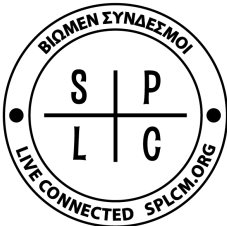
*2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Christmas (with Epiphany Reading)*

**NOTE: NO EDUCATION HOUR**

*(Education Hour resumes Sunday, Jan. 11, 9:00-9:50 am)*

## St. Peter Lutheran Church

**437 East Dagoon Trail; Mishawaka, IN 46544; 574-255-5585**



The Rev. Dr. Adam Clark, Senior Pastor – Cell 574-323-0654

The Rev. Bryan G. Borger, Associate Pastor – Cell 574-386-6401

Mrs. Emily Ruch, Director of Music Ministries

Renee Peggs, Ministry Coordinator (Church Office)

**Sunday Schedule:**

**Education Hour (All Ages)**

**9:00-9:50am**

**Sunday Worship**

**10:15am**