

St Stephen

Evangelical Lutheran Church



Encouraging and
strengthening faith in Jesus,
and sharing the joy of God's love.

December 24, 2015

Christmas Eve

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Rev. Pedro Suarez

Welcome to our community of faith on this Eve of Christmas. On a long winter evening we gather to proclaim the coming of the light. Amid our broken world we proclaim that the prince of peace is born among us. God comes to us in human flesh--in Christ's body and blood--so that we may be bearers of divine light to all the world. This is a new beginning in the story of God with us. After this evening, we hope you will continue the story with us here or in another community of faith. Keep the pages turning...

~WE GATHER~

*Lost in the night do the people yet languish,
longing for morning the darkness to vanquish,
plaintively sighing with hearts full of anguish,
Will not day come soon? Will not day come soon?*

CHORAL ANTHEMS

Choir

A CHRISTMAS LITANY:

When the time had come

P: We were heavy with sorrow,

C: but joy interrupted.

P: We were deep in the night,

C: but a star appeared.

P: We were silent with sadness,

C: but the heavens rang. And the splendor shone around them when the time had fully come.

P: We were hardened by conflict,

C: but love intervened.

P: We were frightened by shadows,

C: but light took them away.

P: We were haunted by fears,

C: but a child brought us hope. And she laid him in a manger when the time had fully come.

P: We were dismal and defeated,

C: but faith set us on fire.

P: We were weary and complaining,

C: but our hearts discovered praise.

P: We were doubtful and confused,

C: but a door to life was opened. And the guiding star went before them when the time had fully come.

P: We were arrogant and angry,
P: We were cruel, crude, and clumsy,
P: We were selfish, narrow, greedy,

C: but his innocence disarmed us.
C: but his grace made all things new.

C: but his joy we had to share. And they offered him their treasured gifts when the time had fully come.

P: We were sheep, who had lost their way,
C: but the shepherd knew our names.

P: We were strangers without a country,
C: but our kingdom came to us.

P: We were children far from home,
C: but God sent his Son to guide. And the Word was flesh among us when the time had fully come.

~ written by Kenneth I. Morse, from "In Straw and Story," p.80, Brethren Press, copyright 1977.

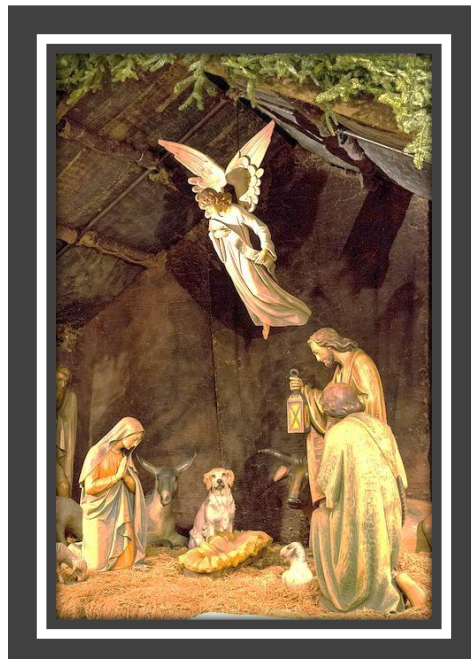
THE GREETING

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.

P: Let us pray together:

C: 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.





1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
 2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
 4 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;
 sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
 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!
 Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

Refrain



Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,
 O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.
 O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

~WE HEAR GOD'S WORD~

THE FIRST READING:

Isaiah 9:2-7

L: A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

²The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness
on them light has shined.

³You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷His authority shall grow continually,

and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

L: This is the word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.



L: A reading from the letter to Titus.

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

L: This is the word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

ALLELUIA SONG:

“Mary, Did You Know?”

Buddy Greene, Mark Lowry

Verse 1

**Mary did you know
That your baby boy
Would one day walk on water
Mary did you know
That your baby boy
Would save our sons and daughters
Did you know
That your baby boy
Has come to make you new
This Child that you delivered
Will soon deliver you**

Verse 2

**Mary did you know
That your baby boy
Would give sight to the blind man
Mary did you know
That your baby boy
Would calm a storm with His hand
Did you know
That your baby boy
Has walked where angels trod
And when you kiss your little baby
You've kissed the face of God**

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

C: Glory to you, O Lord!

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

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

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ!

ALLELUIA SONG:

The blind will see
The deaf will hear
The dead will live again
The lame will leap
The dumb will speak
The praises of the Lamb



Oh Mary did you know
That your baby boy
Is Lord of all creation
Mary did you know
That your baby boy
Will one day rule the nations
Did you know
That your baby boy
Is heaven's perfect Lamb
And the sleeping Child you're holding
Is the great I Am

REFLECTION

Rev. Pedro Suarez.

