

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2025

2:00PM

5:00PM

Welcome to our Guests.

Thanks for joining us! We are gathered here to be strengthened in the faith through the Word of Jesus, the Son of God who has come to save us. If there is anything that we can do to serve you, please let us know.

OUR MISSION

The mission of every Christian and this congregation is to serve all people in God's world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ on the basis of the Holy Scriptures.

OUR FACILITIES

A restroom is located in the Mother's Room at the back of church and also in the church basement. There is also a handicapped accessible restroom in the back of church. Ask an usher for help and directions. The members of St. Matthew's believe that families should be allowed to worship together. If the need arises, we have an audio-equipped children's room just outside of the church doors to your left. If you need anything during the service, please feel free to ask an usher.

Out of courtesy for your fellow worshipers, please silence all electronic devices.

Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

Welcome: As we celebrate Christmas joy, let us look past the glitter and material gifts to the priceless gift of God's love for us in the person of Jesus Christ. Hallelujah!

343 Once in Royal David's City

CW 343



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly
2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and
3 And our eyes at last shall see him through his own re -
4 Not in that poor, low - ly sta - ble with the ox - en



cat - tle shed, where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a
Lord of all, and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his
deem - ing love, for that child, so dear and gen - tle, is our
stand - ing by shall we see him, but in heav - en, set at



man - ger for his bed: Mar - y was that moth - er
cra - dle was a stall; with the poor and mean and
Lord in heav'n a - bove, and he leads his chil - dren
God's right hand on high. Then like stars his chil - dren



mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
low - ly lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
on to the place where he is gone.
crowned, all in white, his praise will sound.

Text: Cecil F. Alexander, 1818–1895, abr., alt.

Tune: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805–1876

Text and tune: Public domain

Bidding Prayer

Lord's Prayer (sung to "O Come, Little Children")

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 time of temptation lead us to 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.

Be seated

Our Thank offerings will be brought forward at this time.

2:00PM – "Child of Love" - Vocal Duet – Kristi Danalis & Amanda Wenzel

Child of wonder, close Your eyes.
Rest here in my arms tonight.
Someday You will save the world,
But tonight, I'll hold You right here in my arms. *Refrain*
Precious miracle of life, child of love.
Gift of hope, the gift of light from the Father above.
And You were made for all mankind, but You will always be mine, Child of love.

Gabriel's promise has come true:
God has blessed this world with You.
And as I humbly hold You now,
In my heart I know I'm holding Heaven's child. *Refrain*

Words and music by Steve Hindalong, Mark D. Lee and Matthew West
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First Lesson

Genesis 3:8–15

The Seed of the woman will crush the serpent's head.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

319 Jesus Came, the Heavens Adoring

CW 319 sts. 1–3



1 Je - sus came, the heav'ns a - dor - ing, came with peace from
2 Je - sus comes a - gain in mer - cy when our hearts are
3 Je - sus comes to hearts re - joic - ing, bring - ing news of



realms on high; Je - sus came to win re - demp - tion,
worn with care; Je - sus comes a - gain in an - swer
sins for - giv'n; Je - sus comes with words of glad - ness,



low - ly came on earth to die; Al - le - lu - ia!
to an ear - nest, heart - felt prayer, Al - le - lu - ia!
lead - ing souls re - deemed to heav'n. Al - le - lu - ia!



Al - le - lu - ia! came in deep hu - mil - i - ty.
Al - le - lu - ia! comes to save us from de - spair.
Al - le - lu - ia! Hope to all the world is giv'n.

Text: Godfrey Thring, 1823–1903, abr., alt.

Tune: Geistreiches Gesang-Buch, Darmstadt, 1698

Text and tune: Public domain

Second Lesson

Genesis 22:15–18

God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

315 Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord

CW 315 sts. 1–4



1 Let the earth now praise the Lord, who has tru - ly
2 What the fa - thers most de - sired, what the proph - ets'
3 A - bram's prom - ised great re - ward, Zi - on's help - er,
4 Sav - ior, hear my wel - come cry— loud ho - san - nas



kept his word and at last to us did send
heart in - spired, what they longed for man - y a year
Ja - cob's Lord— him of two - fold race be - hold—
lift - ed high! King of glo - ry, en - ter in;



Christ, the sin - ner's help and friend.
stands ful - filled in glo - ry here.
tru - ly came, as long fore - told.
cleanse my soul of ev - 'ry sin.

