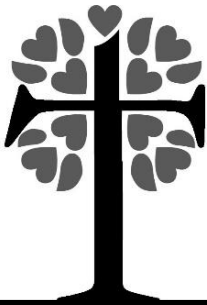


*O Holy Night*

# Welcome to Tree of Life Lutheran Church



December 24, 2024 ~ The Nativity of Our Lord

Leader in regular type, **congregation in bold type**

↑ means stand as you are able

**Restrooms** are by the kitchen and by the Wiggle Room

**Wiggle Room** is available for anyone needing a brief break from worship, at the end of the piano wing of the sanctuary

**WiFi** is available: Look for TOL-GUEST; password is OdessaTOL1

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## We Gather as God's People

### PRELUDE

#### ↑ **ANCIENT PROCLAMATION OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST**

On the 25<sup>th</sup> day of December, according to the teaching of the Church;

many ages after God created the heavens and the earth,  
when man and woman were formed in God's own image;  
long after the great flood,  
when God set the rainbow in the clouds as a sign of the covenant;  
21 centuries from the time of Abraham and Sarah;  
13 centuries after Moses led God's people to freedom;  
11 centuries from the time of Ruth and the judges;  
1,000 years from the anointing of David as king;  
in the 65<sup>th</sup> week as Daniel's prophecy takes note;  
in the 194<sup>th</sup> Olympiad;  
the 752<sup>nd</sup> year from the founding of the city of Rome;  
the 42<sup>nd</sup> year of the reign of Octavian Augustus;  
in the sixth age of the world, all earth being at peace,

Jesus Christ, eternal God, Son of the eternal Father, willing to hallow the world by his coming in mercy, was born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem of Judea.

Come, now, let us go to Bethlehem, to join with the shepherds and the angels and with the Church from every time and place, as we gather to pray and worship our God. For today is the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, God made flesh!

1 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* O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

2 The highest, most holy, light of light eternal,  
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes; Son of the Father  
now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

3 Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above! Glory to God  
in the highest: *Refrain*

4 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*

↑ CHRISTMAS DIALOG AND GREETING

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

**The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness, on them light has shined.

**We have beheld Christ's glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.**

For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

**In him was life, and the life was the light of all people.**

May the grace and truth of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

## ↑ PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray: Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day awaken to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## ↑ CAROL

### “Angels We Have Heard on High”

RED HYMNAL #289

- 1 Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.

*Refrain* Gloria in excelsis Deo, gloria in excelsis Deo.

- 2 Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heav'nly song? *Refrain*

- 3 Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;  
come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn king. *Refrain*

## We Hear God's Word

### FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7

A reading from Isaiah:

<sup>2</sup>The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light, those who lived in a land of deep darkness — on them light has shined. <sup>3</sup>You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.

<sup>4</sup>For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. <sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. <sup>6</sup>For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup>His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

↑ **CAROL**

**“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”**

**RED HYMNAL #270**

1 Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king;  
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."  
Joyful, all you nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;  
with angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

*Refrain:* Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

2 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, incarnate deity!  
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel! *Refrain*

3 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 we no more may die,  
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us second birth. *Refrain*

**SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14**

A reading from Titus:

<sup>11</sup>The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, <sup>12</sup>training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, <sup>13</sup>while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup>He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

↑ **CAROL**

**“Angels, from the Realms of Glory”**

**RED HYMNAL #275**

1 Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
once you sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:  
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king.

2 Shepherds, in the fields abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,  
God with us is now residing, yonder shines the infant light.  
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king.

↑ **GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-20**

The holy gospel according to Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<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.

<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!”

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.’ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

↑ **CAROL**

**“Angels, from the Realms of Glory”**

**RED HYMNAL #275**

- 3 Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar;  
seek the great desire of nations, you have seen his natal star.  
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king.
- 4 All creation, join in praising God, the Father, Spirit, Son,  
evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One.  
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king.

## ↑ CAROL

## “What Child is This?”

RED HYMNAL #296

- 1 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!
- 2 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!
- 3 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!

## ↑ NICENE CREED

**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, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. 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, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who 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.**

## ↑ PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Filled with the Good News of the great joy of Jesus' birth, let us offer our prayers for the Church, the world and all people. *A brief silence.*

Holy God and heavenly Father, your angels sing with praise, and shepherds run with haste to the manger of your Son. Inspire your Church in all times and places to echo the heavenly song of your glory, to know your love through Word and Sacrament, and to proclaim the salvation that you have revealed this night. God of grace...