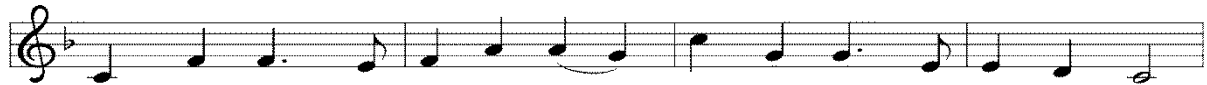
~WE RESPOND~

REFLECTION SONG: "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

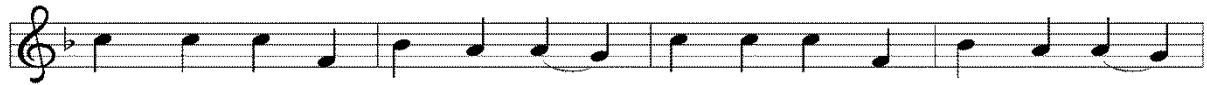
ELW 270



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king;
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3 Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righ - teous - ness!



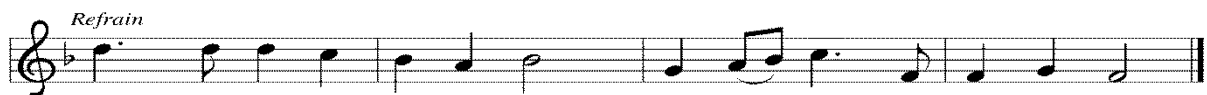
peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled."
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God - head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with an - gel - ic hosts pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.



Refrain
Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king!"

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

After each petition of the prayer is said:

A: Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Greet one another with the peace of the Lord.

~WE COME TO THE LORD'S TABLE~

OFFERING

MUSICAL OFFERING

"ALL IS WELL"

OFFERING RECEPTION: "Angels We Have Heard on High"

ELW 289

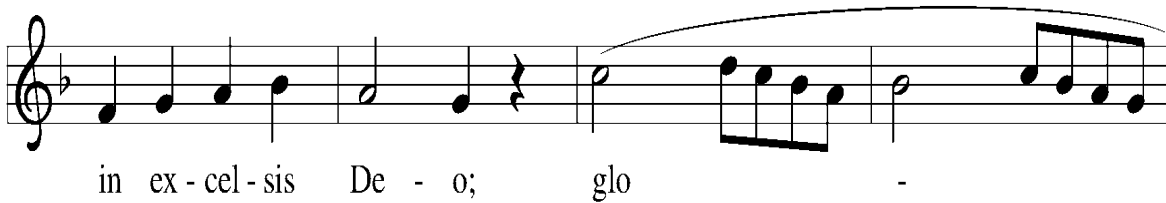
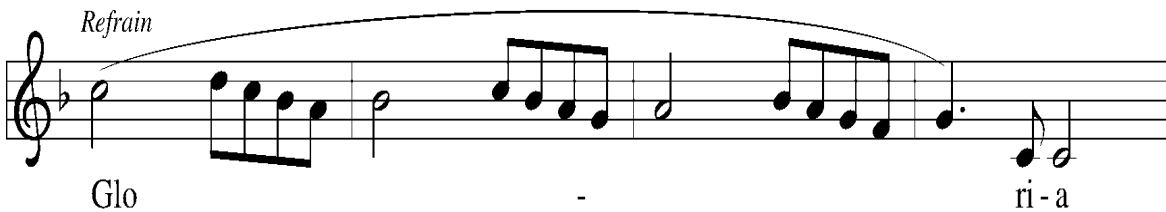
(Verses 1 & 2)



1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi-lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
3 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.
What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.



OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray. Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Dialogue

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them up to the Lord.

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

C: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise, O Lord. . . And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we come praising you and singing:

Eucharist Song:

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

ELW 289

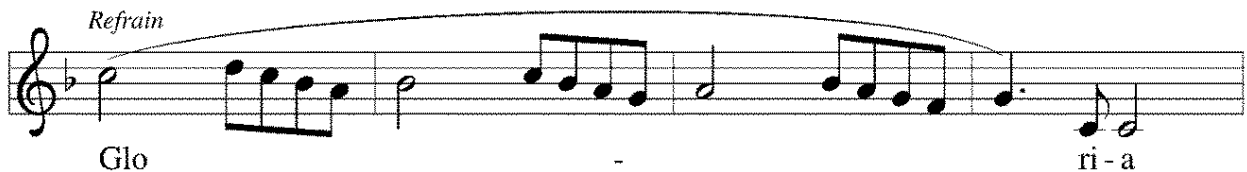
(Verse 3)



1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
3 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.
What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.



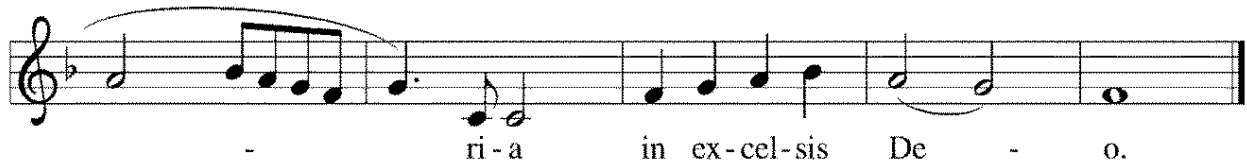
Glo

ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o;

glo



ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o.

