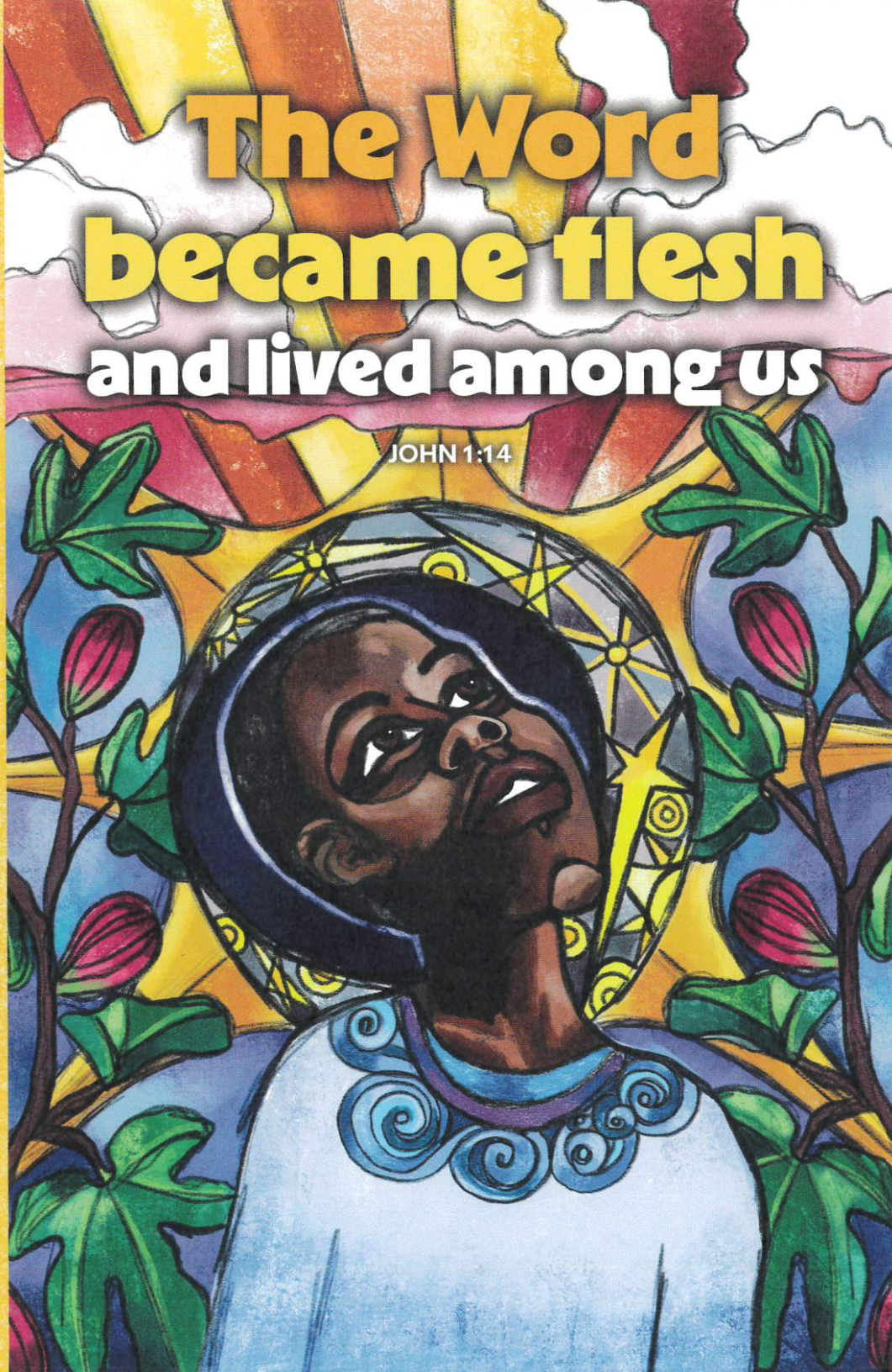
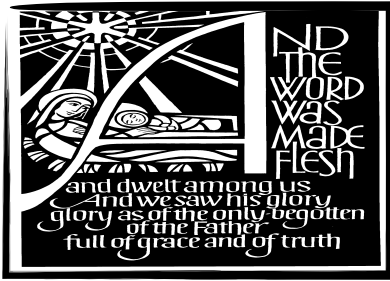


