



*December 24, 2025*

**Welcome in the name of Jesus!**

We're so glad to have you join us to worship our Lord!

If you are a guest with us today, please introduce yourself to our pastor and stop by the registration book in the Narthex.

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church  
Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod**

14531 Old Olga Road  
Fort Myers, FL

# *Bethlehem Lutheran Church*

Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

14531 Old Olga Road S.E.

Ft Myers, FL 33905

Sunday Worship: 10:30 AM

Sunday School & Bible Class: 11:30 AM

Church Office: **(239) 694-3878**

[bethlehemlutheranfortmyers.org](http://bethlehemlutheranfortmyers.org)

E-Mail: [bethlehemlc@gmail.com](mailto:bethlehemlc@gmail.com)

**Rev. Karl P. Glander, Pastor**

Pastor's Cell Phone: **(239) 293-1489**

Pastor's E-Mail Address:

[pastorkarlglander@gmail.com](mailto:pastorkarlglander@gmail.com)

Linda Kirsch, Church Secretary

**A special WELCOME to our guests this evening.**

May you find grace and blessing in the time we spend together. If you are looking for a church home, please speak to the Pastor or an Elder. We would be most pleased to share with you ways in which you might become a regular part of our Christian fellowship.

## **RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION**

If you are not a member of Bethlehem Lutheran Church, we ask that you speak with the pastor or elder prior to the service before receiving the Lord's Supper.

### **As We Gather**

Tonight, in the stillness of this holy evening, we step into the wonder of Bethlehem. The stars shine above, the angels sing, and the world holds its breath as the Light of the world is born. In the quiet joy of this moment, we see God's great love in the face of a child lying in a manger. This night is not about the noise or busyness of the season but about the peace and hope that Jesus brings. As the shepherds hurried to see the newborn Savior, we, too, are drawn to worship Him, marveling at the fulfillment of God's promises. In this time together, we pause to reflect on the miracle of Immanuel, God with us. May the story of Christ's birth bring comfort to our hearts, inspire our faith, and lead us to rejoice in the peace that only He can give.

# **The Nativity of Our Lord Christmas Eve**

December 24, 2025, 7:00 p.m. Communion Service

**Theme of the Day:** The author of Hebrews pounds this point over and over—when compared to the Old Testament, Jesus always gives something better. Today's topic? *A better name than angels.*

## **PRELUDE**

✠ **ORDER OF WORSHIP** ✠

## **HYMN OF INVOCATION**

### **368 ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH**

*(Bells intro then Bells and Congregation stanzas 1–2)*

- 1 Angels we have heard on high,  
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply,  
Echoing their joyous strains. **Refrain**

**ref Gloria in excelsis Deo.**  
**Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
Which inspire your heav'nly song? **Refrain**

**ref Gloria in excelsis Deo.**  
**Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

**+ CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION +**  
*(Please rise)*

### **INVOCATION**

**[P]** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and  
of the Holy Spirit.

**[C]** Amen.

### **EXHORTATION**

**[P]** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves,  
and the truth is not in us.

**[C]** But if we confess our sins, God, who is  
faithful and just, will forgive our sins and  
cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

## **CONFESSION OF SINS**

**P** Merciful Father, King David writes, “O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name.” (Psalm 8:1) Forgive us for failing to honor your name and neglecting to regard it as the greatest treasure and most sacred gift we have.

**C** We look for life in other names, brand names and famous names.

**P** Your word says, “The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.” (Proverbs 18:10)

**C** We run to other names we think will save us, like money and merchandise.

**P** Your word says, “In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name.” (Psalm 33:21)

**C** We trust in other names, big names and business names.

**P** Your word says, “I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD.” (Psalm 116:13)

**C** We call on other names that promise everything, only to deliver nothing.

**ALL:** God, be merciful to me, a poor sinful being.

## **ABSOLUTION**

**P** Hear the good news! The name of Jesus is the name that is above every name—that includes the names sin, guilt, shame, regret and remorse. In the powerful name of Jesus you are absolved, forgiven, cleansed, washed and set free.

**ALL:** He who promised is faithful and he will do it!

*(Please be seated)*

## Hymn

### **368 ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH**

*(Stanza 3)*

**3** Come to Bethlehem and see  
Him whose birth the angels sing;  
Come, adore on bended knee  
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. **Refrain**

**ref Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

**Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

## **+ SERVICE OF THE WORD +**

*(Please rise)*

## **Prayer of the Day**

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** And also with you.

**P** Let us pray. Father in heaven, you instructed Joseph to name our Savior Jesus, for he saves us from our sins. Increase in us a deep love and great appreciation for this name which is above



every name; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**ALL: Amen.**

*(Please be seated)*

## **OLD TESTAMENT READING**

*Exodus 3:9–14*

<sup>9</sup>And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. <sup>10</sup>Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.” <sup>11</sup>But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?” <sup>12</sup>He said, “But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”

<sup>13</sup>Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?”

<sup>14</sup>God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## **EPISTLE**

*Hebrews 1:4–14*

<sup>4</sup>having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

<sup>5</sup>For to which of the angels did God ever say,

“You are my Son,  
today I have begotten you”?

