



APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH



THE REV. JENIFFER TILLMAN

7092 Main Street, Gloucester, VA 23061 | 804-693-9098 | www.apostles-elca.org



NATIVITY OF OUR LORD: CHRISTMAS EVE

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2021 | 7:00 PM



RECONCILING *in* CHRIST



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

WELCOME TO APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH!

It is an honor to worship God with you this evening. We pray you experience the loving presence of the Spirit as we share our words, our actions, and the Holy Meal. A restroom can be found by exiting the rear door of the worship space. It is directly in front of you to the right. Additional restrooms can be found in the back corner of the fellowship area, near the Pastor's office.

IN-PERSON WORSHIP

The leadership of Apostles Lutheran Church has prioritized keeping all worshipers healthy and at ease as we return to in-person worship. For some the pace of transition back to normalcy isn't happening fast enough; for others, it seems too fast. As we continue to assure one another and our neighbors that Apostles is a safe place to celebrate our community of faith in Jesus Christ, we appreciate patience and understanding over the weeks and months ahead. If someone approaches you and appears to want to hug, shake hands, etc., please know that it is okay to say that you are not comfortable with this at this time. So, to keep everyone safe during these continuing challenging times, we ask:

- For everyone to wear a mask
- For families to sit together – the prayerground is closed for the time being.
- For you to use the hand sanitizer which is available both in the narthex and the sanctuary.
- For everyone to stay in place when we share the peace – *of course, feel free to share the peace with members of your family.* Otherwise, kindly use appropriate hand gestures to share the peace with your neighbors.
- For you to place your offering in the offering plate at the rear of the sanctuary when you enter or leave the sanctuary – the offering plates will not be passed during the service.
- For you to leave the building after worship. At this time there will be no greeting of Pastor Jeniffer.

INTRODUCTION TO NATIVITY OF OUR LORD: CHRISTMAS EVE

As on the first day of creation, on this Christmas Eve the Word illumines the world, shining forth to bring all things into being. Tonight, we celebrate the incarnate Word, God becoming flesh to live among us in the person of Jesus Christ then and now. Emboldened by the good news of Christ's birth, along with the shepherds, Mary and Joseph, and all witnesses to the light of Christ, we declare to the world that we have indeed seen and been transformed by the arrival of "the salvation of our God." O come, let us adore!

GATHERING

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

WELCOME & PRELUDE

*Martin Luther said of music: "Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world." Please take a moment to **silence all cell phones**.*

Stand

HYMN

ELW, #283

"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:

2 The highest, most holy,
light of light eternal,
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father
now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

Refrain

Venite adoremus,
venite adoremus,
venite adoremus Dominum.

3 Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God
in the highest: *Refrain*

O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!

4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing: *Refrain*

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711-1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880, sts. 1, 3-4; tr. unknown, st. 2

GREETING

The word was made flesh and dwelt among us.

O come, let us adore HIM.

May the light and peace of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.

Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

Sit

FIRST LESSON

ISAIAH 9:2-7

Light shines: a child is born for us

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Psalm 96

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad. (Ps. 96:11)

SECOND LESSON

TITUS 2:11-14

The grace of God has appeared

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

HYMN

ELW, #248

“People, Look East”

1 People, look east. The time is near
of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east, and sing today—
Love, the Guest, is on the way.

3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim,
one more light the bowl shall brim,
shining beyond the frosty weather,
bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east, and sing today—
Love, the Star, is on the way.

2 Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
one more seed is planted there.
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
that in course the flow'r may flourish.
People, look east, and sing today—
Love, the Rose, is on the way.

4 Angels announce with shouts of mirth
him who brings new life to earth.
Set ev'ry peak and valley humming
with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east, and sing today—
Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Text: Eleanor E. Farjeon, 1881–1965

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GOSPEL

LUKE 2:1–14 [15–20]

God with us

Response after the announcement

The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Response after the conclusion

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

NOTES

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

ANTHEM

BEFORE THE MARVEL OF THIS NIGHT

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

Each portion of the prayers ends with these words:

Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

*We share a distanced sign of Peace with our neighbors saying **Peace be with you** to which we respond **And also with you.***

Sit

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. Offering plates will not be passed around. Drop your offering in the plate at the back or give online:

✚ Visit apostles-elca.org/contributions

✚ From your mobile phone, text the word **GIVE** to 844-215-5453

Stand

OFFERING PRAYER

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*The thanksgiving continues with the preface
for the day or season.*

... we praise your name and join their
unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth
are full of your glory.
Hosanna. Hosanna.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

The thanksgiving continues.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The great thanksgiving continues.

We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

The great thanksgiving continues.

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

The great thanksgiving continues.

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

**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

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Sit

COMMUNION

All are invited to join us at the Lord's table to receive the presence of Jesus through the bread and wine. Jesus himself invites you and Jesus turns no one away. You will be invited to come forward to receive the elements from the Pastor. Holy Communion are the gifts of God for the people of God.

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

ELW, #279

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

1 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.

2 For Christ is born of Mary,
and, gathered all above
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the king,
and peace to all the earth!

3 How silently, how silently
the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming;
but, in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.

4 O holy child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
oh, come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Immanuel!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

ELW, #270

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

1 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!"