The Word became flesh and lived among us

JOHN 1:14





Gathered By the Cross at St. Peter Christmas Day – The Nativity of Our Lord

December 25, 2025

*IN-PERSON and LIVESTREAM WORSHIP at splcm.org/worship
Video streamed in Sunday School Wing*



AS WE ARE GATHERED BY THE CROSS

The Life-Giving Word of God Dwells Among Us in the Flesh

God publishes peace, salvation, and the good news that “*all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.*” For the Lord has “*bared his holy arm*” in the incarnate Christ (*Is. 52:7, 10*). The Child in the manger, born of the Virgin Mary, is the very Word of God, the only begotten Son of the Father, “*whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world*” (*Heb. 1:2*). As “*all things were made through him*” (*John 1:3*), so are all things redeemed and made new in Him. In His body of flesh and blood, we behold “*the radiance of the glory of God*” (*Heb. 1:3*), “*glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth*” (*John 1:14*). He has made his dwelling among us in peace that we might have life and light and salvation in Him. For by His Word of the Gospel, we are born again as sons of God, his children, bearing His name and sharing His eternal life.

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

✠ In the Name of Jesus ✠

GATHERING

PRELUDE CAROL (CHOIR)

Come Run, Ye Shepherds - Hal H. Hopson

Come run, ye shepherds! The star is shining, the gates of Bethlehem high are lifted.

Make haste to enter, and find the stable,

And kneel down and worship the newborn King.

Come play your pipe, come play your drum; Make merry and dance the way along,

For Christ is born, yes, Christ is born; yes, Jesus, our Savior, is born.

Sing Noel on the way to Bethlehem; come and join us; Jesus, the Savior, is born.

The prophets wrote, the sages spoke of this night of wonder, this night of joy;

come join our hearts, come join our voices and praise of the newborn King.



PROCLAMATION OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST (CANTOR)

Stand

INVOCATION

Matthew 28:19b; [18-20]

- P** We are gathered in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

- P** Amidst the darkness of this world,
let us confess our sin and welcome the light of God's forgiveness.

Kneel or Sit

- P** Mary accepted Your call to be the mother of Jesus.
C **Forgive our lack of faith and trust in Your will.**
P Your Son was born in the poverty of a manger.
C **Forgive our neglect of the poor.**
P The shepherds left their flocks and went to Bethlehem.
C **Forgive our selfishness and complacency.**
P The magi followed the star to find the Savior of the nations.
C **Forgive our reluctance to seek You with all our hearts.**
P The angel said, "You shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." With great joy, I announce to you the entire forgiveness of your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

[John 20:19-23]



Stand and turn toward the processional cross.

GATHERING HYMN

Love Has Come



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 Noël's composés en langue provençale, 1856

Text: © 1996 Integrity's Hosanna! Music (ASCAP); Used by permission OneLicense.net License # A-707328.

BLESSING OF THE NATIVITY SCENE

- P** Let us pray. Lord our God, with Mary and Joseph, angels and shepherds, and the animals in the stable, we gather around Your Son, born for us. Bless us with Your holy presence, and inspire us to help those who have no place to dwell. Be with us that we might share Christ's love with all the world, for He is our light and salvation. Glory in heaven and peace on earth, now and forever.

C Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE

Angels We Have Heard on High

P Glory to God in the highest, and peace to His people on earth.



C Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And the mountains in reply,
Echoing their joyous strains.

Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

**Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.**

Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo. *from LSB 368 verses 1 and 3*

SALUTATION AND PRAYER OF THE DAY

P The grace of our Savior ✠ Jesus Christ,
Word made flesh, born of Mary, be with you all.

C And also with you.

2 Timothy 4:22

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

C Amen.

WORD

Sit

READINGS AND RESPONSES

FIRST LESSON – Isaiah 52:7-10

⁷How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of him who brings good news,
who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness,
who publishes salvation,
who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.”

⁸The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice;
together they sing for joy;
for eye to eye they see
the return of the LORD to Zion.

⁹Break forth together into singing,
you waste places of Jerusalem,
for the LORD has comforted his people;
he has redeemed Jerusalem.
¹⁰The LORD has bared his holy arm
before the eyes of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.

