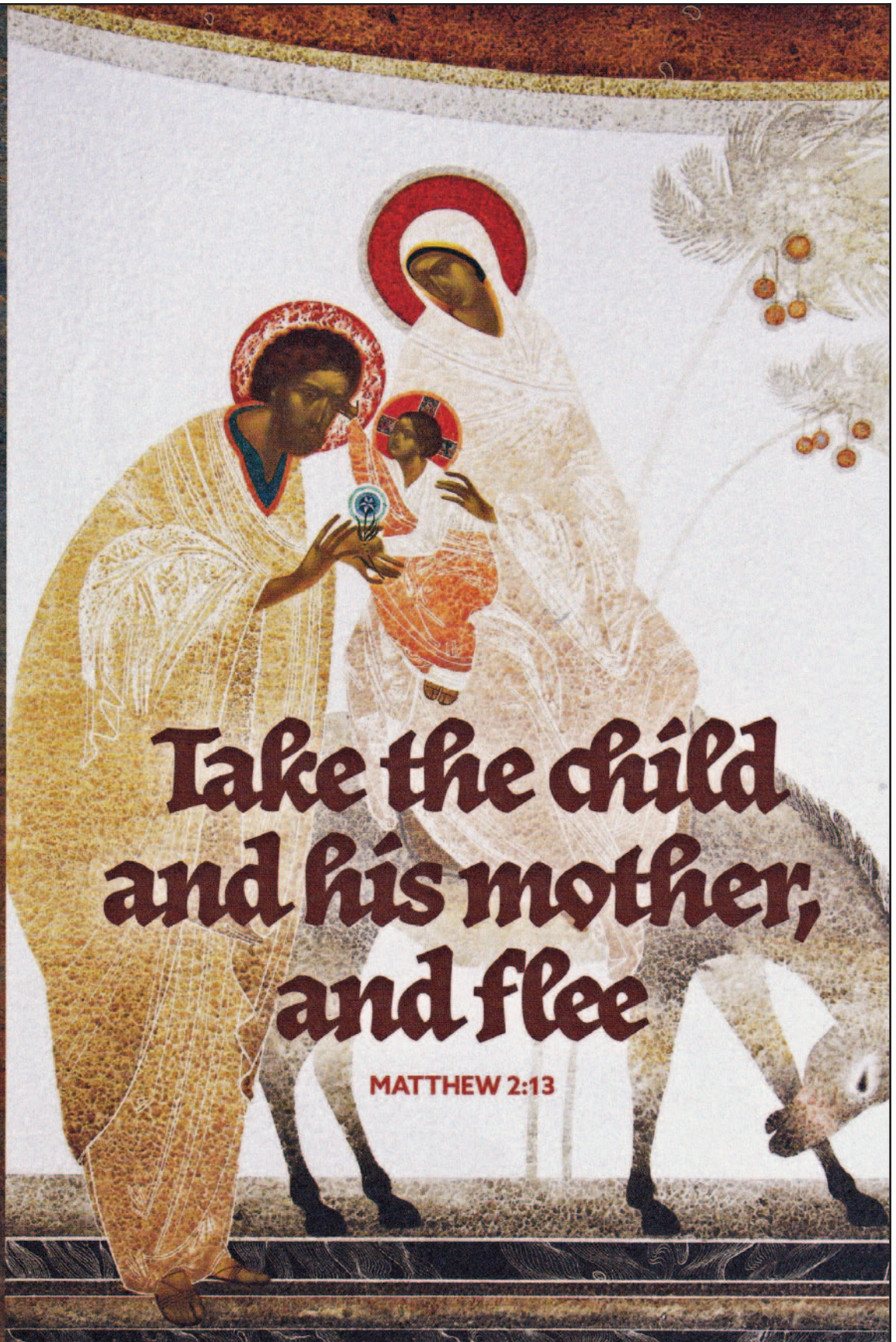


# St. John Lutheran Church



**Take the child  
and his mother,  
and flee**

**MATTHEW 2:13**

Cover: *Flight into Egypt* by Ivanka Demchuk. Copyright © Ivanka Demchuk. All rights reserved. Used by permission of the artist.