Refrain

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

2 Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail, incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel! *Refrain*

3 Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace!
Hail the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise each child of earth,
born to give us second birth. *Refrain*

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.

Stay Seated

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Response after the prayer:

Amen.

The congregation is asked to leave the sanctuary to safely gather outside for the Lighting of the Candles.

As you exit the sanctuary to go outside, please take a candle from one of the Ushers.

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

As you light your candle, tilt it toward your neighbor's candle as they hold their candle upright.

Pass the light along by holding your candle upright as your neighbor tilts their own candle.

Extinguish your candle as directed by the Pastor.

READING

JOHN 1:1-14

The Word became flesh

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.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission back into the world.

SENDING HYMN

ELW, #281

“Silent Night, Holy Night”



Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,
 1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,



ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.
 all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
 at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,



Hold - er Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher
 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
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your



Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh.
 peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792–1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820–1885
 Music: STILLE NACHT, Franz Gruber, 1787–1863

Stand

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

WORSHIP LEADERS

Serving Today

Officiating Minister	..... The Rev. Jeniffer Tillman
Accompanist	..... Janet Gomez
Acolyte	..... Chase Ambrose
Altar Care	..... Margaret Grimes
Assisting Minister	..... Linda Hodges
Children’s Message	..... The Rev. Jeniffer Tillman
Choir/Hand Chimes Director	..... Sue Turner
Flute	..... Vanessa Fry
Lector	..... David Luenig
Tellers	..... P. Liljeberg/B. Grimes
Ushers	..... Betsy Liljeberg

THANK YOU TO . . .

Teresa and Dan Grantham for being Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus and for donating the teddy bears!

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

Opal Baker, Luise Buerkert, Eddie Freeman, Manning Freeman, Betty Hauch, Michael Schlemmer, George Thomas, Jewel Thomas, Sue and George Turner, and Jerry and Lena Woodlief

OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Pastor Jeniffer's neighbor, Amanda and Travis, Andrea, Patricia Armentor, family of Sharon Bagley (friends of Judy Wright), **Judy and Chuck Bucher, Sally Burkholder, Amy Carter, Eric and Lauren Cartwright, the Clements family, Laura Clodfelter, family of Kimberly Conine, James Cummings, Sr.** (brother-in-law of Reida Avery), **Ben Davis** (friend of Donna Ambrose), **Tommy and Kathie Davis, Mary Divelbiss, Terry Dobson, Colton Elliot** (Michael Schlemmer's cousin), **Laura Fleige** (Janet Gomez's sister), **Teresa Floersheim-Miller** (Ingrid Peterson's mother), **Michelle Fowler** (Reida Avery's daughter), **Dana Goodwin** (Juanita Sturdy's daughter), **Shirley Grimes** (Ben Grimes' mother), **family of Shirlean Hackman, Mike Hall, Carl and Kaleb Hess, Adam Hewko** (nephew of the Hansons), **Aris Hibbs** (friend of Ray Scholz), **Diane Hill** (friend of Nancy Wagner), **Jim and Barbara Hoerle** (parents of Babs Zuhowski), **Alice Jaeger, John, Nero Katz** (friend of Pastor Jeniffer), **Nicole Keating** (friend of Daniel Gomez), **Pastor Betty Krafft, employees and residents of Liberty ARC, Terri Larsen, the Little Family, Richard and Gloria Lowe** (friends of the Averys), **Lorraine Malkemus, Lotte Mathias, Wayne Mathews, Jean McKee** (Lilly Frost's grandmother), **Sylvia Midgette** (grandmother of Krystle McMahon), **Mitchelle and baby Stella, Keith Morgan, Nutmeg, Edward and Carol Pascale** (Lynn Jaeger's parents), **Melissa Persse and her father, Dick Peterson and his brother, Aleen Poupard** (friend of Luise Buerkert), **Carol Schlemmer, James Schollian** (friend of Nancy Wagner), **Michael Scholz** (nephew of Ray Scholz), **Kathy Shackelford** (friend of Jim Reinke), **Fred Smith, Tammy Smith, Genie Stickleman** (friend of Chris Avery), **Becky Speight** (friend of the Alberts), **Linda Sutterfield, Danny Sydow** (friend of Chris Avery), **Tara, Angie** (co-workers of Jennie Hawkins), **Dave Wagner** (husband of Nancy), **Robert Wagner** (friend of Nancy Wagner), **Chuck Webb** (Tina Britt's father), **Makenzie Webb** (niece of Tina Britt), **Al Whitcomb** (Reida Avery's cousin), **Elizabeth and Steven White, Carla Witt** (friend of Chris and Reida Avery), **Kitty Witty, Cory Woodlief, Greg Yvonovich** (friend of Margaret and Ben Grimes), **Derek Zwiers** (friend of CK Ambrose)

Our sponsored children in Guatemala – Amavra, Hugolino and Manuela

THIS WEEK AT APOSTLES

DECEMBER 24, 2021 – DECEMBER 26, 2021

TODAY 7:00 PM Candlelight Worship Service

SATURDAY A most blessed Christmas to all!

SUNDAY A Thrill of Hope: Lessons and Carols for Christmas (**no in-person worship** – online service provided by the Virginia Synod)

