## Paradise Lutheran Church – Thomasville, Pennsylvania First Sunday of Christmas December 31, 2023

#### Service of Lessons and Carols

#### Welcome and Announcements

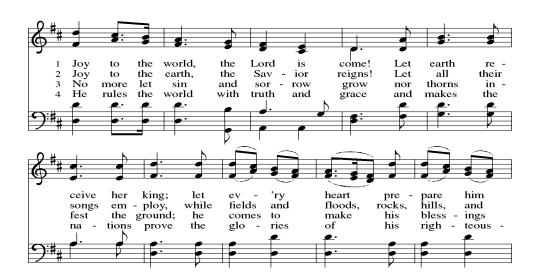
**Prelude** "Angels We Have Heard on High"

Jazz Ensemble

Please stand.

**Gathering Song:** 

"Joy to the World"



Continued >>>



## Dialogue

Pastor: Jesus, the bright Morning Star, shines light in the world.

All: By day and night he shines for all to see.

Pastor: Jesus was born in the midst of injustice and poverty All: that the world may see the justice and richness of God.

Pastor: God so loved the world that God sent Jesus,

All: so that all who believe in him may not perish but have eternal life.

Pastor: Jesus is the light of the world.

All: Jesus is the light of our lives.

Pastor: Sing to God a new song!

All: A song of hope, joy, and peace around the world.

## **Opening Prayer**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray. Gracious God of heaven and earth, you have thrown a lifeline to us in our darkness— a beam of light that shines through Jesus. Though born in a manger, he is the firstborn of all creation. Though crucified on a cross, he is the Lord of life. Fill us with the wonder and joy of his presence in the world and in our hearts. All: Amen.

Please be seated.

**Special Music** 

Jazz Ensemble

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

#### **Lessons and Carols**

A Reading from Genesis: Genesis 1:1-5, 14-18

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, <sup>2</sup>the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. <sup>3</sup>Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. <sup>4</sup>And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup>God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

<sup>14</sup>And God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, <sup>15</sup>and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth." And it was so. <sup>16</sup>God made the two great lights — the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night — and the stars. <sup>17</sup>God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, <sup>18</sup>to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.

#### Hymn: "I Wonder as I Wander"

- I wonder as I wander, out under the sky, How Jesus the Savior did come for to die For poor ord'n'ry people like you and like I. I wonder as I wander, out under the sky.
- When Mary birthed Jesus, all in a cow's stall, Came wise men and farmers and shepherds and all And high from the heavens a star's light did fall; The promise of the ages it then did recall.
- If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing,
  A star in the sky or a bird on the wing,
  Or all of God's angels in heav'n for to sing,
  He surely could have had it, 'cause he was the king.
- I wonder as I wander, out under the sky,
  How Jesus the Savior did come for to die
  For poor ord'n'ry people like you and like I.
  I wonder as I wander, out under the sky.

A Reading from Micah: *Micah 5:2-5a* <sup>2</sup> But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old,

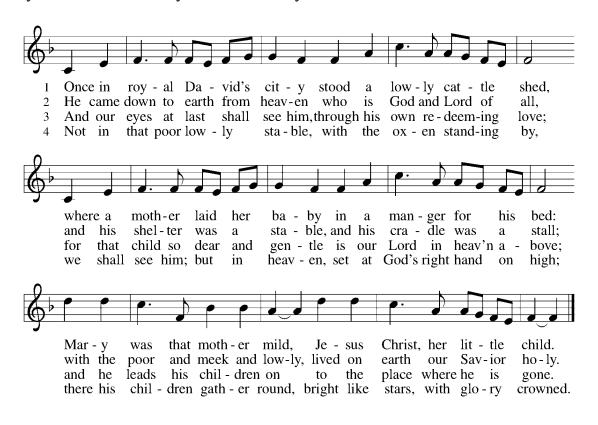
<sup>3</sup>Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel.

<sup>4</sup>And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth;

<sup>5</sup>and he shall be the one of peace.

from ancient days.