L This is the Word of the Lord:

C Thanks be to God.

CAROL

**1 Infant holy,
Infant lowly,
For His bed a cattle stall;
Oxen lowing,
Little knowing
Christ the child is Lord of all.
Swiftly winging,
Angels singing,
Bells are ringing,
Tidings bringing:
Christ the child is Lord of all!
Christ the child is Lord of all!**

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly – LSB 393

**2 Flocks were sleeping,
Shepherds keeping
Vigil till the morning new
Saw the glory,
Heard the story,
Tidings of a Gospel true.
Thus rejoicing,
Free from sorrow,
Praises voicing,
Greet the morrow:
Christ the child was born for you!
Christ the child was born for you!**

Text: tr. Edith M. G. Reed, 1885–1933, alt.; Polish; Text: Public domain

SECOND LESSON – Hebrews 1:1-12

The Supremacy of God's Son

¹Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

⁵For to which of the angels did God ever say,
“You are my SON, today I have begotten you”?

Or again,
“I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son”?

⁶And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,
“Let all God’s angels worship him.”

⁷Of the angels he says,
“He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire.”

⁸But of the Son he says,
“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,
the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom.

⁹You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has anointed you
with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.”

¹⁰And,
“You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning,
and the heavens are the work of your hands;

¹¹they will perish, but you remain;
they will all wear out like a garment,

¹²like a robe you will roll them up,
like a garment they will be changed.

But you are the same, and your years will have no end.”

L This is the Word of the Lord:

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL PROCESSIONAL VERSE

Let Our Gladness Have No End, Alleluia!

from LSB 381 verses 1 and 4

C Let our gladness have no end, Alleluia!
For to earth did Christ descend, Alleluia!

Into flesh is made the Word, Alleluia!
He, our refuge and our Lord, Alleluia!

HOLY GOSPEL – John 1:1–18

P The Holy Gospel according to Saint John, the 1st chapter:

C Glory to You, O Lord.

The Word Became Flesh

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵(John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”) ¹⁶And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.



P This is the Gospel of the Lord:

C Praise to You, O Christ.

GOSPEL RECESSIONAL VERSE (repeat verse)

Sit

SERMON

Love Letter from God

Stand

HYMN OF THE DAY

From Heaven Above to Earth I Come – LSB 358

**1 “From heav’n above to earth I come
To bear good news to ev’ry home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
Whereof I now will say and sing:**

**5 “These are the signs that you shall mark:
The swaddling clothes and manger dark.
There you will find the infant laid
By whom the heav’ns and earth
were made.”**

**11 Instead of soft and silken stuff
You have but hay and straw so rough
On which as King, so rich and great,
To be enthroned in royal state.**

**13 Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled,
A quiet chamber set apart
For You to dwell within my heart.**

**14 My heart for very joy must leap;
My lips no more can silence keep.
I, too, must sing with joyful tongue
That sweetest ancient cradlesong:**

**15 Glory to God in highest heav’n,
Who unto us His Son has giv’n!
While angels sing with pious mirth
A glad new year to all the earth.**

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.

Text: Public domain

NICENE CREED

P God has made us His people through Baptism into Christ.
Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith:

C 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 worshiped 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 ancient text reads "catholic," meaning the whole Church as it confesses the wholeness of Christian faith.*

Sit

LITANY OF THE INCARNATION

[1 Timothy 2:1-4]

After each petition, Pastor will extend his hand toward the congregation, inviting the following response:

C Praise to You, O Lord.

At the conclusion of the litany, all say: Amen.

GREETING OF PEACE

Matthew 5:22-24; Ephesians 4:1-3



P The peace of the Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

*We greet one another in the name of the Lord by saying, “Peace be with you,”
as a sign of forgiveness and reconciliation and of the unity of the Spirit
in the bond of peace and in preparation for reception of the Holy Supper.*

LORD’S SUPPER

OFFERINGS FOR GOD’S MINISTRY

OFFERTORY

In the Bleak Midwinter (vs. 4)

(Please STAND as the elder and usher bring the gifts forward to the altar.)



C What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb;
If I were a wise man I would do my part;
Yet what I can, I give Him – Give my heart.