Scripture quotations from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. Revised Common Lectionary copyright © 1992 by the Consultation on Common Texts (CCT), admin. Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Please visit our website at [www.augsburgfortress.org](http://www.augsburgfortress.org). Tracks 1 and 2

Copyright © 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. May not be reproduced. Printed in U.S.A.

20251228-CHR1 ITEM014733 ELCA-K



# ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Rev. Tammy P. Harmer

Deacon Betsey Eley & Deacon Ken Weaver

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS • DECEMBER 28, 2025

## Reverent Reflection

## Prelude

## Welcome

## Church Announcements

## Confession and Forgiveness

- P. Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.
- C. **Amen.**
- P. O God, powerful and compassionate, you shepherd your people, faithfully feeding and protecting us. Heal each of us, and make us a whole people, that we may embody the justice and peace of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
- C. **Amen.**
- P. Most merciful God,
- C. **we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.**
- Amen.**
- P. In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us and for his sake God forgives us all our sin. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
- C. **Amen.**

## Gathering Hymn: What Child Is This (#631)

## Apostolic Greeting

- P. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- C. **And also with you.**

## Kyrie p. 147

- P. In peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- C. **Lord, have mercy.**
- P. For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.
- C. **Lord, have mercy.**
- P. For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.
- C. **Lord, have mercy.**

- P. For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.  
C. **Lord, have mercy.**  
P. Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.  
C. **Amen.**

## **Canticle p. 149**

- P. This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.  
C. **Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God. Power and riches and wisdom and strength, and honor and blessing and glory are his. This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.**  
**Sing with all the people of God and join in the hymn of all creation:**  
**Blessing and honor and glory and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.**  
**This is the feast of victory for our God, for the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign. Alleluia. Alleluia.**  
  
P. The Lord be with you.  
C. **And also with you.**

## **Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray:

*O Lord God, you know that we cannot place our trust in our own powers. As you protected the infant Jesus, so defend us and all the needy from harm and adversity, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

## **Word**

### **First Reading: Isaiah 63:7-9**

<sup>7</sup> I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord, the praiseworthy acts of the Lord, because of all that the Lord has done for us, and the great favor to the house of Israel that he has shown them according to his mercy, according to the abundance of his steadfast love.

<sup>8</sup> For he said, "Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely"; and he became their savior <sup>9</sup> in all their distress. It was no messenger or angel but his presence that saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Psalm 148**

**Response: "The splendor of the Lord is over earth and heaven."**

<sup>1</sup> Hallelujah! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise God in the heights.

<sup>2</sup> **Praise the Lord, all you angels; sing praise, all you hosts of heaven.**

<sup>3</sup> Praise the Lord, sun and moon; sing praise, all you shining stars.

<sup>4</sup> **Praise the Lord, heaven of heavens, and you waters above the heavens.**

<sup>5</sup> Let them praise the name of the Lord, who commanded, and they were created,

<sup>6</sup> **who made them stand fast forever and ever, giving them a law that shall not pass away. R**

<sup>7</sup> Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps;

<sup>8</sup> **fire and hail, snow and fog, tempestuous wind, doing God's will;**

<sup>9</sup> mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars;

<sup>10</sup> **wild beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds;**

<sup>11</sup> sovereigns of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the world;

<sup>12</sup> **young men and maidens, old and young together. R**

<sup>13</sup> Let them praise the name of the Lord, whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.

<sup>14</sup> **The Lord has raised up strength for the people and praise for all faithful servants, the children of Israel, a people who are near the Lord. Hallelujah! R**

## **Second Reading: Hebrews 2:10-18**

<sup>10</sup> It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. <sup>11</sup> For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, <sup>12</sup> saying, "I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you."

<sup>13</sup> And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again, "Here am I and the children whom God has given me."

<sup>14</sup> Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, <sup>15</sup> and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. <sup>16</sup> For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. <sup>17</sup> Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. <sup>18</sup> Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Gospel Acclamation p. 151**

**Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.**

## **Gospel: Matthew 2:13-23**

The holy gospel according to St. Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>13</sup> Now after [the wise men] had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." <sup>14</sup> Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, <sup>15</sup> and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

<sup>16</sup> When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. <sup>17</sup> Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

<sup>18</sup> "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more."

<sup>19</sup> When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, <sup>20</sup> "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead."

