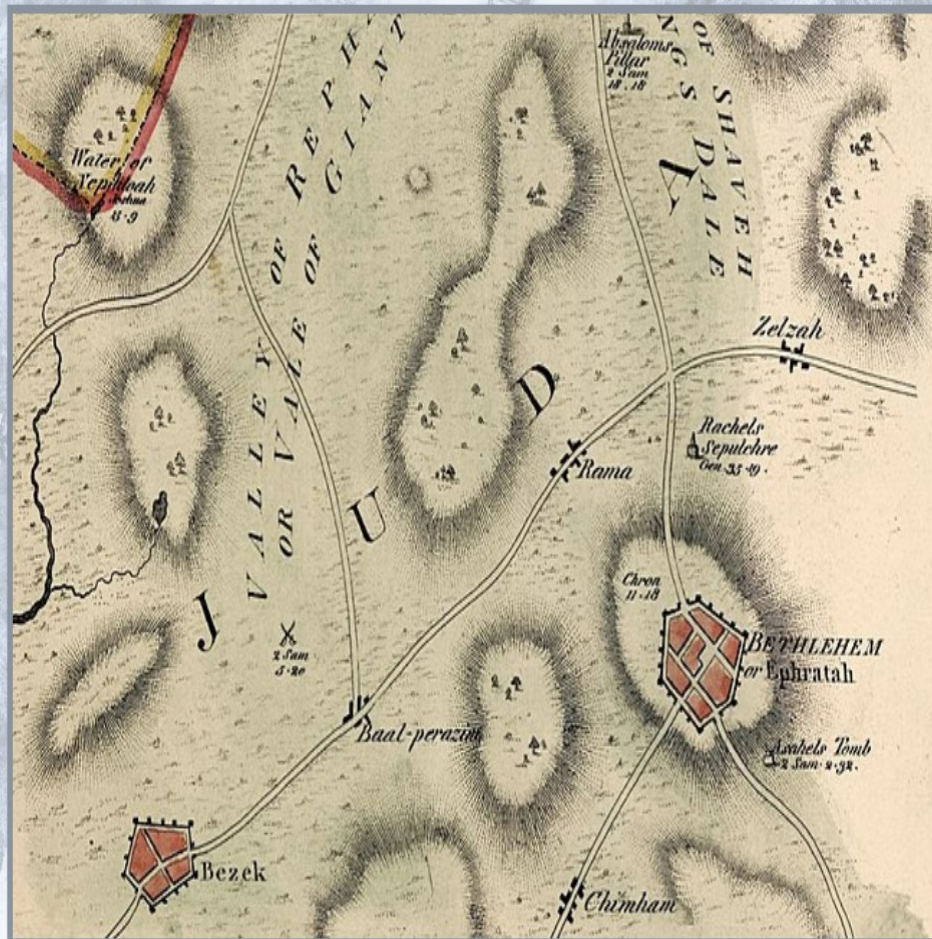


# On the Way to Bethlehem



Hope Peace LOVE Joy Care

December 29, 2024  
1st Sunday of Christmas



1105 N. Washington Blvd.  
Ogden, UT 84404  
801.782.2810

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 the cry room at the back of the sanctuary is available for**  
**parents who need to tend to their little ones.**

---

## Introduction

We are so often focused on the destination in our travels. "Where are you going?" is the most common question upon hearing that someone is heading out of town. While the destination is perhaps the impetus for deciding to "go," it is often the journey itself that offers the most memorable moments—frustrating or delightful. This Advent season, we will pay attention not just to the destination of Christmas, but also to the places where events occurred that led to a starry night on which a child was born who would change the world. And we will ponder our own milestones—the progress and the potholes "on the way."

# Bethlehem: Meno in the Unexpected

In each heart lies a Bethlehem ...

...we have arrived at Bethlehem. May we find our kneeling places.

*Adapted from In Search of Our Kneeling Places, Ann Weems*

**♪ ♪ 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.**

The musical score is written on three staves in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: "We're on our way. We're on our way. Dream of the day when love holds sway. With all the earth, in all our hearts. We're on our way. This is the day." The score includes various musical notations such as rests, eighth notes, quarter notes, and half notes, with some notes beamed together and others held over from the previous staff.

## Confession and Forgiveness

*Please stand in body or spirit.*

**P** Holy and Living God, we pray for hearts and minds to open wide to merciful acts in your name.

**All** Give us the humility to make more room.

Call us to a "generosity of grace."