Christina Georgina Rossetti, 1830-1894

GREAT THANKSGIVING

PREFACE *(spoken responses)*

P The Lord be with you.

2 Timothy 4:22

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

[Colossians 3:1]

C We lift them to the Lord.

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

[Psalm 136]

C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE

P It is indeed right and salutary... and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS ~ *Holy, Holy, Holy*

Isaiah 6:3, Matthew 21:9

Tune: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

C Holy, holy, holy Lord! God of hosts, by all adored!
Heav’n and earth cannot contain all the glory of Your name!
Hail, *Hosanna, God most high! Blest is He who now draws nigh
In the name of God the King! Hallelujahs glad we sing:
Hail, *Hosanna! Praises due be forever, Lord, to You!

**Hosanna is a Hebrew word meaning “save us now.”*

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

- P** Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are You for the birth of creation...
Blessed are You for Your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD (see LSB 162)

Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

- P** Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:
C **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**
P With this bread and cup... We look with hope for His coming.
C **Come, Lord Jesus.**
P Holy God, we long for Your Spirit....
Fill us with Your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.
C **Come, Holy Spirit.**
P All praise and glory are Yours, Holy One of Israel,
Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.
C **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER (Sung)

Matthew 6:9-13

Tune: Away in a Manger

Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray, singing:

- C** **Our Father in heaven, all praise to Your name!**
Your kingdom among us, Your will done the same
By mortals and angels. Come, Lord, reign alone;
Oh, hear us and bless us from heaven's high throne.

The bread that we yearn for provide us each day;
As we forgive others, our sins take away;
In times of temptation, to lead us be near;
From evil deliver Your children most dear.

For Yours is the kingdom; o'er all things You reign.
And Yours is the power; all things You maintain.
To You be the glory, resounding again
From all of creation, forever! Amen.

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

Luke 7:7

P The Word made flesh has come down from heaven
and gives life to the world. Come, eat, and live.

C Thanks be to God.

Please remain standing for the Agnus Dei.

AGNUS DEI ~ Lamb of God

John 1:29

Oh, Come, Little Children

C Oh, come, little children, oh, come, one and all,
To Bethlehem, haste, to the manger so small.
God's Son, Christ, the Lamb, has been sent you this night
To be your Redeemer, your Joy and Delight.

Kneel down and adore Him with shepherds today,
Oh, lift up your hands now, and praise Him as they;
Rejoice that a Savior from sin you can boast,
And join in the song of the heavenly host.



Distribution Notes



The Lord's Supper is joyfully received here today. At the altar, our Lord Jesus Christ gives us a tremendous gift. His body and blood in, with, and under the bread and wine forgives our sins, strengthens our faith, binds us to the Lord, and embodies our unity with one another. Accordingly, in 1 Corinthians 11, St. Paul cautions Christians to receive the Supper together only when they are united in a common faith and love. If you are new to our congregation, please see the pastor before communing.

*Please fill in around the altar accordingly: **Fellowship Hall Side:** fill in from the back to the front; **Sunday School Side:** fill in from the front to the back.*

- * Those not communing are invited to come forward for a blessing, indicating so by crossing your arms over your chest.
- * Those communing will receive the host from the pastor and may receive the consecrated wine by Common Cup OR Individual Cup.
 - Common Cup: Offered by the elder, by guiding the base of the cup with your hand.
 - Individual Cup: Available as you process down the center aisle from the individual cup dispenser. Twist and pull upward to receive an empty cup. An elder will fill your cup at the altar. Place the used individual cup in the collection basket.

After receiving the elements you may return to your pews. Please inform an usher if you want the elements to be brought to you.

CAROLS DURING DISTRIBUTION

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen

- 1 God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay;
Remember Christ our Savior
was born on Christmas Day
To save us all from Satan's pow'r
when we were gone astray. *R/*

REFRAIN:

O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy;
O tidings of comfort and joy.

- 2 From God our heav'nly Father
a blessed angel came,
And unto certain shepherds
brought tidings of the same,
How that in Bethlehem was born
the Son of God by name. *R/*

- 3 "Fear not, then," said the angel,
"Let nothing you affright;
This day is born a Savior
of Virgin pure and bright,
To free all those who trust in him
From Satan's pow'r and might." *R/*

- 4 Now to the Lord sing praises,
all you within this place,
And with true love and charity
each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas
is filled with heav'nly grace. *R/*

Text with refrain: trad. English carol, 18th cent.