<sup>21</sup> Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. <sup>22</sup> But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. <sup>23</sup> There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazorean."

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **Sermon**

## **Children's Sermon**

## **Anthem**

## 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 Intercession

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.

*A brief silence.*

Merciful God, broaden the church's hospitality and welcome. Open our hearts to any in need of refuge and help, especially those who are persecuted. Prosper the work of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services.

God of Grace, **hear our prayer.**

Life-giving God, restore the health of the soil, the seas, and the air. Increase the joy and praise of all living things. In the coming year strengthen local, national, and international efforts to prevent further harm to the environment.

God of Grace, **hear our prayer.**

Liberating God, deliver your people from cruel oppression. Increase justice in every nation and keep the dream of freedom alive. In this new year bring the blessing of peace and put an end to violent conflict throughout the world (regions in turmoil and conflict may be named).

God of Grace, **hear our prayer.**

Uplifting God, raise all who are bowed down by trouble and need, especially individuals and families living in poverty (and those we name now). Protect and nurture all children. Sustain those who parent, teach, and care for the young.

God of Grace, **hear our prayer.**

Abiding God, accompany this community in the coming year. Increase our love for one another and the neighbors we serve. Enrich our worship and deepen our faith. Sustain our pastor/s (name/s) and all who minister in your name. (Specific ministries or individuals may be named.)

God of Grace, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for peace throughout the world: in our nation, Ukraine, Israel, Gaza, Sudan, and all war-torn areas. We pray for our military and their families.

God of Grace, **hear our prayer.**

Loving God, the holy innocents who perish in every generation are safe in your keeping. We give you thanks and praise for the all the faithful who have gone before us into everlasting life with you.

God of Grace, **hear our prayer.**

Pondering the mystery of eternal love made flesh in Christ Jesus, we commend all for whom we pray to the mercy of God. **Amen.**

## Sharing of the Peace

## Offering

## **Great Thanksgiving p. 152**

P. The Lord be with you.

C. **And also with you.**

P. Lift up your hearts.

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

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

C. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

## **Preface p. 153**

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

## **Words of Institution**

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. p. 153**

## **Lord's Prayer**

Let us 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, for ever and ever. Amen.*

## **Communion p. 154**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: grant us peace, grant us peace.**

## **Distribution of Holy Communion**

**Communion Hymns:** The First Noel (#300)  
O Little Town Of Bethlehem (#279)  
Let Us Break Bread Together (#471)

## **Prayer after Communion**

## **Blessing**

**Sending Hymn:** Go Tell It On The Mountain (#290)

## **Dismissal**

## **Postlude**

**ALTAR FLOWERS DEDICATION FOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28<sup>th</sup>**

*Dedicated by Sharon Esbensen and Family in loving memory of Ted Esbensen.*

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday	9:30 am	Sunday Morning Worship Service
	10:30 am	Band Rehearsal
	10:45 am	Sunday School/CIA
	11:15 am	Youth Chime/Vocal Choir
	11:30 am	Bell Choir ( <i>every other Sunday</i> )
Wednesday	7:00 pm	Band Rehearsal
Thursday	7:00 pm	Chancel Choir Rehearsal
Ongoing		Shelf Stable Milk Collection Diaper Collection for Pantry, Holy Communion, Berlin Happy Feet Socks for Homeless Donations thru Dec
Tuesday, January 6th	7:00 pm	Bible Study in the Parish House
Saturday, January 10th	11:30 am	Community Luncheon in the Ed. Building
Monday, January 12th	7:00 pm	Council Meeting in the Parish House
Sunday, January 18th	2:00 pm	Ministerium Workshop: Faith250 Sacred Bonds, Shared Hopes in the Ed. Building
Wednesday, January 21st	7:00 pm	Grief Gathering in the Parish House Tea Room
Sunday, January 25th	After Worship Service	St. John's Church Annual Congregational Meeting