Call us to be generous—not to a fault—but to a future

where all have a place and a home where they are deeply loved.

We pray this in the name of your Son,  
Jesus, the Christ, your Love Incarnate. Amen.

*P* Let this be a marker of assurance that we are moving into a new year in a faithful direction: God is with us every step of our way toward the Love of Bethlehem. Jesus is being born into our lives even now. ✚ The Spirit is transforming us in this place.

**All Amen.**

[You may be Seated](#)

## Children's Sermon & Noisy Offering

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

<sup>1</sup>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>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

<sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

<sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<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.

John 1:1-14

Christmas Reflection

Pr. Debra Jimenez

Hymn of the Day

🎵 **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.***

## Apostles' Creed

*P* Let us join together with the saints across the ages confessing our faith with the words of the Apostles' Creed.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## Prayers of The People

[You may be Seated](#)

*WA* Filled with good news of great joy,  
let us offer our prayers for the church, the earth, and all people.

*We Lift Up, By Nick Ehrhardt*

**All Ooooh, Oooooh, We Lift Up Our Prayers.**  
*(Repeat throughout)*

*Leader* For the planet, for its people.  
For the church and it's many shapes of steeples.

*Leader* For the hungry, for the cold.  
For the young and for the old.  
For our joy and for our pain.  
For the sunshine for the rain.  
For the dying, for the sick.  
For our loved ones and the glue that makes us stick.  
For our leaders for their minds.  
For your wisdom as to how we draw our lines.  
For the world and its frantic pace.  
For the places where we find deeper space.  
For all yearning hearts beneath the sun.  
For the chance for a prayer for everyone.  
(For our words and for our silence. (Pause)  
Ooooh, Ooooooh, Ahhhmen.

## Passing of the Peace

*P* Jesus Christ become Peace with you.

**All** And also with you.

## Offertory

*Tune: Away in a Manger*

♪ ♪ Praise God for these gifts that we offer today ♪ ♪  
and bless them for good in the world, this we pray.  
Praise Jesus, the Christ-Child, our Hope and our Stay,  
the Spirit, our Keeper, our Guide on the Way.

## Offertory Prayer

*P* Let us pray, God of our waiting and watching,

**All** we offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives  
to the service of all your people.

Prepare the way before us as we meet you in this simple meal,  
through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace. Amen.

## The Great Thanksgiving and Words of Institution

*P* The God of Love be with you

**All** And also with you.

*P* Lift up your hearts.

**All** We lift them to the Lord.

*P* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All** It is right to give God thanks and praise.

*P* On 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.”

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  
which is shed for you and for all people  
for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.”

## The Lord's Prayer

[Please stand in body or spirit.](#)

*P* God in Community, Holy and One,  
we lift our prayers to you, saying ...

**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* A child has been born for us, a Son given to us.  
Come, receive the gift of Jesus.

Note: the communion cups on the periphery of the tray contain red wine while the cups in the center contain white grape juice.

*Gluten Free wafers available –ask the communion attendant*

## Communion Songs

### 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 — *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.*

*They looked up and saw a star  
shining in the east beyond them far;  
and to the earth it gave great light,  
and so it continued both day and night.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.*

**♪ 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!*

**Post Communion Blessing and Prayer**

[Please stand in body or spirit.](#)

*P* The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**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 surpass those of the world. Amen

# Stewardship of Life & Ministry Announcements

## Benediction

[Please stand in body or spirit.](#)

*P* Incarnate God,  
As we move into a new year we wait with you  
for the hungry to be fed,  
for freedom for all,  
for the weapons of war to be abolished,  
for everyone to have clean water and sanitation,  
for an end to suspicion between Christian, Muslim, and Jew,  
for peace in our world ..  
Incarnate God, we wait ...✝  
for your Kingdom to come.

*All* Amen.

## 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

WA Go in Peace. The Word of God dwells in You!