Or again,

“I will be to him a father,  
and he shall be to me a son”?

<sup>6</sup>And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,

“Let all God’s angels worship him.”

<sup>7</sup>Of the angels he says,

“He makes his angels winds,  
and his ministers a flame of fire.”

<sup>8</sup>But of the Son he says,

“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,  
the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of  
your kingdom.

<sup>9</sup>You have loved righteousness and hated  
wickedness;  
therefore God, your God, has anointed you  
with the oil of gladness beyond your  
companions.”

<sup>10</sup>And,

“You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the  
beginning,

and the heavens are the work of your hands;

<sup>11</sup>they will perish, but you remain;

they will all wear out like a garment,

<sup>12</sup>like a robe you will roll them up,

like a garment they will be changed.

But you are the same,

and your years will have no end.”

<sup>13</sup>And to which of the angels has he ever said,

“Sit at my right hand

until I make your enemies a footstool for your  
feet”?

<sup>14</sup>Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

**[L]** This is the Word of the Lord.

**[C]** Thanks be to God.

*(Please rise)*

**♪ ALLELUIA AND VERSE ♪**

**[C]** Alleluia.

**Lord, to whom shall we go?**

**You have the words of eternal life.**

**Alleluia, alleluia.**

**HOLY GOSPEL**

*Matthew 1:18–25*

**[P]** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the first chapter.

**[C]** Glory to You, O Lord.

**The Birth of Jesus Christ**

<sup>18</sup>Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>And her

husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.

<sup>20</sup>But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” <sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

<sup>23</sup>“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,

and they shall call his name Immanuel”

(which means, God with us). <sup>24</sup>When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, <sup>25</sup>but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

**[P]** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**[C]** Praise to You, O Christ.

## **NICENE CREED**

**[C]** I believe in one God,

**the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth  
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God,  
begotten, not made,  
being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation  
came down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of  
the virgin Mary  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under  
Pontius Pilate.  
He suffered and was buried.  
And the third day He rose again  
according to the Scriptures  
and ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of the Father.**

**And He will come again with glory to  
judge both the living and the dead,  
whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the  
Son,  
who with the Father and the Son together  
is worshiped and glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.  
And I believe in one holy Christian and  
apostolic Church,  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the  
remission of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life ✝ of the world to come.  
Amen.**

*(Please be seated)*

### **370 WHAT CHILD IS THIS**

*(Bells)*

- 1** 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!

**2** Why lies He in such mean estate  
Where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear; for sinners 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!

**3** 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!



## SERMON

"A Better Name"

. . . Pastor Karl

## OFFERING

SOLO *(sung during offering)*

IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR

. . . Doug Johnson

## ♪OFFERTORY RESPONSE♪

**357 O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL**

*(Stanzas 1, ref 2-4)*

**1** O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appear. **Refrain**

**ref Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

**2** O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,  
Who ord'rest all things mightily;

To us the path of knowledge show,  
And teach us in her ways to go. **Refrain**

**ref Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel**  
**Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

**3** O come, O come, Thou Lord of might,  
Who to Thy tribes on Sinai's height  
In ancient times didst give the Law  
In cloud and majesty and awe. **Refrain**

**4** O come, Thou Branch of Jesse's tree,  
Free them from Satan's tyranny  
That trust Thy mighty pow'r to save,  
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave. **Refrain**

**PRAYERS** *(based upon Psalm 8:1)*

**P** O LORD, our Lord,

**C** **How majestic is your name in all the earth!**

**+ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +**

*(Please rise)*

## **THE WORDS OF OUR LORD**

**P** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My ✝ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✝ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

## **PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST**

**P** As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

**C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

**P** O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed

death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

### **♪LORD'S PRAYER♪**

**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 debts,  
as we forgive our debtors;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom  
and the power and the glory  
Forever. Amen.**

### **PAX DOMINI**

**☐** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**☑** Amen.

## ♪ AGNUS DEI ♪

**☐** 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.

*(Please be seated)*

## DISTRIBUTION

## DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

### 361 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;

O come to us, abide with us,  
Our Lord Immanuel!

### **367 ANGELS FROM THE REALMS OF GLORY**

1 Angels from the realms of glory,  
Wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
Ye who sang creation's story,  
Now proclaim Messiah's birth. **Refrain**

**ref Come and worship, come and worship;  
Worship Christ, the newborn King.**

2 Shepherds in the field abiding,  
Watching o'er your flocks by night,  
God with us is now residing,  
Yonder shines the Infant Light. **Refrain**

3 Sages, leave your contemplations,  
Brighter visions beam afar;  
Seek the great Desire of nations,  
Ye have seen His natal star. **Refrain**

4 Saints before the altar bending,  
Watching long in hope and fear,

Suddenly the Lord, descending,  
In His temple shall appear. **Refrain**

**ref Come and worship, come and worship;  
Worship Christ, the newborn King.**

**5** All creation, join in praising  
God the Father, Spirit, Son,  
Evermore your voices raising  
To the\_ eternal Three in One. **Refrain**

*(Please rise)*

**♪THANK THE LORD♪**

**☐** Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell  
ev'ryone what He has done.  
Let all who seek the Lord rejoice and proudly  
bear His name.  
He recalls His promises and leads His  
people forth in joy  
with shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia,  
alleluia.