*Please note: All activities, dates and times are subject to change.*

## PRAYER LIST

*Please keep the following in your prayers for healing:*

Jen Bailey	Tracey Drew	Eunice Knopp	Erica Polito	George Van Wagner
Krystal Booras	Karen Campbell-Erickson	Naveen Kumar	Samantha Reed	Beverly Warming
Michael Botti	Indie Fisher	Donna Leek	Kimberly Rickert	Mary Weltzin
Brian Byrnes	Rhea Fryor	Rebecca Livingston	Ashley Rosser	Mary White
Randy Cantoral	Bob Garner	Tim McCarthy	Dorcas Schellhas	Helen Yezusko
Janet Cappuccio	Angela Guedes	Joanne McVelli	Finn Schureman	Bob Zielsdorf
Sandra DeRitis	Stan Harmer	Melanie Miles	Frank Siderio III	
Barbara Doelling	Valerie Hoffmann	Kent Montford	Eric Sprengel	
Helen Dominic	Ed Kagen	Sue Murphy	Bill Steel	
Frank Donovan	Tracey Kelly	Bill Murray	Bill Todt	
Marie Lentine Douglas	Carl Knopp	Renate Murray	George Vaneman, Sr.	

*Please notify the office if you want to add or remove a person from this list.*

## ALTAR FLOWER DEDICATION

Altar Flowers are available for dedication for \$30. Please fill out the envelope located in the pew rack at least one week before you wish to dedicate the flowers. The card may be placed in the offering plate or left in the office. Please be sure to note the date on the white board in the Narthex. Please see Pat Reed to make payment.

## WORSHIP BULLETIN DEDICATION

The cost (\$23) of the Weekly Worship Bulletin to fully cover the cost of paper and printing is donated by Henry and Marie Fickenschner in memory of their loved ones.

This Worship Bulletin is printed on paper that is made with renewable resources  
from third-party certified, sustainably managed forests.

Please place any Worship Bulletins to be discarded in the recycle bin in the narthex.

## ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

**1002 S. Main Street Williamstown, NJ 08094**

**Phone Number: 1-856-875-8742 • Email: [stjohnslutheran1002@yahoo.com](mailto:stjohnslutheran1002@yahoo.com)**

**Website: [www.stjohnselc1002.org](http://www.stjohnselc1002.org)**



**We are accepting donations of  
Shelf Stable Milk for Our Lady of Peace Food Bank.**  
Donations in the form of cash or check will also be welcome.



### **HOLY COMMUNION LUTHERAN CHURCH OF BERLIN BABY PANTRY NEED**



### **BABY DIAPERS** (especially larger sizes)

Collection will take place  
in the Narthex.





# **BIBLE STUDY**

**Tuesday, January 6<sup>th</sup>**  
**at 7:00 pm**  
**in the Parish House**  
**Please join us!**




# **COMMUNITY LUNCHEON**

**Saturday, January 10<sup>th</sup> • 11:30 in the Ed. Bldg.**  
**ALL ARE WELCOME!**



# **CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING**

**Monday, January 12<sup>th</sup>**  
**7:00 pm in the Parish House**



## **faith250**

**Sacred Bonds, Shared Hopes**

**St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**1002 S. Main Street \* Williamstown, NJ**  
**January 18th • 2:00 PM**

**faith250** will be 4 workshops hosted and facilitated by different clergy members of the ministerium. It is an American Scripture Project focused on "The Spiritual Side of American Democracy" using sacred, traditional Scripture along side American texts (i.e., The New Colossus, The Declaration of Independence, What to the Slave is the Fourth of July, and America the Beautiful).





1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar-y's lap is sleep-ing?  
 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?  
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas-ant, king, to own him.



Whom an - gels greet with an-thems sweet while shep-herds watch are keep-ing?  
 Good Chris-tian, fear; for sin-ners here the si - lent Word is plead-ing.  
 The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en-throne him.



This, this is Christ the king, whom shep-herds guard and an - gels sing;  
 Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;  
 Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
 hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
 joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!