### Hymn: "Once in Royal David's City"



A Reading from Luke: Luke 1:26-35-38

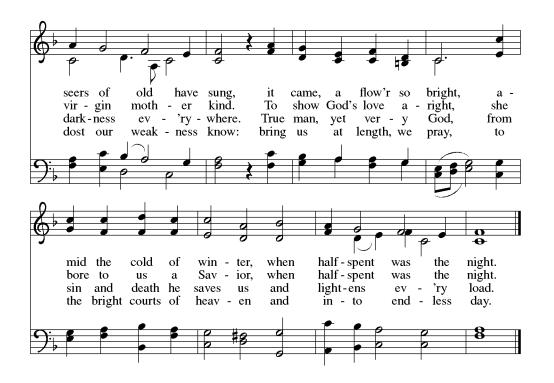
<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup>But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the

house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup>And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible with God." <sup>38</sup>Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.





Continued >>>



A Reading from Matthew: Matthew 1:18-25

<sup>18</sup>Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. <sup>20</sup>But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." <sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

<sup>23</sup>"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with

us." <sup>24</sup>When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, <sup>25</sup>but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Solo: "Jesus, What a Wonderful Child"

Julie Maher, Soloist

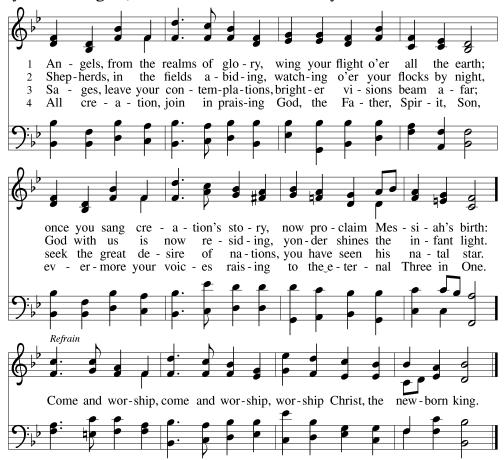
A Reading from Luke: Luke 2:8-20

<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!"

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

Hymn: "Angels, from the Realms of Glory"



#### A Reading from Matthew: Matthew 2:1-11

<sup>1</sup>In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup>asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." <sup>3</sup>When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup>and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where

the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup>They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup>'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"

<sup>7</sup>Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." <sup>9</sup>When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup>On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

#### Hymn: "In the Bleak Midwinter"



A Reading from John: John 1:1-14

<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.

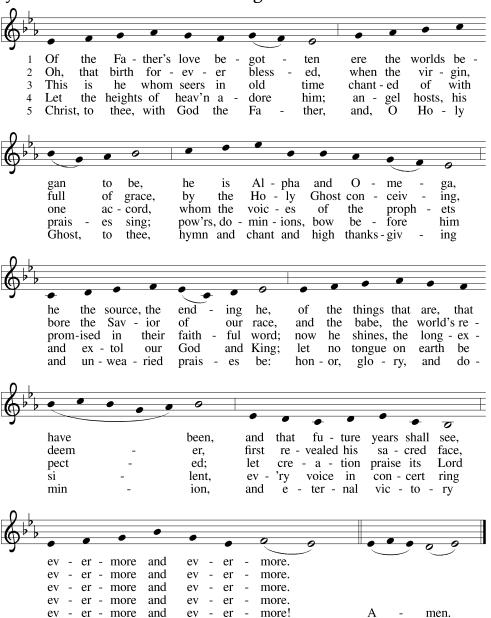
<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming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

#### Please stand.

### Hymn: "Of the Father's Love Begotten"



### **Responsive Prayer**

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

All: Your Word, Jesus, is truth.

In his light, draw all to the manger

to gather in wonder with the shepherds.

In his light, draw all to the manger

to kneel in reverence with the wise ones.

In his light, draw all to the manger

to sing for joy with the angels.

