



*Immanuel Lutheran Church &
Wilmington Lutheran Church
December 28, 2025*

Welcome to this place of praise and prayer. We gather today in celebration of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, as part of God's family.

- ❖ We would appreciate having you sign our guest book so that we can remember your presence with us. Please note that in the ELW the page numbers are printed at the bottom of the page and hymn numbers are located at the top. The order of worship is outlined on the following pages.
- ❖ The offering reminds us that all of life is a gift of God. We are stewards of that gift. In response, a portion of our income is given as an act of worship to do God's work in the world. Immanuel is a first-fruits congregation. That means that every Sunday when the offering is taken in, we give first to the mission and the ministry of the ELCA. We don't wait to see if we can pay our bills before we give away for God's mission. It is our hands doing God's work, for the sake of the world our Lord loves.
- ❖ We serve Holy Communion on the first Sunday of the month and at all festivals. We offer an open invitation to all baptized believers to participate. It is our understanding that Christ offers his body and blood with the bread and wine to forgive sin and strengthen faith and life. If you receive communion in your home church, you are welcome to receive communion here.
- ❖ We have a toddler worship area in the middle-right section of our pews. This area is intended for children ages 0-3 accompanied by an adult(s) to sit during worship. Children 4K-6th Grade are welcome to join us for Sunday school during worship downstairs. This is a space for families to be fully engaged in worship, while providing quiet activities for young children to accommodate their natural need to move and be busy. Please follow posted guidelines for use of this space. Thank you!
- ❖ We have accommodated seating available in the middle-left and the front-right sections of our pews. Please feel free to utilize this space for those who may need it!

CONTACT INFORMATION

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FIND US ONLINE



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www.lacrosseareasynod.org

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND WORSHIP ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jana Dittmer

*Please note all **bold** text throughout the service are congregational responses

(Please stand as you are able)

GATHERING CAROL

O Come, All Ye Faithful

#283

CALL TO WORSHIP

Jana Dittmer

L: Come! Look upon the baby Jesus, cradled in the arms of his mother.

C: Seeing this wondrous sight, may our hearts be comforted and our spirits filled with peace.

L: Come! Listen to choirs of angels announcing good news to all people.

C: Hearing this marvelous song, may we too sing: Glory to God in the highest!

L: Come! Receive this ancient story in your heart, not as history but as a gift.

C: Opening our hearts to this great mystery, may Christ be born in us today.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Jana Dittmer

O Lord God, you know that we cannot place our trust in our own powers. As you protected the infant Jesus, so defend us and all the needy from harm and adversity, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

(Please be seated)

LESSONS AND CAROLS

The First Reading: Genesis 1:26-2:3

Jana Dittmer

Today we gather to give thanks for the greatest present we have ever received: that God so loved the world as to send God's only Son to us as one of us. Before we marvel over the infant Messiah, let's begin by remembering where we have come from. Our first reading begins in Genesis, chapter 1.

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make humans in our image, according to our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over the

cattle and over all the wild animals of the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.” ²⁷ So God created humans in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. ²⁸ God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” ²⁹ God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. ³⁰ And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the air and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. ³¹ God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

¹ Thus the heavens and the earth were finished and all their multitude. ² On the sixth day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. ³ So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

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

CAROL

Of the Father's Love Begotten vs. 1 & 3

#295

The Second Reading: Isaiah 9:2-4, 6-7

Tyler Engen

God saw that all of creation was very good, but sin and suffering had entered the world. So God sent prophets, like Isaiah, to remind us of the right path, and spread God's message of hope. Our next reading is from Isaiah, chapter 9.

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. ³ You have multiplied exultation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴ 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.

⁶ 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. ⁷ Great will be his authority, 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

Awake, Awake and Greet the New Morn vs. 1 & 2

#242

The Third Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34

Tyler Engen

The hope for a Messiah lifted the spirits of God's people. Yet God promised still more, a new covenant of forgiveness. Our next reading is from Jeremiah, chapter 31.

³¹ The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. ³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ No longer shall they teach one another or say to each other, "Know the LORD," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD, for I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more.

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

CAROL

Joy to the World vs. 1, 3, & 4

#267

The Fourth Reading: Luke 2:1-7

Gretchen Anderson

When it was time for the Messiah to arrive, the scene was set not in a palace, but a stable. A young woman named Mary and her husband, Joseph, had traveled a long way to arrive in Bethlehem. Our next reading is from Luke, chapter 2.

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!**

CAROL

O Little Town of Bethlehem vs. 1 & 2

#279

The Fifth Reading: Luke 2:8-20

Donna Huttner

The first people to hear of baby Jesus' arrival were not great royalty, but humble shepherds, guarding their flocks by night. And who should announce Jesus' birth to them but a whole choir of angels! Our reading continues in Luke, chapter 2.

⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ 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: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

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

CAROL

Angels We Have Heard on High vs. 1 & 2

#289

The Sixth Reading: Titus 3:4-7

Gary Buxengard

Christians through the ages have sometimes greeted this night with self-doubt. Are we good enough, have we done enough, could we be worthy? A letter from the early church reassures us, from Titus, chapter 3.

⁴ But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. ⁶ This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

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

CAROL

Rejoice, Rejoice Believers vs. 1, 2, & 4

#244

The Seventh Reading: John 1:1-9

Gretchen Anderson

As we ponder the miraculous love of God come to us in Jesus Christ, and what our next steps could be, we hear our final reading tonight, from John, chapter 1.

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

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

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

CAROL

Love Has Come vs. 1 & 3

#292

(Please stand as you are able)

RESPONSIVE PRAYERS

Gary Buxengard

L: It is you, loving God, who lights our path with truth.

C: Your Word, Jesus, is truth.

L: In his light, draw all to the manger

C: to kneel in reverence with the wise ones.

L: In his light, draw all to the manger

C: to sing for joy with the angels.

L: In the brightness of his life

C: cast away the darkness of injustice, poverty, and hunger in the world.

L: It is you, loving God, who meets us on our way.

C: In the light of Jesus, show the world the way of life. Amen.

Mighty God of mercy, we thank you for our risen Lord who makes every day new.

Especially thank you-

for the sustaining goodness of your creation...

for the new creation in Christ and all gifts of healing and forgiveness...

for the gifts of relationship with others...

for the communion of faith in your church...

God of grace, **receive our thankfulness.**

Merciful God of might, renew this weary world, heal the hurts of all your children, and bring about your peace for all in Christ Jesus, the living Lord.

Especially we pray-

for those who govern nations of the world...

for the people in countries ravaged by strife or warfare...

for all who work for peace and international harmony...

for all in need of healing...

for all who strive to save the earth from carelessness and destruction...

for the church of Jesus Christ in every land...

God of grace, **receive our prayers.**

Almighty and everlasting God, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power, that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome in adversity. In all we do, direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

SHARING THE PEACE

Gary Buxengard

The Peace of the Lord be with you always

And also with you.

(Please share signs of peace with others who are worshipping with you. Feel free to text a friend or relative not present in worship this morning.)

OFFERING

Jana Dittmer

(Offerings may be placed in the wooden offering box as you leave the sanctuary)

OFFERING RESPONSE

He Came Down

He came down that we may have light;

He came down that we may have light;

He came down that we may have light;

Hallelujah forevermore!

OFFERING PRAYER

Jana Dittmer

God of Glory, great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Jana Dittmer

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

BLESSING

Gary Buxengard

May the Word that Mary brought to birth carry you into new and abundant life.

May the Word that Joseph cradled in his arms enfold you with love and strength.

May the Word that angels proclaimed in song bring harmony to our world.

And the blessing of almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SENDING CAROL

The Bells of Christmas (vs. 1, 4-6)

#298

DISMISSAL

Gary Buxengard

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ. **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE



Thank you to Today's Volunteers!

We would love to have your help during our worship service. Please sign up at the kiosk in the church narthex or on the church website under the sign-up link on the home page. Thank you!

Greeters:

Ushers: Allen Dittmer, Dave Renslo &
Dean Schutte

Readers: Jana Dittmer, Tyler Engen, Gretchen
Anderson, Donna Huttner, & Gary Buxengard

Presentation Clicker:

Live Stream: Cheryl Kuennen

Acolytes:

Coffee & Fellowship Servers:

Pianist/Organists: Emily Riley &
Jan Lee Buxengard

Worship Leads: Jana Dittmer &
Gary Buxengard

Additional News and Notes:

Immanuel Youth Pizza Orders: Youth are selling pizzas again this year! Please see the information below! Orders can be placed after church with youth, there is also an order form on the back counter in the Narthex and a manilla envelope outside the church office to place your orders. Money can be turned into the manilla envelope outside the church office or given to Chelsey! Thank you!



Pizza Get Your Pizza's!

Just in time for Super Bowl Sunday!
Take and Bake 12" Pepperoni, Sausage, or both!
(Gluten Free available as well)

Order yours
From The Immanuel Lutheran Youth Group
Or Call 507-450-4973

Preorder by February 1st.

\$15 Pickup February 7th from 4p-5p

Immanuel Lutheran Church
409 E. Grove Street Caledonia.

Thank you for your support!