**Receive our prayer.**

All creation resounds with joy at your Son's incarnation in physical form. Inspire us to care for the world that you created as good, that you loved so much to enter, and that you redeemed through your Son. God of grace... **Receive our prayer.**

The nations declare your glory. Guide this and every nation with your justice, liberty and righteousness. Break the rod of the oppressor in every land, and bring true peace on earth. God of grace... **Receive our prayer.**

The Holy Family is protected as they journey to a distant land. Watch over those who travel during this season; overcome family tensions; and bring joy to every table. Give strength to those who work during the holidays for our safety and our convenience. God of grace... **Receive our prayer.**

The Messiah finds shelter in a lowly manger. Draw near to all who are poor, homeless or needy today. Console those who are lonely or grieving in this holiday season. Be with those who work or watch or weep this night. Bring healing to anyone facing troubles of body, mind or spirit, including those whom we now name... (*Time for personal petitions*) God of grace... **Receive our prayer.**

A Child is born for us, and light shines in the darkness. Make Tree of Life a beacon of your light in this area. Bless our visitors this night, and help us all to find renewed joy in your love made flesh. Make us into a people zealous for good deeds, sharing your love and mercy with all. God of grace... **Receive our prayer.**

The heavens rejoice in the life that your Son brings. With thanksgiving for Mary, Joseph and all the saints, sustain us in the blessed hope revealed this night. Make us certain that, in Christ's birth and death and resurrection, we are also born anew as your children who will live forever with you. God of grace... **Receive our prayer.**

Rejoicing in your Word made flesh, we commend these prayers to you, O God, trusting in your grace made known through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**



## ↑ PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

## We Share God's Holy Meal

### OFFERING

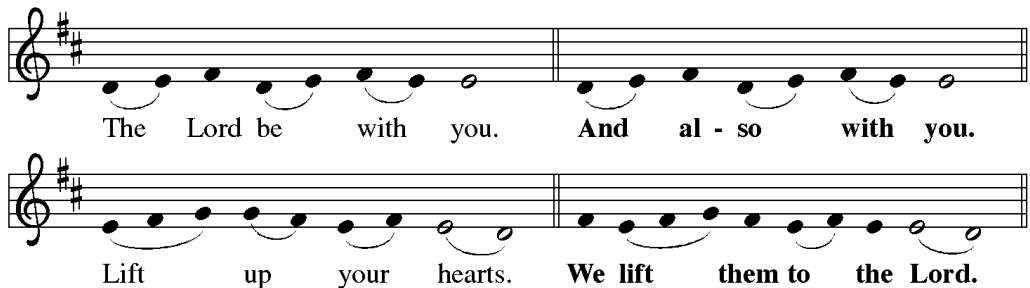
#### ↑ OFFERTORY      "In the Bleak Midwinter"      RED HYMNAL #294, vss. 1,3

- 1 In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,  
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;  
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.
- 3 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.

#### ↑ OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray together: **God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Amen.**

#### ↑ GREAT THANKSGIVING



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.



Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*The thanksgiving continues with the preface for the day. The congregation responds:*

↑ **SANCTUS**

**Tune: "Angels We Have Heard on High"**



Ho - ly ho - ly ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and mi - - ght.  
Bles - sed is the One who comes, the in - car - nate Chri - - st.



Heav'n and earth de - clare your praise: "Ho - san - a on hi - - gh!"  
Bles - sed is the new - born King. Ho - san - a on hi - - gh!



*Refrain*  
Glo - - - - - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o; glo - - - - -



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

## ↑ EUCHARISTIC PRAYER AND WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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.