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 [pause] ... for all people in countries ravaged by warfare or natural disaster [pause] ... for all who work for peace and international harmony [pause] ... for all who strive to save the earth from carelessness and destruction [pause]...for all who seek healing of body, mind, or spirit, especially Janet Mansberger, Joyce Bentzel, Kay Brady, Sherry Feeser, Gloria Krebs; Kaleb Trump, Nancy and Jerry Frey-Markell, Ron Schwartz, Bob Markle, Samantha Zorbaugh, Gwen Schnetzka, Angie Zepp, Melissa Hipkiss, Erika Smith, Jody Stauffer, Kim Culbert, Mark and Connie Keller, Heather Shoemaker, Judy Jarvis, Bernie Tucker, Sue Sell, Joe Pohlman, Linda Schreier, Connie McNeil, James Sanders, Bill Funk, Christine Ruth Smith, Jen Miller, Dolores Diehl [pause] ... for the church of Jesus Christ in every land...[pause]

In the brightness of his life

cast away the darkness of injustice, poverty, and hunger in the world. It is you, loving God, who meets us on our way.

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

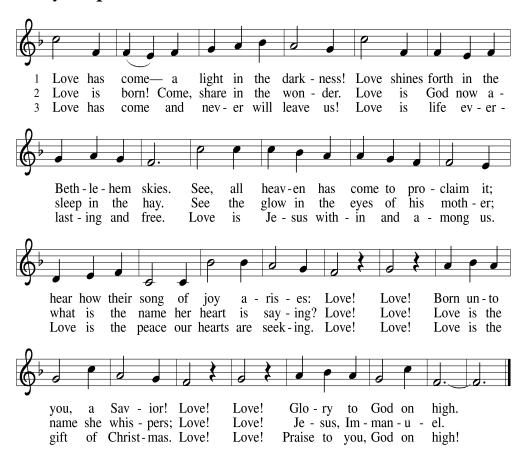
#### **Sharing of the Peace**

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you always.

## All: And also with you.

(Please feel free to move around and share the peace with those around you with a sign, handshake, or a hug.) **Please remain standing.** 

### **Offertory Response:** "Love Has Come"



### **Offertory Prayer**

Assisting Minister: Let us pray. Our Lord Emmanuel, receive and bless the gifts we have offered, signs of your goodness. As you gather us here at this table of celebration, we thank you for the wonders of your love, given for us in the bread and wine, your body and blood. Nourish us with this meal of grace, that our lives might shine with your everlasting light. All: Amen.

### **Eucharistic Prayer**

#### Lord's Prayer

Pastor: Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray.

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.

#### **Invitation to Communion**

Pastor: O come, all ye faithful! Jesus, the child of Bethlehem, is the host of this meal. Whether you are joyful or weary, whether you have been here often or not for a while, the table is set and there is a place for you. Come, let us adore him, and receive with open hands and hearts this dearest gift. Jesus invites you to his feast! Come forward, as you are able, to receive his body and blood in the bread and wine. (If you need to receive communion in your pew, you can alert us by

holding up your hand after the line has gone through, and we will be glad to come to you.). Please be seated.

After all have communed, please stand.

## Blessing after communion

Pastor: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **All: Amen.** 

#### **Post-Communion Prayer**

Assisting Minister: Let us pray. Joy to the world! You, Lord, have come to us in this meal and fed us with gifts of grace, truth, and life. Heaven and nature sing of the wonders of your love. Send us from this table to share the good news of great joy for all people.

All: Amen.

#### **Announcements**

#### **Blessing**

Pastor: Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!

All: Praise God, all creatures here below!

You are the shepherds telling the story.

We tell it in the streets and across the land.

You are the wise ones worshiping with thanksgiving.

We worship with gifts of song and service, talents, and treasures.

You are the angels announcing peace.

We live with joy and go now in peace.

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

## **Sending Song:** "Go Tell It On the Mountain"



#### **Dismissal**

Pastor: Go in peace. Rejoice in Christ our Savior.

All: Thanks be to God.

**Postlude** "Joy to the World"

Jazz Ensemble

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**WELCOME** to Paradise! Happy New Year's Eve; tomorrow is 2024! May we try our best to love like Jesus this year ...totally... unconditionally...oh boy. Deep breath...we can do this!!

**SPECIAL THANKS** to our Jazz Ensemble for providing the rockin' good music this morning! What a great way to end the year. Special thanks to our talented and dedicated Minister of Music Allison Trump for all her hard work this Christmas season... and all year.