Music: 86 86 86 ; Trad. English carol; melody fr. Little Book of Christmas Carols, ca. 1846.

Now Sing We, Now Rejoice – LSB 386

- 1 Now sing we, now rejoice,
Now raise to heav'n our voice;
He from whom joy streameth
Poor in a manger lies;
Not so brightly beameth
The sun in yonder skies.
Thou my Savior art!
Thou my Savior art!
- 2 Come from on high to me;
I cannot rise to Thee.
Cheer my wearied spirit,
O pure and holy Child;
Through Thy grace and merit,
Blest Jesus, Lord most mild,
Draw me unto Thee!
Draw me unto Thee!

- 3 Now through His Son doth shine
The Father's grace divine.
Death was reigning o'er us
Through sin and vanity
Till He opened for us
A bright eternity.
May we praise Him there!
May we praise Him there!
- 4 Oh, where shall joy be found?
Where but on heav'nly ground?
Where the angels singing
With all His saints unite,
Sweetest praises bringing
In heav'nly joy and light.
Oh, that we were there!
Oh, that we were there!

Text: Latin and German, 14th cent.; tr. Arthur T. Russell, 1806–74, alt.; Text: Public domain

Stand

DISMISSAL AND COLLECT

- P** The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace.
- C** **Amen.**
- P** Let us pray in thanksgiving. We give You thanks, O God, that in this bread and cup of Christ's very life, You give us food for our journey.
- C** **As You led the magi by a star, as You brought the holy family home again, guide us on the way unfolding before us. Wherever we go, may our lives proclaim good news of great joy in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SENDING

BENEDICTION

- P** Let us bless the Lord.
- C** **Thanks be to God.**
- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.
- C** **Amen.**

Numbers 6:24-26

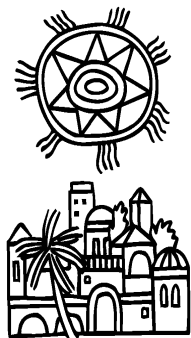
SENDING CAROLS

O Come, All Ye Faithful & Joy to the World

(Verses 1 and 4 of each carol are sung alternately.)

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:
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!

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.



**Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!**

**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.**

- ❖ *O Come, All Ye Faithful* – Text: John Wade, c. 1711-86; Tune: ADESTE FIDELES; from LSB 379, vv. 1 & 4.
❖ *Joy to the World* – Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748; Tune: ANTIOCH; George Frideric Handel, 1685-1759, adapt.; setting: Lowell Mason, 1792-1872 from LSB 387, vv. 1 & 4.

SENDING

- P** Go in peace, 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.
- C** Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE (*ORGAN*)

✠ Glory to God Alone ✠

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

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THOSE WHO SERVE TODAY:

Celebrant:	The Rev. Dr. Adam Clark, Senior Pastor	Elder:	Chuck Ryan
		Lectors:	Mike Fonck, Elena Clark
Preacher:	The Rev. Bryan G. Borger, Associate Pastor	Usher:	Matthew Rockwell
		Altar Guild:	Emily Ruch
Music Director and Organist:	Emily Ruch <i>Adult Choir</i>	Sound Board:	TBD
		Video Streaming:	TBD
Cantor:	Dave Homann	Greeters:	TBD

Please update the Sunday Servant sign-up sheet on the slat wall.

Christmas Worship Schedule

IN-PERSON AND LIVESTREAM AT [SPLCM.ORG/WORSHIP](https://splcm.org/worship)



Sunday, December 28th, Worship at 10:15am

1st Sunday of Christmas

NOTE: NO EDUCATION HOUR

Sunday, January 4th, Worship at 10:15am

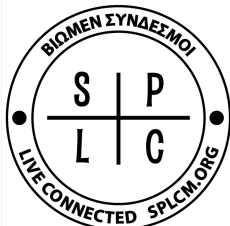
2nd Sunday of Christmas (with Epiphany Reading)

NOTE: NO EDUCATION HOUR

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

St. Peter Lutheran Church

437 East Dragoon 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)

<u>Sunday Schedule:</u>	Education Hour (All Ages)	9:00-9:50am
	Sunday Worship	10:15am