**POST-COMMUNION COLLECT**

**☐** Let us pray.



We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C Amen.**

***The Lighting of the Individual Candles***

*(Please keep the lighted candle **upright**... tilt the unlighted candle to the upright lighted candle... lift the candles higher during each successive verse while singing "Silent Night")*

**363 SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT**

*(bells will play intro, then Congregation will sing when organ plays)*

- 1 Silent night, holy night!  
All is calm, all is bright  
Round yon virgin mother and child.  
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace,  
Sleep in heavenly peace.

**2** Silent night, holy night!  
Shepherds quake at the sight;  
Glories stream from heaven afar,  
Heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!  
Christ, the Savior, is born!  
Christ, the Savior, is born!

**3** Silent night, holy night!  
Son of God, love's pure light  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face  
With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

*(Please extinguish your candle and put it in the baskets as  
you leave.)*

## **BENEDICTION**

**P** The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be  
gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give  
you peace.

**C** Amen.

## Silent Prayer

Father, thank you for the names of Jesus. They give me great hope for the living of these days! Amen.

Immediately following tonight's Candlelight Service ... we will be hosting (in the fellowship hall) a **FESTIVE CHRISTMAS EVE GATHERING!!** It will be a time of...food...fellowship...some Christmas music... **AND A GREAT TIME TO CELEBRATE JESUS' BIRTHDAY!!**

**BLESSINGS TO EVERYONE ON THIS WONDERFUL  
CHRISTMAS EVE.  
GO PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS —  
CHRIST THE SAVIOR IS BORN!!**



*We would like to express our sincere appreciation for all of those that made our church so festive for this Christmas season. Thank you to those who have made donations for the beautiful flowers to decorate our sanctuary!*



# *Poinsettias*



**Holly Bell** *in Loving Memory of †Gary Bell, †Jean and †Bill Hutchings and †Corrine and †Elmo Bell and in celebration of Lynn Martin*

**Annette Brocious** *in Loving Memory of †Russ and †Alma Bowser, †Ruth and †George Fennelly*

**Ann Cirillo and Marge Cirillo** *in Loving Memory of † those who have gone before us and In Celebration of Ann Cirillo and Joseph Wierzbicki marriage on 12/31/2024*

**John and Judy Cook** *in Honor of and Memory of Vietnam Vets †Torzo, †Sparkman, †Downs, †Salazar, and †Brooks*

**Gary Dreischerf** *in Loving Memory of †Fred and †Shirley Dreischerf*

**Rollin and Pat Duckwitz** *in Loving Memory of our grandson †Justin*

**Richard and Terri Gerlach** *To the Glory of God for all our blessings*

**The Glander Family** *in Loving Memory of †Bill and †Evelyn Ott and †Reverend Dennis and †Patricia Glander and †David Glander*

**Doug and Sandy Grage**

**Judy Hinrichs** *in Loving Memory of †Dean and mother †Myrtle Edge*

**Debbie Jackow** *To the Glory of God for my Family*

**Al and Bev Johnston** *in Loving Memory of †Dave Schwark*

**Jeff and Linda Kirsch and Raul Puga** *in Loving Memory of †Delbert Kirsch and †Jean Carrie, †George and †Betty Rosine and †Gary Rosine*

**Emeline Larson** *in Loving Memory of †Jan Larson*

**LWM**

**Marny Miles** *in Loving Memory of †Margaret Zanto*

**Greg and Yvonne Murray** *in Loving Memory of †Murray's, † Miller, and †Schwark*

**Rick and Nancy Rybak** *to the Glory of God for prayers answered*

**Sharon Schafer** *in Loving Memory of †Luman Schafer, in Honor of those lost this year, in Celebration of our Gracious Lord, and to the Glory of God for helping Sandi get through this year*

**Schroskey's**

**Tammy Sheridan** *in Loving Memory of †Tara Barrick, and in Honor of my youngest daughter*

**Ken and Sharon Spalding** *in Loving Memory of*  
*†Lorraine Spalding and †Trampis Cornwell*

**The Stecklein's** *in Loving Memory of †Stella,*  
*†Paul, and †Robert Orzechowski*

**Lillian Taylor** *to the Glory of God for Blessings*  
*Received*

**Tim and Mary Tobeck**

**Bob Vanderpool and Joanne Holt**

**Ralph and Betty Willis** *in Loving Memory of*  
*†Jennis Pankow*



## *SERVING IN THE LORD'S HOUSE TODAY*

Preacher: Rev. Karl P. Glander

Organist: Holly Bell

Flutist: Nancy Rybak

Bells: Debbie Jackow

Soloist: Douglas Johnson

The Sound System: Jeff Kirsch

Elder: Klaus Naumann

Altar Guild: Emmy Larson, Betty Willis

Ushers: Richard Gerlach, Doug Grage

Reader: Annette Brocious