IN OUR PRAYERS: Janet Mansberger, Joyce Bentzel, Kay Brady, Sherry Feeser, Gloria Krebs; Kaleb Trump, Nancy and Jerry Frey-Markell, Ron Schwartz, Bob Markle, Samantha Zorbaugh, Gwen Schnetzka, Angie Zepp, Melissa Hipkiss, Erika Smith, Jody Stauffer, Kim Culbert, Mark and Connie Keller, Heather Shoemaker, Judy Jarvis, Bernie Tucker, Sue Sell, Joe Pohlman, Linda Schreier, Connie McNeil, James Sanders, Bill Funk, Christine Ruth Smith, Jen Miller, Dolores Diehl

For healing/comfort/peace: For those in prison, especially Patrick and Keith For those who mourn

#### **NOTES ABOUT WORSHIP:**

✓ Large print bulletins are available in the binders in the narthex. We have one copy of each service in each of the four binders.

✓ Offering plates are located by the entrances. Please put your offering in before worship begins, as we will be bringing the offering forward to the altar during worship. (If you forget, there will be a plate still available at the back at the end of worship.)

- ✓ As you share the peace, you are welcome to move around and greet one another with Christ's peace with a sign, handshake, or hug.
- ✓ All the baptized are invited to receive Holy Communion. If we are communing by intinction, you will receive a wafer, which you can then dip in the wine. If we are communing with bread, you will receive a piece of bread from the pastor. Then proceed to pick up a cup, which a server will fill with wine. Gluten-free wafers are always available from the pastor's communion station.

✓ When you leave, please dispose of any trash with you. Bulletins may be taken with you or placed in the box either on the table shelf outside the office or in the narthex for recycling. Thank you!

**THE ALTAR FLOWERS** are given to the Glory of God by an anonymous donor.

**RESERVE ALTAR FLOWERS OR BULLETINS:** sign up to sponsor the altar flowers or bulletins — add your information to the book in the narthex.

THE CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED through <u>January 1</u>. We'll be back on Tuesday, <u>January 2</u>.

**BREAKFAST CLUB** will meet on Tuesday, <u>January 3</u>, 8:30 a.m., at Fresh Start, 4345 West Market Street, York.

**EVENING BIBLE STUDY** on the Ten Commandments: beginning on <u>January 9</u>, Pastor Sigrid will be offering a study on <u>Tuesday evenings</u> at 7 p.m. We will dig into a study on the role the Ten Commandments play in our personal and public lives as Christians, using a resource by Joan Chittester. This study was originally planned to go only through February 13, but, given the study chosen, will extend

through Lent, probably until March 12. You can attend in person or through Zoom (link will be emailed).

**BOOK CLUB** meets at the church on Thursday, <u>January 4</u>, 6:30 p.m. The book: "The Lost Letter" by Jillian Cantor. Couple of copies still available outside the church office.

**COUNCIL INSTALLATION** at both services next Sunday, <u>January 7</u>.

**WINTERWEAR COLLECTION** will end on <u>January 7</u>. Bring your donations (mittens, gloves, hats, scarves, etc.) to the narthex!

**GIANT AND WEIS CARDS** are available for purchase. Contact **Pat Zech** or **Heidi Wolf**. The church gets a portion of the total purchased.

**WEBSITE:** The church's website for **January** is sponsored by **Dale and Barb Musser** in memory of their parents: Gordon and Helen Musser; Robert Zellers and Rosella Buchmyer. Let Julie know if you'd like to sponsor a month in 2025 [all of 2024 is sponsored, hooray!]. Cost: a mere \$20!

**SPECIAL OFFERING ENVELOPE** for **January** will go to *our Endowment Fund*.

# Bulletins were run before the financial information was available.

We'll catch up next week.



## Worship Participants:

**Pastor:** Reverend Sigrid Hipkiss **Minister of Music:** Allison Trump Greeters: Tom and Cheryl Hoover

Acolyte: Paul Hipkiss Lector: Heidi Wolf

Assisting Minister: Larry McConnell Usher/communion: Justice White

Tech: Mike Gautsch



## Gathered to worship, care, and grow; sent to love like Jesus!

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