Text: Heinrich Held, 1620–1659, abr.; (sts. 1–3): tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.; (st. 4): tr. Christian Worship, 2021

Tune: Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn, Wittenberg, 1524, ed. Johann Walter

Text (st. 4): © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 715394

Text (sts. 1–3) and tune: Public domain

Third Lesson

Isaiah 9:2, 6, 7

The prophet foretells the coming of the Savior.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

381 The People Who in Darkness Walked

CW 381



1 The peo - ple who in dark - ness walked have seen a glo - rious
 2 To us a child of hope is born, to us a son is
 3 His name shall be the Prince of Peace, the Ev - er - last - ing
 4 His right - eous gov - ern - ment and pow'r shall o - ver all ex -
 5 Lord Je - sus, reign in us, we pray, and make us yours a -



light; the heav'n - ly dawn broke forth on those who
 giv'n, and on his shoul - ders ev - er rests all
 Lord, the Won - der - ful, the Coun - sel - or, the
 tend; on judg - ment and on jus - tice based, his
 lone, for you are with the Fa - ther and the



dwelt in death and night, who dwelt in death and night.
 pow'r in earth and heav'n, all pow'r in earth and heav'n.
 God by all a - dored, the God by all a - dored.
 reign shall have no end, his reign shall have no end.
 Spir - it ev - er one, the Spir - it ev - er one.

Text: John Morison, 1749–1798, abr., alt.

Tune: Nicolaus Herman, c. 1480–1561

Text and tune: Public domain

Fourth Lesson

Micah 5:2–5a

A Branch from the stump of Jesse will bear fruit.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

333 O Little Town of Bethlehem

CW 333



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
 2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, and, gath - ered all a - bove
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is giv'n!
 4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by;
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - d'ring love.
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heav'n.
 cast out our sin and en - ter in, be born in us to - day.



yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light.
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
 No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad ti - dings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
 and prais - es sing to God the King and peace to all the earth.
 where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.
 O come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Im - man - u - el!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835–1893, abr., alt.
 Tune: Lewis H. Redner, 1831–1908
 Text and tune: Public domain

Fifth Lesson

Isaiah 60:1–6

Arise, shine, for your Light has come

The Word of the Lord
 Thanks be to God

Andrea Frick, Lisa Frisk, Tamara Koenig, Deb Sonnenberg, Amanda Wenzel

Andrea Frick, Lisa Frisk, Tamara Koenig, Deb Sonnenberg, Amanda Wenzel

CW 364

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!

Tune: Public domain

Luke 2:1–7

St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

8

340 Away in a Manger

CW 340

1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed,
 2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head.
 but lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes.
 close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.

The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
 I love you, Lord Je - sus; look down from the sky,
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in your ten - der care,

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 and stay by my side un - til morn - ing is nigh.
 and take us to heav - en to live with you there.

Text (sts. 1-2): The Myrtle, Boston, 1884; (st. 3): Vineyard Songs, Louisville, 1892, alt.

Tune: James R. Murray, 1841-1905

Text and tune: Public domain



The Gift that Changed the World

Seventh Lesson

(Responsive Reading)

Luke 2:8–20

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them

“Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.”

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another

“Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen,

which were just as they had been told.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

350 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

CW 350



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King;
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3 Hail, the heav'n - ly Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Right-eous-ness!



peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
late in time be-hold him come, off-spring of a vir-gin's womb.
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na-tions rise, join the tri-umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God-head see, hail th'in-car-nate De - i - ty!
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that man no more may die,



with th'an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth-le - hem!"
Pleased as man with man to dwell, Je - sus, our Im-man-u - el!
born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them sec-ond birth.

Refrain



Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.
Tune: Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–1847
Text and tune: Public domain

Eighth Lesson

Galatians 4:4–7

The Savior was born at just the right time.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

329 All My Heart Again Rejoices

CW 329 sts. 1–2, 5–6



1 All my heart a - gain re - joic - es as I hear
 2 Hear! The con - quer - or has spo - ken: "Now the foe,
 5 Soft - ly from his low - ly man - ger Je - sus calls
 6 Come, then, ban - ish all your sad - ness! One and all,



far and near sweet - est an - gel voic - es.
 sin and woe, death and hell are bro - ken!"
 one and all, "You are safe from dan - ger.
 great and small, come with songs of glad - ness;



"Christ is born!" their choirs are sing - ing till the air
 God is man, man to de - liv - er, and the Son
 Chil - dren, from the sins that grieve you you are freed;
 we shall live with him for - ev - er there on high



ev - 'ry - where now with joy is ring - ing.
 now is one with our blood for - ev - er.
 all you need I will sure - ly give you."
 in that joy which will van - ish nev - er.

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607–1676, abr., adapt.; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.

Tune: Johann Crüger, 1598–1662

Text and tune: Public domain

Ninth Lesson

John 1:1–14

St. John unfolds the great mystery of the incarnation.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Confession of Faith

I BELIEVE that Jesus Christ is true God, begotten of the Father from eternity;
I BELIEVE that Jesus Christ, true God, is also true man, born of the Virgin Mary.
I BELIEVE Jesus Christ is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature;
I BELIEVE that Jesus Christ, my Lord, has redeemed me, NOT WITH GOLD OR SILVER, BUT WITH His holy precious blood and with His innocent sufferings and death;
I BELEVE that Jesus Christ my Savior died for me, that He rose again from the dead, and that he lives and reigns to all eternity this is most certainly true.

Christmas Eve Responsive Prayer

Oh gracious and almighty Father, we praise you that you kept your ancient promises by sending your everlasting Son in human flesh.