## ↑ 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 COMMUNION

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

**Thanks be to God.**

## COMMUNION

*All baptized Christians are welcome to commune. At the direction of the usher, please come forward and kneel or stand at the rail. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request. Wine and white grape juice are in the individual cups. Those not wishing to receive Communion may receive an individual blessing. Indicate this by crossing your hands in front of you at the rail.*

**“O Holy Night”**

**“O Little Town of Bethlehem”**

**“It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”**

**BLACK BINDER #31**

**RED HYMNAL #279**

**RED HYMNAL #282**

## ↑ PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray together: **God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth and life. Gather us always in the light of your love, and let us shine with the Good News of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

## We Praise the Light of Christ

### ↑ LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

*The pastor lights a large candle from an altar candle, which symbolizes Christ, the Light of the world. The ushers light their candles from the pastor's candle, then light the candle of each worshiper nearest the aisle. Please tip only the unlit candle when spreading the light.*

### ↑ CAROL

### “Away in a Manger”

RED HYMNAL #277

- 1 Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;  
the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.
- 2 The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes,  
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.  
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky  
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.
- 3 Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay  
close by me forever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in your tender care  
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

### ↑ GOSPEL OF THE INCARNATION: John 1:1-5, 10-14

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>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.

↑ **CAROL**

**“Silent Night, Holy Night”**

**RED HYMNAL #281**

- 1 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.
- 2 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!
- 3 Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light  
radiant beams from your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

↑ **BLESSING**

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. May Almighty God – Father, +Son and Holy Spirit – bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

*Please extinguish your candle.*

↑ **CAROL**

**“Joy to the World”**

**RED HYMNAL #267**

- 1 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.
- 2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains, repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy; repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
- 3 No more let sin and sorrow 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.
- 4 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.

## ↑ **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace to bring a merry Christmas to all! **Thanks be to God!**

## **POSTLUDE**

*You may listen to the music or depart to do God's work.*

+ + +

### **SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY**

**Presiding Minister:** Rev. Robbie Ketcham

**Assisting Minister:** Gene Zaiser

**Music Minister:** Duane Dillard

**Usher:** George Matz

**Altar Care:** Gene Zaiser

**Livestream:** Gail Russell

**CHRISTMAS LESSONS & CAROLS:** Our Christmas celebration continues on Sunday, as we hear the story of Jesus' birth interspersed with more Christmas carols and reflections from Martin Luther's writings. Join as we continue celebrating Christmas in Word and song, share Communion, and rejoice at our salvation through the Christ Child!

**PR. ROBBIE ON VACATION:** Pr. Robbie will be on vacation this week from Thursday through next Tuesday, Dec. 31. For any urgent pastoral needs, you can call the Rev. Linda Ray, pastor of St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Odessa, at (540) 207-1787.

**COVER ART:** "The Nativity" ("The Holy Night"), Antonio da Correggio, c. 1529–1530, in public domain, held at Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Germany.

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# **Welcome to Tree of Life Lutheran Church!**

We are a growing congregation located in Odessa, and part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA). In a friendly atmosphere, we teach the Gospel of the Lord and share a living confidence in God's grace. We embrace you as a whole person – questions, complexities and all. Our mission is to be faithful children of God, called by grace through Christ, and sharing this gift with Middletown, Odessa, Townsend and the world.

## **Worship**

We gather for worship with Holy Communion at 10:30 a.m. every Sunday. We follow a traditional order of worship, with both traditional and more contemporary music. People wear everything from suits to T-shirts, so no matter how you look, you'll fit right in!

## **Youth**

Kingdom Kids is our youth group, which meets two Sundays a month after worship during the school year. Youth from preschool through high school are welcome for lunch, fun and faith formation!

## **Seniors**

Our "Older Wiser Lutheran Seniors" (OWLS) get together every month for a meal or a special outing. And even if you don't consider yourself "older," you can still join the fun!

## **Service**

We work with Neighborhood House and Our Daily Bread in Middletown to help those in need in our area. Our 'Knot-Quilters' prepare quilts for people worldwide.

## **To Learn More**

Find us online at *TreeOfLifeChurchDE.com*

Find us on Facebook at *Tree of Life Lutheran Church*

Call us at (302) 378-3345

Or come and join us this Sunday! We'd love to meet you!

# Christmas at Tree of Life



**Celebrate the 12 Days of Christmas**  
Find resources at the sanctuary entryway

**December 24: Christmas Eve**  
7 p.m. – Candlelight Communion and Worship

**December 29: Service of Lessons and Carols**  
10:30 a.m. – Praise the newborn Savior through Scripture and song, and New Year's blessing

**January 5: Epiphany Sunday**  
10:30 a.m. – Holy Communion