1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to  
 2 They look - ed up and saw . . a star shin-ing  
 3 And by the light of that . . same star three . .  
 4 This star drew near to the . . north - west, o'er . .  
 5 Then en - tered in those wise . . men three, full . .



cer-tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where  
 in . . the east . . be - yond . . them far; and to the  
 wise . . men came . . from coun - try far; to seek for a  
 Beth - le - hem . . it took . . its rest; and there it  
 rev - 'rent - ly . . up - on . . their knee, and of - fered



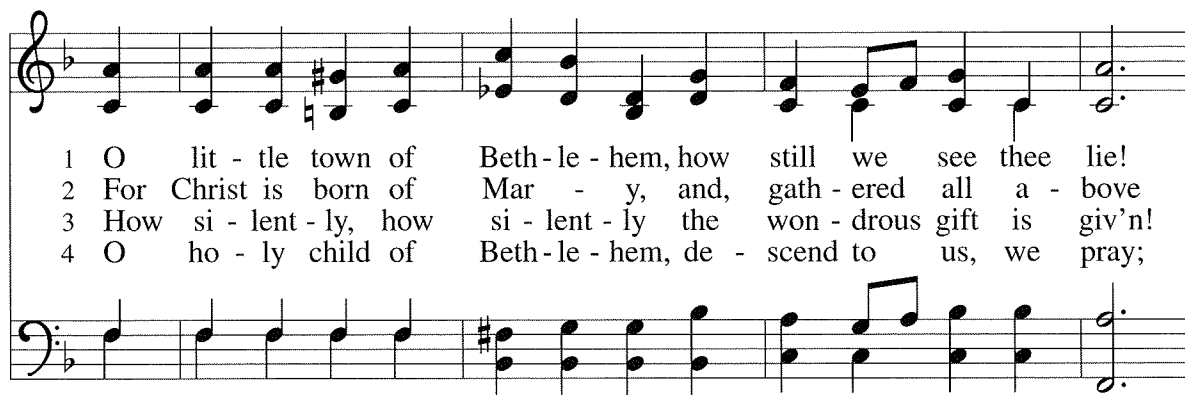
they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's  
 earth it gave . . great light, and . . so it con -  
 king was their . . in - tent, and to fol - low the  
 did both stop . . and stay right . . o - ver the  
 there in his . . pres - ence their . . gold, . . . and

*Refrain*

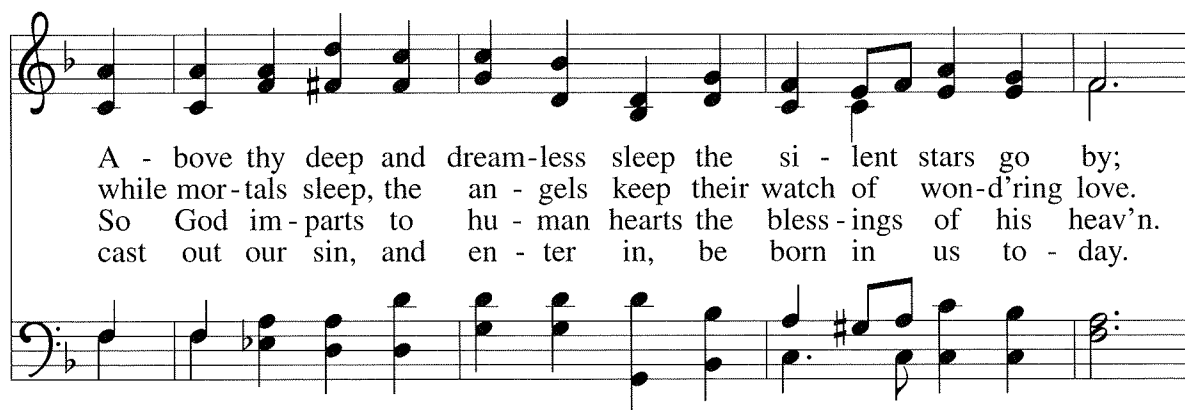
night that was so deep.  
 tin-ued both day and night.  
 star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -  
 place where Je - sus lay.  
 myrrh, and frank - in - cense.