On this holy night, receive our thanks and devotion, our songs and prayers.

You sent Jesus as a lowly child to demonstrate your concern for all, the weak and lonely, the troubled and frightened, the timid and helpless. No one is overlooked by your ever-seeking eyes. No one is excluded from your upholding arms. No one is denied the comfort and help of your outstretched hand.

Bless us with a childlike faith in the divine assurance that you love and care for us always.

You sent Jesus as the Savior of the world to deliver all from the curse of sin, the power of death, and the torment of hell. He took our place. He was born under the law to set us free. He became the innocent lamb of sacrifice. He came to die and rise again in order that we might live eternally. Firmly implant this good news in our hearts, and fill us with an eager desire to spread the

May all who hear the message, in every nation under heaven, be amazed and believe what is told them about the child.

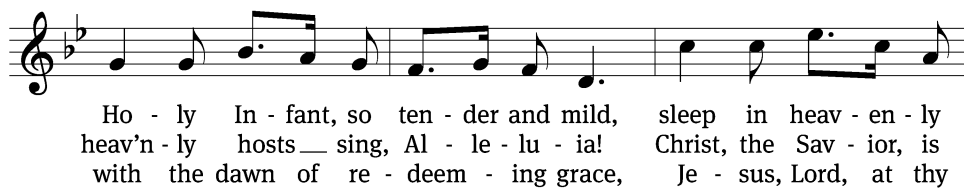
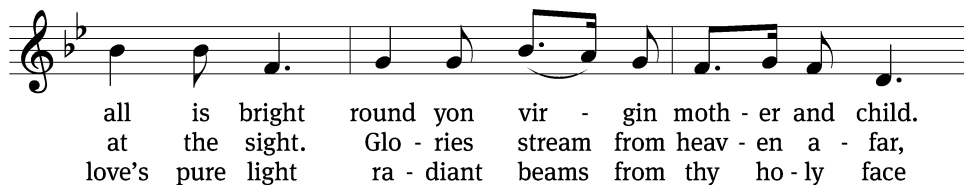
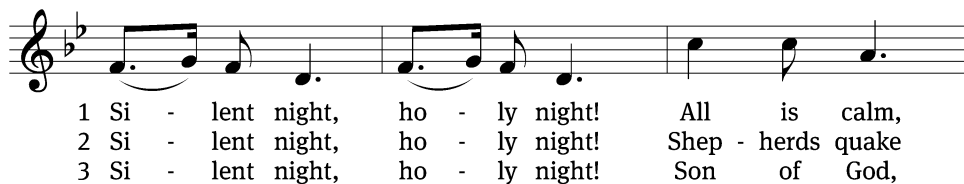
You sent Jesus as the Light of the world to drive out all darkness that would rob us of the full life that you intend for us. May the joy that will be for all people be our joy. May the peace on earth to all on whom his favor rests be our peace. May the treasure that Mary pondered in her heart be our treasure.

For today in the town of David, a Savior has been born to us. He is Christ, the Lord. Amen.

337 Silent Night, Holy Night

CW 337 sts. 1-3

Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!
 Alles schlaeft, einsam wacht
 Nur das traute hoch heilige Paar,
 Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,
 Schlaf in himmlische Ruh,
 Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!



Text: Franz Joseph Mohr, 1792–1848; tr. John F. Young, 1820–1885
 Tune: Franz Xaver Gruber, 1787–1863
 Text and tune: Public domain

Stand

Benediction & Response

As the angels sang out their praise, move us also to sing out our praise to you, today and every day, as the joy of Christmas remains in our hearts.

Glory to God in the highest! Amen.

May he who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with such joy that comes from the forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the T Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always.

Amen.

Be seated

345 Where Shepherds Lately Knelt

CW 345



- 1 Where shep-herds late - ly knelt and kept the an - gel's word,
- 2 In that un - like - ly place I find him as they said:
- 3 How should I not have known I - sa - iah would be there,
- 4 Can I, will I for - get how Love was born, and burned



I come in half - be - lief, a pil - grim strange - ly stirred;
sweet new - born babe, how frail! And in a man - ger bed:
his proph - e - cies ful - filled? With pound - ing heart I stare:
its way in - to my heart— un - asked, un - forced, un - earned,



but there is room and wel - come there for me,
a still, small voice to cry one day for me,
a child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me,
to die, to live, and not a - lone for me,



but there is room and wel - come there for me.
a still, small voice to cry one day for me.
a child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me.
to die, to live, and not a - lone for me?

Closer to Jesus, Closer Together



**Today's bulletin is sponsored by
Gene and Amy Brink**

Worship Leader: Winfried Schroeder

Readers: Robb Brown, Jim Mendell, Dean Rupprecht, Scott Schomberg, Jeff Sell

Organist/Musicians: Sarah Sell, Tamara Koenig, Amanda Wenzel, Tom Frisk, Michael Sell, David Sell, Jeff Sell

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Acknowledgments in

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