**All Thanks be to God!**

Reading for next Sunday,  
January 5<sup>th</sup>  
The Epiphany of Our Lord

**Reading**

**Ephesians 3:1-12**

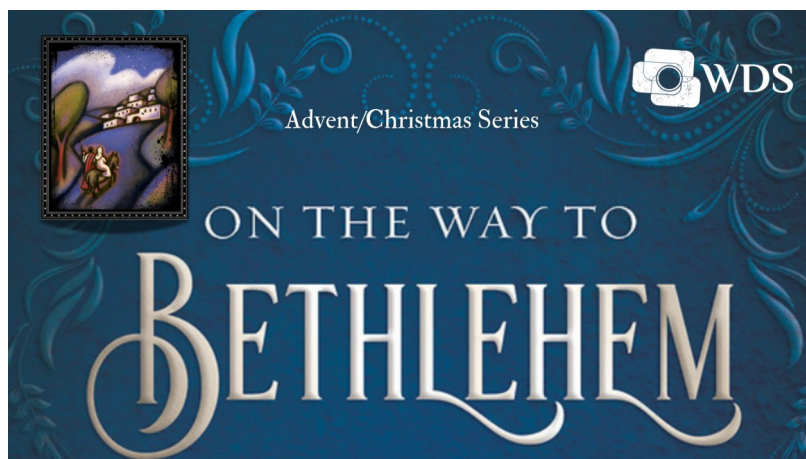
**Gospel:**

**Matthew 2: 1-12**

**Front Cover:**

**Photos by Worship Design Studio**

Used by permission



Music licenses covered by these subscriptions

Used by Permission OneLicense.net A-705915

Used by Permission CCLI LiscenSing License # 1924512



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

Diane Baird *in loving memory of her son, Danny and her siblings, Cheryl & Mike*  
Dee and Don Brown *Merry Christmas to one and all*  
Linda and Clark Corey *in loving memory of Linda's parents*  
Linda and Clark Corey *in loving memory of Clark's parents*  
Edith Cryts *in loving memory of her parents, Rosalea and Charles*  
Cindy and Alan Day *in loving memory of their son, Erik*  
Christie & Mark Denniston *in loving memory of Kent & Ruth Anderson, Anders' grandparents*  
Anne and Orv Engelby *in loving memory of their parents*  
Anne and Orv Engelby *in honor of their family*  
Dave Filanda *in loving memory of Lorine Filanda*  
Renee and Todd Hart *in loving memory of Lorraine Wilson*  
Shelie and Ada Ingram *in loving memory of their moms*  
Debra and James Jimenez *in honor of their families - past, present and future*  
CJ Jordan *in loving memory of family members who have gone before us*  
Sharen Kamp *in loving memory of her husband, Ivan*  
Marilyn Keile *to the Glory of God*  
Nancy & Mike Otto *to honor those in service to others*  
Pat and Eric Refsdal *in honor of our musicians and singers*  
Pat and Eric Refsdal *in loving memory of their moms*  
Mari Roberts *in loving memory of Sarah Smith*  
Nicole & Mike Shane *in loving memory of Robert Oliva, Ronald Shane & Kim Rathke*  
Marlys and Keith Sorbo *in loving memory of Paula Volpi*  
Marlys and Keith Sorbo *in loving memory of Jack Crowley*  
Carol Stafford *in loving memory of Jean Goodwin*  
Diana and John Warkentin *in loving memory of their son, Scott*  
Arliss and Roy Zimmerman *in loving memory of Arliss' parents*  
Arliss and Roy Zimmerman *in loving memory of Roy's parents*

## *In Search of Our Kneeling Places*

*In each heart lies a Bethlehem,  
an inn where we must ultimately answer  
whether there is room or not.*

*When we are Bethlehem-bound  
we experience our own advent in his.*

*When we are Bethlehem-bound  
we can no longer look the other way  
conveniently not seeing stars  
not hearing angel voices.*

*We can no longer excuse ourselves by busily  
tending our sheep or our kingdoms.*

*This Advent we travel to Bethlehem  
to see this thing that the Lord has made known to us.*

*In the midst of shopping sprees  
let's ponder in our hearts the Gift of Gifts.*

*Through the tinsel  
let's look for the gold of the Christmas star.*

*In the excitement and confusion, in the merry chaos,  
let's listen for the brush of angels' wings.*

*We have arrived at Bethlehem.  
May we find our kneeling places.*

*Adapted from a poem by Ann Weems*

## ***IT IS NOT OVER***

*It is not over,  
this birthing.  
There are always newer skies into which  
God can throw stars.  
When we begin to think  
that we can predict the Advent of God,  
that we can box the Christ  
in a stable in Bethlehem,  
that's just the time  
that God will be born  
in a place we can't imagine and won't believe.  
Those who wait for God  
watch with their hearts and not their eyes,  
listening  
always listening  
for angel words.*

*Ann Weems*

