

ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH

FAMILY SERVICE



CHRISTMAS EVE - 4:30 PM

December 24, 2023



St. Matthew

LUTHERAN CHURCH

CENTERED IN CHRIST

Celebrating Love • Serving All

Phone: 717-637-7101

General mailbox ext. 221

30 W Chestnut Street Hanover PA 17331

Email: info@stmattlutheran.org www.stmattlutheran.org

Facebook: St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Hanover PA

Instagram: @stmatthanover

Livestream Worship:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/StMatthewLutheranChurchHanoverPA>

Welcome! Whether you are a long-time member of St. Matthew, a first-time visitor, or somewhere in between, we are thankful you are here today. We have more information for you to read on the bulletin insert and the welcome sheet in the pew. We're excited about the many ministries of St. Matt's, and we hope you'll find a way to plug in that makes sense for you!

Please tear off and put in the offering basket as you leave:

Names of everyone attending **December 24 at 4:30 p.m.:**

Would you like to be added to our email list? **Please list your name and email address:**

PRELUDE

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Traditional Polish Carol

Away in a Manger

Murray

Brody Rummel, Soloist

WELCOME

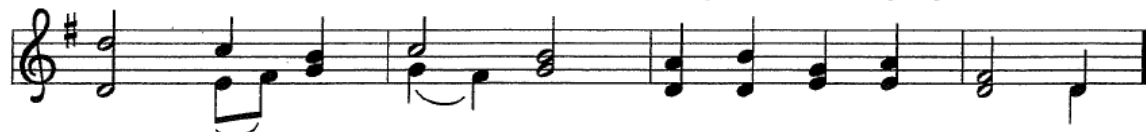
GATHERING CAROL *O Come, All Ye Faithful* – Wade/Oakeley



O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,
Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;
Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!



come and be - hold him, born the / king of an - gels:
Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:



O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: Welcome to a celebration like no other!

All: This is the night of the Holy Birth!

Pastor: Let the love of Jesus be born in our hearts

All: We open our hearts to receive this gift.

Pastor: Rejoice, good friends, the Good News is here!

All: Christ our Savior is Born! Amen.

MUSICAL OFFERING

Noel, Glory to God
Junior Choir

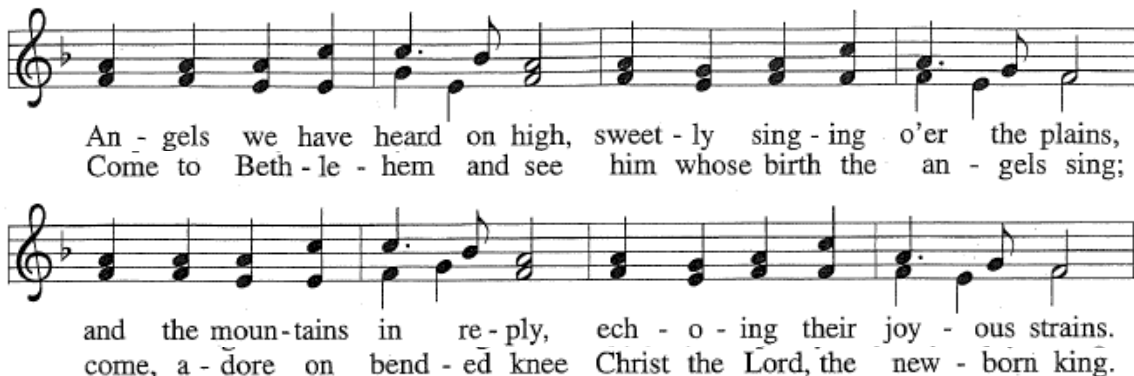
Bailey

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

All: Amen.

CAROL.....*Angels We Have Heard on High* – Hemy/Barnes



An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;
and the moun - tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.



THE LESSONIsaiah 9:2, 6-7

Pastor: A reading from the 9th chapter of Isaiah.

² The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.

On those living in a pitch-dark land, light has dawned.

⁶ A child is born to us, a son is given to us, and authority will be on his shoulders. He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷ There will be vast authority and endless peace for David's throne and for his kingdom, establishing and sustaining it with justice and righteousness now and forever. [CEB translation]

Pastor: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

MUSICAL OFFERING

Happy Birthday, Jesus
Preschool and Primary Choirs

Saddleback Kids

Ring and Celebrate!
Preschool, Primary and Junior Choirs

Thornhill/Nix

(Children are invited forward for the Christmas Story and Children's Message)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 2nd chapter.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

HOLY GOSPEL.....Luke 2:1-20 (Adaptation from The Beginners Bible)

The Most Special Boy

Now Mary loved a man named Joseph. They were going to get married.
One day Joseph had to take a trip to the city of Bethlehem.
So Mary went with him. The city of Bethlehem was crowded.
Many people had come there. Joseph and Mary looked for a place to stay.
But there was no room in any house. All the beds were full.
People were even sleeping on the floors.
So Joseph and Mary had to stay in a stable
where the donkeys and horses stayed.
That night, the baby was born. It was God's only son.
Mary and Joseph named him Jesus, just as the angel had told them to do.
They wrapped him up so he would be warm.
Mary made a soft bed for him in a manger. The baby Jesus slept there.
Mary loved him.
Joseph loved him.
And God loved him.

