



First Weekend in Christmas

Eucharist | Lessons & Carols
Sunday, December 28, 2025, 10 a.m.

CENTRAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Exploring the promise of God for all

You are welcome. No exceptions.

Central Lutheran Church experiences God's expansive love and strives to share it abundantly. We affirm all people without regard to age, race, biological sex, housing status, ethnicity, sexual orientation, immigration, refugee or migration status, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, and physical or mental health or ability. All are a part of God's family, created in God's image.

We strive to practice radical hospitality with all people and work toward racial equity. Everyone is invited to immerse themselves in the life of this community of faith as we explore the promise of God for all.

Worship



Bold print indicates responses spoken by all.



Congregational hymns are found printed in this bulletin or in the red hymnal, Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW).



You are encouraged to listen to your body and stand or remain seated at any point in the service.



Masks are welcome, but not required.



Children are welcome and celebrated in worship. Each Sunday there are Children's Bags at each of the ushers tables at the entrances to the sanctuary. Inside each bag is a worship activity and treat. Many families sit near the children's tables near the baptismal font, but you are welcome to sit anywhere in the sanctuary that is comfortable to you.



All are welcome to receive communion at Central. At the ushers' invitation, you will proceed toward the altar where there are regular and gluten-free wafers served with wine or grape juice. Your server will offer bread and wine for all, including children. If you prefer to receive a blessing rather than communion, please let your server know.



Offering can be made online using the QR code in the bulletin or left in the offering plates just outside the sanctuary doors.

MEMBERS OF:

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America | www.elca.org

Align Minneapolis | www.alignmpls.org

ReconcilingWorks | www.reconcilingworks.org





The Holy Spirit gathers us in unity on this first day of the week.

PRELUDE

“Greensleeves”

Setting, Richard Purvis

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

Setting, David Blackwell

(At the sound of the bell, please stand)

Gathering

OPENING SENTENCES

Before the world was
Before the spoken word was
Before the world of words was
God was.

God spoke the unspoken Word – with God from the other side of time

Truthful, loving, beautiful, wise.

The Word, truthful,

Sounded and

Light!

light and darkness.

Time was.

The word, wise

Played and Sky!

Sky and World.

Space was.

Sun and Moon.

Sea and Land,

Plants and animals

Matter was.

The Word, Beautiful

Rang out across

The field of stars,

Of secondary stars,

Grace upon grace.

The Word, loving,

sang out across

the newborn time,

Across unfolding space,

Of humus formed human –

Grace upon grace.

Truth, wisdom, beauty, love.

Still the Word resounds, forming us still –

Like a great loving song, forming us still

Grace upon grace.

GATHERING HYMN

“Once in Royal David’s City”

Hymn 269

Stanzas 1 and 2

GREETING AND PRAYER OF THE DAY

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

Let us pray.

O Holy One, heavenly angels spoke to earthly shepherds and eternity entered time in the child of Bethlehem. Through the telling of the Christmas story, let our temporal lives be caught up in the eternal in that same child, that we might join shepherds and all the heavenly host in praising the coming of Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit now and forever. **Amen.**

(Please be seated)



God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

Word

READING

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

² 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.
"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.
⁷His 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.

HYMN

"Love Has Come"

Hymn 292

Stanzas 1 and 2

READING

Isaiah 11:1-4, 6-9

¹A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
²The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
³His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
⁴but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
⁶The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.
⁷The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
⁸The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
⁹They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HYMN

“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming”

Hymn 272

Stanzas 1 and 2

READING

Luke 2:1-7

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph 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. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And 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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HYMN

“Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”

Hymn 276

READING

Luke 2:8-20

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

¹⁵When 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.” ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HYMN

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

Hymn 289

READING

John 1:1-14

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 came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And 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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HYMN

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

Hymn 295

Stanzas 1-3 and “Amen”

SERMON

(Please stand)

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

May our gracious God, whose light shines in the darkness of our lives, the One who formed creation, now hear the prayers we offer this day for all people.

Each petition concludes:

God who is with us,

Hear our prayer.

Splendor of eternal glory, grant that we may be faithful witnesses to the light that dawns this morning [day], proclaiming Christ's word of peace and salvation in acts of justice and mercy. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

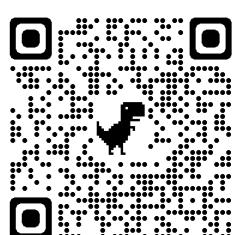
And also with you.

(Please be seated)

MUSICAL OFFERING

“The Shepherds”

Peter Cornelius



This year's Christmas appeal is for the ministry of the Central Restoration Center. There are offering envelopes available at the sanctuary doors for your special Christmas offering. You can also use this QR code to make an online gift for this remarkable, shared ministry by choosing "Restoration Center" in the Fund line.



God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Meal

(Please stand)

PRESENTATION HYMN

“What Child Is This”

Hymn 296 *Stanza 2*

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also 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.

It is indeed right...and join in their unending hymn:

1. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, O God of
2. Blest is the one who comes to us, comes in the

Soprano part (Treble clef, G major, 2/4 time):

glo - ry. Ho - san-na to our God,
heav - en. Ho - san-na to our God,

Basso continuo part (Bass clef, G major, 2/4 time):

ho - san-na to our
ho - san-na to our

Ho - san - na to our God, ho -

God, ho - san-na, ho - san - na to our God.
 God, ho - san-na, ho - san - na to our God.

Ho - san - na to our God.

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:...

...Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

Our Father in heaven,

 hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
 your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
 now and forever. Amen.**

*All are invited to receive these
 gifts of God.*

*Children are welcome to
 come forward and receive
 communion or a blessing.*



*God blesses us and sends
 us for shared mission in
 our shared world.*

(Please be seated)

COMMUNION

“Gesù Bambino”

Pietro Yon,
arr. Michael Burkhardt

(Please stand)

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Radiant God, with our eyes we have seen your salvation, and in this meal we have feasted on your grace. May your Word take flesh in us, that we may be your holy people, revealing your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Sending

BENEDICTION

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.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

“The Bells of Christmas”

Hymn 298

Stanzas 1-4

DISMISSAL

Go rejoicing. Christ is born!

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Toccata on “Il est né, le divin Enfant”

Denis Bédard

Serving Today

Pastor Brian Gutzmann	<i>preacher</i>
Pastor Peter Nycklemoe	<i>presider</i>
Robin Helgen	<i>soloist</i>
Melanie Ohnstad	<i>organist</i>
Mark Kieffer	<i>video/sound</i>
Rexanne Spicer	<i>host</i>

Thanks to:

Sacristans, Usher, Hospitality Ministry, and Décor Teams.

Chancel flowers this week are given in memory or honor of loved ones by various donors. See the *Spirit* for more information.

If you wish to donate flowers, please contact Judy Korogi at 612-788-1288.

Portions of the liturgy are from SundaysandSeasons.com

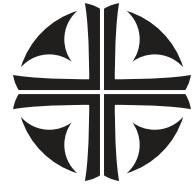
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Opening Sentences: Susan Palo Cherwien, "Crossings: Meditations for Worship"

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