

*The Nativity of Our Lord
Sacred Being*



*Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
December 24, 2022*



Ascension Lutheran Church

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Ogden, UT 84404

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Welcome to Worship...

Welcome to all God's guests, including those who call themselves "members" of this church named Ascension Lutheran Church more than 50 years ago.

A special welcome to guests who are here for the first time or who call yourselves "visitors" among the people of this community. It is at God's invitation, through worship, the Holy Spirit calls each of us to come to a place of **community**, **communion** and **commitment**. Each of us brings a different lens to worship, and yet, in a worshiping community, these differences become celebrations of diversity.

Children are always welcome in worship services;
however please know a nursery space is available for
parents who need to tend to their little ones.

Introduction

Our Christmas visuals have lots of shiny things this year to remind us that we are called to reflect the sacred each and every day. "Incarnation" is a word that means that God's presence came to dwell among all people, and we believe this happened in a special way in the birth of Jesus. All creation has always been imbued with the Creator's brilliance. This season, we have been remembering the call to shine with this holy light.

Bringing of Light

Youth in Attendance

All Youth and Children in attendance are invited to process the light into the darkness.

*Parents may join in assisting the very young if they wish.
Please assemble in the narthex (lobby) to receive a tea light for the processional.*

Sacred Being—The Nativity

Welcome to Worship

Solo

Upon this moment,
upon this people,
upon this place,
the holy comes.
And sacred knowing
brings sacred being
for sacred doing of God's plan.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

WA We pray for Hope this night.

All We pray for Hope this night.

WA We pray for Love this night.

All We pray for Love this night.

WA We pray for Joy this night.

All We pray for Joy this night.

WA We pray for Peace this night.

All We pray for Peace this night.

WA We open to see the Sacred reflected in all things.

All We open to see the Sacred reflected in all things.

WA We open to see our deepest selves

All We open to see our deepest selves

WA as a gift of holy presence.

All as a gift of holy presence.

WA This is the gift of the Christ Mystery,

All This is the gift of the Christ Mystery,

WA lighting the way to peace.

All lighting the way to peace.



U-pon this mo - ment, U-pon this peo - ple, U-pon this
place the Ho-ly comes. And Sa-cred know-ing brings Sa-cred
be - ing for Sa-cred do - ing of God's plan.

P Living God, Christ Mystery, Holy Spirit,
we give you thanks for this holy sensing of your presence.

**All As we take in the light you offer,
may we be a reflection of that light,
expanding the sacred being of this place
into the sacred being of all things. Amen**

The Story Reflected

It is not difficult to imagine this night as “reflecting the sacred.” We gather and sing and light candles and dare to believe that love truly enters the world time and again and anything is possible.

What may be more difficult to understand, however, is that this love is ours, not because we’ve been “good” (as if God is Santa Claus), but simply because we are beloved—the firstborn of God. Our very being reflects the sacred. The incarnation of God in human flesh is proof.

Let us hear the story reflected this night:

♪ Song—O Little Town of Bethlehem ♪

***O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light,
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.***

Around the time of Elizabeth’s pregnancy and John’s birth, the emperor in Rome, Caesar Augustus, required everyone in the Roman Empire to participate in a massive census—the first census since Quirinius had become governor of Syria. Each person had to go to his or her ancestral city to be counted.

Mary’s fiancé Joseph, from Nazareth in Galilee, had to participate in the census in the same way everyone else did. Because he was a descendant of King David, his ancestral city was Bethlehem, David’s birthplace. Mary, who was now late in her pregnancy that the messenger Gabriel had predicted, accompanied Joseph.

While in Bethlehem, she went into labor and gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped the baby in a blanket and laid Him in a feeding trough because the inn had no room for them.

♪ Song — Infant Holy, Infant Lowly ♪

***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!***

Nearby, in the fields outside of Bethlehem, a group of shepherds were guarding their flocks from predators in the darkness of night. Suddenly a messenger of the Lord stood in front of them, and the darkness was replaced by a glorious light—the shining light of God’s glory. They were terrified!

♪ Song — The First Noel ♪

***The first Noel the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter’s night that was so deep.***

***Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel.***

Don't be afraid! Listen! I bring good news, news of great joy, news that will affect all people everywhere. Today, in the city of David, a Liberator has been born for you! He is the promised Anointed One, the Supreme Authority! You will know you have found Him when you see a baby, wrapped in a blanket, lying in a feeding trough.

At that moment, the first heavenly messenger was joined by thousands of other messengers—a vast heavenly choir. They praised God.

