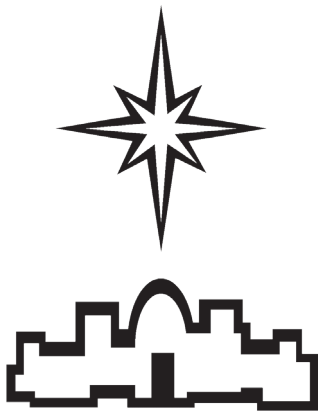


Nativity of Our Lord

December 24, 2025

Christmas Eve (Year A)

The Nativity of our Lord is a celebration of that moment in time when darkness was turned to light. The true light and life of the world entered human history in the dark obscurity of an animal barn and was placed in the rustic bed of a manger. While the skies burst forth with the joyful sounds of the angels' song, a grand announcement was made to an unsuspecting world that God had come to humanity.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-14

God Sent a Sign

The Word of the Lord came to King Ahaz, encouraging him to be bold and to ask for a sign from the Lord. Ahaz, in his stubbornness, refused to ask God for a sign, claiming that would be "putting God to the test." Ahaz discounted the reassurance that the Lord was offering him and continued deeper in his sin by rejecting God's offer. That sign was nothing less than Immanuel, "God with us."

Psalm 110:1-4

A Priest Forever

In this psalm we hear the promise of God to bless the kingly line of David. As Christians, we hear it as the union of king and priest in the person of Jesus Christ. Not only was Jesus a descendant of King David, he was also David's Lord and was anticipated by David.

Second Reading: 1 John 4:7-16

God Loved Us First

St. John makes it clear that we love only because God has loved us first. God sent Jesus to be the Savior of our lives and the one who grants us forgiveness. The love of God is what empowers us to love like Jesus, sacrificially and unconditionally.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 1:18-25

His Name Will Be Jesus

As the honorable man, Joseph, was wrestling with the situation concerning his pregnant fiancé, an angel of the Lord came to him in a dream. The angel explained how the child Mary was carrying was the Son of the Most High God, and Joseph was called to care for them and name the child "Jesus," which means "He saves."

Suggestions for the Day:

- * The liturgical color is white or gold.
- * Use the Nicene Creed.
- * Light all four candles on the Advent wreath and the Christ candle.
- * Place the Baby Jesus in the crèche in the nativity scene.
- * Incorporate more candles into the worship space to create a warm glow for the Holy Night.
- * Hand out individual candles to each person in worship and light them after Holy Communion, during the Service of Light portion of the Christmas liturgy. Sing "Silent Night" as you light the candles.
- * Have a cantor sing the first verse of "Silent Night" in German, then have the congregation join in English on the second verse.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
When Mary Was Still Pregnant	---	---	---	---	---	web
Angels from the Realms of Glory	50	---	367	275	126	126
O Little Town of Bethlehem	41	---	361	279	115	115
Away in a Manger (alt. tune WOV)	67	644	364	277	110	110
What Child is This	40	---	370	296	113	113
The First Noel	56	---	---	300	121	121
It Came Upon a Midnight Clear	54	---	366	282	---	---
Silent Night, Holy Night	65	---	363	281	107	107
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing	60	---	380	270	106	106
All My Heart This Night Rejoices Once Again	46	---	118	273	118	118

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOV= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at "Hymns and Music."

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles
Mary's Song (CCLI# 824522)
For to Us a Child is Born (CCLI# 7045163)
Hope Was Born this Night (CCLI# 5873296)
Rise Up, Shepherd (CCLI# 6351308)
O, Holy Night (CCLI# 32015)

The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.