el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

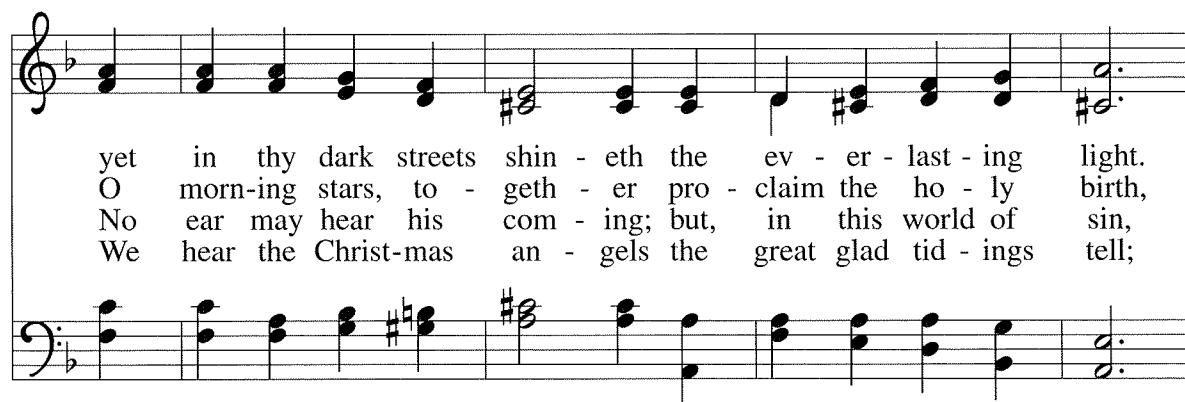




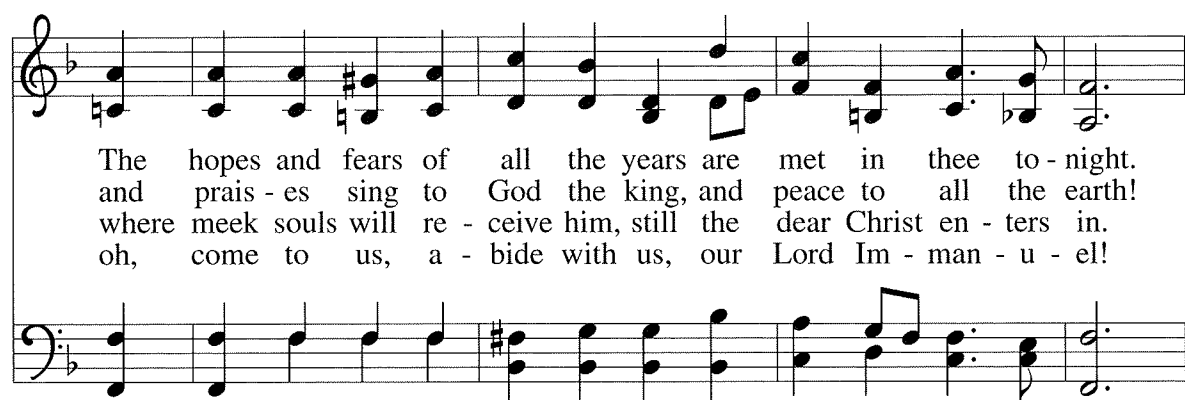
1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!  
 2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, and, gath - ered all a - bove  
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is giv'n!  
 4 O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by;  
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - d'ring love.  
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heav'n.  
 cast out our sin, and en - ter in, be born in us to - day.



yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light.  
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,  
 No ear may hear his com - ing; but, in this world of sin,  
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.  
 and prais - es sing to God the king, and peace to all the earth!  
 where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.  
 oh, come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Im - man - u - el!

# Let Us Break Bread Together

471

1 Let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees;  
2 Let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees;  
3 Let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees;

The first system of the song features a treble and bass staff in B-flat major (two flats). The melody is in the treble staff, and the accompaniment is in the bass staff. The lyrics are for three parts: 1. Let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees; 2. Let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees; 3. Let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees;

let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees.  
let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees.  
let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees.

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system. The lyrics are: let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees. let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees. let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees.

*Refrain*

When I fall on my knees, with my face to the ris - ing

The refrain section begins with the word 'Refrain' in italics. The melody and accompaniment continue. The lyrics are: When I fall on my knees, with my face to the ris - ing

sun, O Lord, have mer - cy on me.

The final system of the song concludes the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are: sun, O Lord, have mer - cy on me.

# Go Tell It on the Mountain

290

*Refrain*



Go tell it on the moun - tain, o-ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;



go tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!



1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,  
2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when, lo, a - bove the earth  
3 Down in a lone - ly man - ger the hum-ble Christ was born;



*Refrain*



be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.  
rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.  
and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless-ed Christ-mas morn.



Text: African American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work Jr., 1872–1925, stanzas, alt.  
Music: African American spiritual

GO TELL IT  
7 8 7 6 7 6 7 6