♪ SONG — Angels We Have Heard on High ♪

*Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.
Glo-ria, in excelsis De-o; Glo-ria in excelsis De-o.*

*Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heav'nly song?
Glo-ria, in excelsis De-o; Glo-ria in excelsis De-o.*

As soon as the heavenly messengers disappeared into heaven, the shepherds were buzzing with conversation.

Let's rush down to Bethlehem right now!

Let's see what's happening!

Let's experience what the Lord has told us about!

♪ O Come, All Ye Faithful ♪

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!

So they ran into town, and eventually they found Mary and Joseph and the baby lying in the feeding trough. After they saw the baby, they spread the story of what they had experienced and what had been said to them about this child.

Everyone who heard their story couldn't stop thinking about its meaning.

Mary, too, pondered all of these events, treasuring each memory in her heart. The shepherds returned to their flocks, praising God for all they had seen and heard, and they glorified God for the way the experience had unfolded just as the heavenly messenger had predicted.

♪ Song — Hark! The Herald Angels Sing ♪

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

Children's Time and Noisy Offering

The Christmas Message

Pr. Debra Jimenez

Please stand in body or spirit.

♪ Song — Go Tell it on the Mountain ♪

Refrain

**Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev'rywhere;
go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!**

**While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. *Refrain***

Prayers of Intercession

L With wonder and thanksgiving for Christ's coming into the world, we pray for the church, the life of the earth, and the whole human family.

Em - man - u - el, _____ Em - man - u - el, _____
_____ His name is called _____ Em - man - u - el: _____
_____ God with us, _____ re - vealed in us! _____
_____ His name is called _____ Em - man - u - el. _____

(each prayer petition ends with)

L: God of Love, **All**: You hear our prayer.

L Rejoicing in your Word made flesh among us, we commend these prayers to you, confident of your grace and love made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior.

All **Christ with me,**
 Christ before me,
 Christ behind me,
 Christ in me,
Christ beneath me,
 Christ above me,
 Christ on my right,
 Christ on my left,
Christ when I sit down,
 Christ when I lie down,
 Christ when I arise. Amen.

[You may be Seated](#)

Offering

The offering plate is located at the back of the sanctuary near the baptismal font.

Offertory

♪ Song — Love Has Come ♪

**Love has come— a light in the darkness!
Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.
See all heaven has come to proclaim it;
Hear how their song of Joy arises:
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!
Love! Love! Glory to God on high!**

Offertory Prayer

P Giving God,

**All we are so glad for the birth of Jesus who gives us the gift of new life.
Let our gifts be a blessing to others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

Call to Confession

Please stand in body or spirit.

P We are in the presence of God!
As Mary and Joseph welcomed strangers
and a host of heavenly guests to the stable,
so God welcomes us with open arms.

In these silent moments, the counsel of God holds us
as we confess our failings and shortcomings.

God loves us.

God loves you.

God is listening.

Silence for reflection

Affirmation of Forgiveness

P 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.

In the glow of God's grace, ✝ you are forgiven!

Forgiven and forgiving, we carry the light of Christ's love
to an aching and ailing world! Amen.

You may be Seated

The Great Thanksgiving and Words of Institution

P The Holy One be with you

All And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts

All We lift them up to our God.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

All It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Birthing God,
creator of heaven and earth.

R

We gather tonight at the Manger of Grace.

And it is right, and a good and joyful thing,
on this special night and always and everywhere,
to give thanks to you, creator of heaven and earth.

R

You, who breathed into us the same breath as the infant Jesus,
You, who crafted our every fiber just as you did your own Son,
You, who formed us in your own image—
that same newborn image of the "One Who Walked Among Us,"
Thanks and praise be to You!

R

Your intention was for every created thing to have a place,
to have vitality, to have sustenance in this world.
Join us to your purpose,
offering hospitality and healing
to the suffering world.

R

A common birth for common people,
he healed the sick, fed the hungry,
and sat in houses at table with those who suffer,
and those who perpetuated suffering,
laying bare complicity and compassion.

P In another house, on another night—
the night in which he gave himself up for us—
he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread,
gave it to his disciples, and said:

“Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.”

P When the supper was over, he took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

“Drink from this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

And so, in remembrance of your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves as a holy and living sacrifice.

Open our hearts, stripping away any excuse or fearful hesitation,
so that we will open our doors to the world
as the body of Christ, redeemed by God’s love.

P By your Spirit make us one with You, and with one another through your Son Jesus Christ, both the Giver and the Gift.

All Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Please stand in body or spirit.

P As we kneel in awe at the manger of Love,
let us approach the throne of grace, praying as Jesus taught:

**All 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.**

The Invitation

P Come to Christ's banquet. Feast on God's gift of grace.