Good News

It was still night.
Outside the town of Bethlehem, some sheep were sleeping.
Shepherds were watching them.
Suddenly an angel came to the shepherds.

And God's glory shone around them. They were afraid.
 But the angel said, "Do not be afraid.
 I am bringing you good news. This is happy news for all the people:
 today in Bethlehem, God's Son was born. You can go see him.
 He is wrapped warm and snug in a manger!"
 Then many, many angels came from heaven.
 They praised God. "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth!"
 When the angels left, the shepherds said, "Let's go find this baby!"
 They found the stable. And they saw the new baby.
 Then the shepherds left, thanking God.
 They told everyone what had happened. The people were amazed.
 And Mary always remembered this special time.

Pastor: The Gospel of our Lord.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

THE MESSAGE

Meeting at the Manger

Pastor Kathy and Missy Smith

CAROL..... *Away in a Manger* - Murray



A - way in a man-ger, no crib for his bed, the lit - tle Lord
 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay close by me for -



Je - sus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked
 ev - er and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil - dren in



down where he lay, the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 your ten - der care and fit us for heav-en, to live with you there.

(Children return to their seats)

CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Each petition concludes, *"Hear us, O God."* and the congregation responds, *"Your mercy is great."*

THE 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.

CAROL..... *Silent Night, Holy Night!* – Mohr/Young/Gruber

1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake

all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,

Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is



THE BLESSING

Pastor: 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.

All: Amen.

SENDING CAROL.....*Joy to the World – Watts/Mason*



(Continued next page)



DISMISSAL:

Pastor: Christ the Savior is born!
Go in peace. Share the good news.

All: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

* * * * *

Please note: Music for this service is covered under CCLI # 1000682 –
Also #A-708989 *One License.net*

Our Warm Thanks to all assisting in our worship service this evening:

MusiciansBrody Rummel, Soloist; Daniel Deitzel III, Organist
Preschool and Primary Choirs with Lindsay Amspacher, Director
and Junior Choir with Deb Smith, Director

Altar Guild Anna Marchio, Judy Porowski

GreeterHunter Crabbs

Live StreamDoug & Jane West

Ushers.....Tim Peck, Keith, Jennifer, Gracie and Ryder Troup

We wish you and your family a joyous and blessed Christmas and prosperous New Year! We thank you for all you do to make our community of faith a wonderful place to work and be.

The Staff of St. Matthew

St. Matthew Lutheran Church

Rev. Kathryn Vitalis Hoffman, Lead Pastor, ext. 231

pastorkathy@stmattlutheran.org

Rev. Faye C. Snyder, Visitation Pastor

Rev. Mark Vitalis Hoffman, Interim Teaching Pastor

PastorMark@CrossMarks.com

Tim Peck, Youth Ministry, ext. 230, *youth@stmattlutheran.org*,

Melissa Smith, Children and Family Ministry Coordinator, ext. 229

msmith@stmattlutheran.org

Doris Deitzel, Pastoral Assistant, ext. 225, *ddeitzel@stmattlutheran.org*

Deb Smith, Interim Youth and Adult Music Ministry Leader,

musicmama1@comcast.net

Lindsay Amspacher, Interim Children's Music Ministry Leader,

Lindsay.amspacher@gmail.com

Scott Fredericks, Minister of Music, Emeritus

A VERY SPECIAL WELCOME to all our visitors this evening. We hope you find this service meaningful and filled with all the blessings of our Lord Jesus Christ. You are invited to join us every weekend as we come together for worship and fellowship. Our Saturday service is at 5:00 p.m. and our Sunday services are at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. with Faith Connections at 9:30 a.m. for all ages. For December 31, there will be one service at 9:30 a.m.

THE MORAVIAN STAR over our manger has its origin in Germany and symbolizes the star that the magi used to find their way to Bethlehem in order to adore the Christ Child. This symbol is left hanging during the Epiphany season which draws together the themes of the birth of Jesus Christ bringing light into the darkness, the coming of the Magi, and Jesus' first miracle in Cana of Galilee.



POINSETTIA LISTS are available in the back of the church and on the Hospitality Desk in the Gathering Place. Thank you to everyone who sponsored poinsettias. After the costs of the plants are met, the money will go to support ELCA Good Gifts.



Scan for
e-giving

We celebrate God's generosity embodied in this community's time, talents and treasures shared with one another. We ask that you would donate as you feel comfortable by leaving physical offerings in the baskets near the entrances/exits of the worship space or through online giving on our website.

MERRY
CHRISTMAS