Eucharist Prayer

P: Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life...Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

C: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

P: With this bread and cup, we remember your Word...We look with hope for his coming.

C: Come, Lord Jesus.

P: Holy God, we long for your Spirit...Bring the gift of peace on Earth.

C: Come, Holy Spirit.

P: All praise and glory are yours...now and forever.

C: Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

P: And now, we come to You in prayer, as our Savior Jesus has taught us:

C: 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 of Communion

We believe Jesus Christ is present in the bread and wine by his Word of Promise. All baptized Christians are invited to participate in the celebration of God's forgiving love, strengthening faith, and grace-filled hope. Those who are not baptized and children not yet communing may come forward for a blessing (please cross your arms on your chest if you desire a blessing).

Reception of Communion

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

Communion distribution is continuous. Please come forward by the center aisle and receive the bread in your hands as you hear the words "The body of Christ, given for you" to which you may respond, "Amen." You may then dip the bread into the cup as you hear the words "The blood of Christ, shed for you," to which you may respond, "Amen." Note that the communion wine is alcohol-free. Please indicate if you need gluten-free elements.

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

Instrumental Music

Cesar Vidaud

Candle Lighting

When all have communed, please remain seated while the candles are lit. The ushers will light their candles, and in turn, will share the light with the congregation. When an usher comes to your pew, the person on the end lights their candle from the usher's candle, and each person in the pew lights their candle in turn. Please **tip the unlit** candle into the lit candle. This will keep wax from dripping. (The wax is hot and will burn your skin, and it is hard to get out of fabric when cooled.)

Candle Light Song: "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.

~WE ARE SENT FORTH~

Christmas Benediction

P: May this eternal truth be always on our hearts: that the God who breathed this world into being, placed stars into the heavens, and designed a butterfly's wing is the God who entrusted his son to the care of ordinary people, became vulnerable that we might know how strong is the wonder of Love, a mystery so deep it is impossible to grasp, a mystery so beautiful it is impossible to ignore.

C: Amen.

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The Sending

A: Go in the peace that this birth brings. Christ the Savior is born!

C: Thanks be to God!

A: Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere!

C: We will go and tell! Amen!



A NOTE FROM PASTOR PEDRO

WELCOME! Christmas is the one of the three great celebrations of the Christian year. Whether tradition, duty, curiosity, or faith brought you here, you are most welcome. On behalf of the whole Saint Stephen family, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2016!

IN OUR PRAYERS

In our prayers today are these members of our homebound and others of our parish family in need of healing: Cynthia Langbauer. We also need to pray for: Kathy Runk, Barbara Nilles, Carmen Crespo, Henry Rosua, Frank Odiema, Roy Kaptain, Jimmy Fennelli, Bob & Jane Reinhold, Larry and Beverly Sheehan, Dee Lauterberg, Chico E., Paul Hanzlik, Rosie Fennelli, C.C. and for Catherine Zippay and her family for the loss of her husband Henry.

Prayers for Friends of the Church: Mike D., George F., David Spall, Joan Coletti, Giacomo Dresseno, Jeannie Rogers, Adam Rubino, Berna, Braemen Weiner, Chandler Weiner, Debbie Fiore, Debbie Seckel, Elaine Brustad, Elizabeth Kraus, Hazel Quire, Juan Tavarez, Kenneth Smith, Mary Taylor, Norma Duckworth, Cynthia, Tim Tyler, Richard H., Antonio C., Mireya D., Emma Holmes and her family, and Jack Vatrál.

We are always updating our prayer list. If you would like your name added or removed, please notify Pat Belanger or the office.

SERVING IN TONIGHT'S WORSHIP

GOSPEL PROCESSION	<u><i>December 24 5:30 P.M.</i></u>	<u><i>December 24 7:30 P.M.</i></u>	<u><i>December 24 9:00 P.M.</i></u>
ASSITING MINISTER	Sera Butz	Pat Belanger	Aura Suarez
CRUCIFER		Carol Jacobson	
ACOLYTE & TORCH BEARERS			TBA
BIBLE BEARER			
LECTOR	Pat Belanger	Carol Jacobson	
USHERS	Marsha & Maddie Kibler	Lynda & Zac Smith	
GREETERS		Linda Hanzlik Ruth Wagle	
SOUND		Sera Butz	Sera Butz
PROJECTION		Larry Jones	



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St. Stephen

Evangelical Lutheran Church

Encouraging and strengthening faith in
Jesus, and sharing the joy of God's love.

Sunday Worship Schedule

Praise and Faith formation 9:00 a.m.
Traditional Blend Worship Service at 10:15 a.m.
Latino Worship Service at 12:30 p.m.
Holy Communion is celebrated weekly

Church Staff

Rev. Pedro Suarez – Pastor
pastor@ststephenlutheran.net
Cesar Vidaud – Director of Music
Aidee Koach – Administrative Assistant
sslcpompano@gmail.com

Congregation Council

Rob Lewis, President:
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Web Antill	Eric Castaneda
Christian Hecker	Larry Jones
Natalie Prego - Secretary	Kathy Runk - Vice Pres.

Office hours: 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 Mon- Fri

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