You may be Seated

♪ Song — Away in a Manger ♪

**Away in a manger, no crib for a 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.**

**The cattle are lowing; the poor baby wakes,
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.**

**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.**

♪ Song — What Child is This ♪

**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!**

**Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinner 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!**

**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!**

♪ Song — *It Came upon the Midnight Clear* ♪

- 1 *It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.*
- 2 *Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heav'nly music floats o'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hov'ring wing,
and ever o'er its babel sounds the blessed angels sing.*
- 3 *And you, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow:
look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing;
oh, rest beside the weary road and hear the angels sing!*
- 4 *For lo! The days are hast'ning on, by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and all the world give back the song which now the angels sing.*

Post Communion Blessing and Prayer

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which you have now received, strengthen you and keep you in His peace.

All Amen

P Let us pray,
Thank you Lord, for your gifts of Peace, Hope, Joy and Love.

All Use them to strengthen us and fill us with your gifts of Grace that far surpasses those of the world. Amen

Candle-Lighting—*a word of instruction*



*The light will be brought to the end of each row,
tip your unlit candle into the flame
of the lighted candle held upright.
Pass the light along your row until every candle is lit.*

A Reading from John the 1st chapter **The Incarnation**

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.

John 1:1-14

Silent Night

***Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.***

***Holy Infant, so tender and mild, sleep in heav'en-ly peace,
sleep in heav-en-ly peace.***

***Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'n-ly hosts sing al-le-lu-ia! Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!***

***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.***

Benediction

Please stand in body or spirit.

P When you see lights twinkle,
when you catch a reflection in a mirror,
when you notice the sunlight dancing on a surface
or a nightlight glowing in the darkness,
let these be signs that the Christ Light is revealed
again and again in and through this world.

Know that your brilliant presence
is pouring more light into a weary world.

Remember, God loves us by becoming us.
This means you are already reflecting the sacred.

In the name of the Creator, ✝ Christ, and Holy Spirit.

All Amen

Extinguish candles

Sending Song

♪ **Song - Joy to the World** ♪

***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.***

***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

P Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.

All Thanks be to God.

Front Cover:

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About our Worship Space

In preparation for the coming of Jesus into our world we have chosen a theme of Reflecting the Sacred for our Advent season.

We too often think that something “sacred” is far away and not available to us.

But what if we saw the presence of the holy in all that has been, is, and always will be—right here—reflected in and through everything and everyone around us?

God’s gift of creation reflects and refracts the light of life throughout heaven and earth.

Just as the seers of old looked to the skies for the light of life and love, our worship space attempts to capture the beauty of the night sky, the lights of the heavens framing the gift of sacrifice that was always present...

*before the birth of Jesus...
even before creation itself.*

***The cross was no surprise to God, yet he came to us anyway...
as a vulnerable baby...as one of us.***

Music licenses covered by these subscriptions



**Thank you to all who Donated the Poinsettias
for our Christmas Worship Service:**

Diane Baird *in loving memory of her son, Danny*
Diane Baird *in honor of her children, Michelle, Mark, Sara and Brian*
Dee and Don Brown *in honor of Don and Dee's birthdays*
Linda Corey *in loving memory of Linda's father*
Cindy and Alan Day *in loving memory of their son, Erik*
Cindy and Alan Day *in loving memory of sister Debbie Johnson Officer*
Christie and Mark Denniston *in loving memory of Kent and Ruth Anderson*
Orv and Ann Engelby *in loving memory of their parents and siblings*
Renee and Todd Hart *in loving memory of their parents*
Shelie and Ada Ingram *in loving memory of their parents*
Debra and James Jimenez *in loving memory of their parents*
Debra and James Jimenez *in loving memory of their siblings*
Sharen Kamp *in loving memory of her husband, Ivan*
Connie Larsen *in honor of her entire family*
Connie Larsen *in loving memory of her husband, Jerry*
Hazel Ann Linke *in loving memory of her husband, Don*
Nancy & Mike Otto *to commemorate the saints who have gone before us
and led the way*
Pat and Eric Refsdal *in honor of Pat's parents and in memory of Eric's parents*
Pat and Eric Refsdal *in honor of our musicians and singers*
Nicole and Mike Shane *in prayerful healing for Nicole's sister, Carroll and family*
Marlys and Keith Sorbo *in loving memory of Paula Volpi*
Marlys and Keith Sorbo *in loving memory of Maynard Satrom*
Arliss and Roy Zimmerman *in loving memory of Arliss' parents*
Arliss and Roy Zimmerman *in loving memory of Roy's parents*