

29th Annual Service of Lessons and Carols



The Nativity of the Lord

Service of Lessons and Carols

Zion Lutheran Church, Harvester, MO

December 7, 2025

6:00 PM

About the Service

Welcome to our 29th annual Service of Lessons and Carols. Nine lessons will be read by various lay readers, taking the congregation on a journey from the "Fall of Man" to the "Birth of Christ" using both Old and New Testament texts. As each lesson is read, a candle will be lit moving us from darkness to light. The ninth candle is the Christ Candle, signifying Christ Jesus as the Light and Savior of the world. An appropriate sung response by one of the choirs or the congregation follows each lesson. This is a Service of wonder, anticipation, and meditation as the mystery of the Incarnation unfolds.

Pre-Service Music

Because of the meditative nature of this service, we respectfully request that the congregation hold its applause until the very end of the service, when there will be an opportunity to express appreciation for the musicians.

A Child Is Born

Janet Linker and Jane McFadden, © 2000 Beckenhorst Press, Inc.

Away in a Manger

arr. Bragi Thor Valsson, © 2025 J.W. Pepper & Son, Inc.

Christmas Fantasy for Organ & Brass

arr. Joel Raney, © 2007 Hope Publishing Company

Prelude: Long Is Our Winter

Long is our winter, dark is our night.
O come, set us free, O saving Light.

Text and tune: anonymous



THE SCRIPTURE in Word and Song

Stand

Bidding Prayer

P Beloved in Christ, in this Christmastide, let it be our care and delight to hear again the message of the angels, and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger. Let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious redemption brought us by this holy Child; and let us make this place glad with our carols of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of His whole world; for peace and goodwill over all the earth; for the mission and unity of the Church for which He died, and especially in this country and within our communities. And because this of all things would rejoice His heart, let us at this time remember in His name the poor and the helpless, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and the unloved, the aged and the little children, and all those who do not know the Lord Jesus, or who do not love Him, or who by sin have grieved His heart of love.

Lastly, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore and in a greater light, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in this Lord Jesus, we forevermore are one. These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven, in the Words which Christ Himself has taught us:

Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:9–13

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.

Hymn: 379 - 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:
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!
2. Highest, most holy, Light of Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
Son of the Father now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!
3. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God in the highest:
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!
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

Text and Tune: John F. Wade (c. 1711-86); tr. Frederick Oakeley (1802-80), alt.

Music for brass and choir descant: setting by David Cherwien, © 2001 Hope Publishing Company

Sit

First Reading: A Savior is promised after mankind's rebellion

Genesis 3:1-15

Response: In the Bleak Midwinter

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Heaven cannot hold Him, nor earth sustain;
Heav'n and earth shall flee away when He comes to reign;
In the bleak midwinter, a stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb,
If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give Him give my heart.

Text: Christina Rossetti (1830-94)

Music: Gustav Holst (1874-1934), arr. Benjamin Culli, © 2011 Concordia Publishing House.

Second Reading: The Prince of Peace shall come

Isaiah 9:2-7

Response: Let Every Heart Prepare a Throne

Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne for soon the Child of Light will come.
Let ev'ry voice prepare a song to welcome Christ the Promised One.

Let ev'ry hand reach out with love to greet this gift from God above.
Make ready now, the Savior comes, the Prince of Peace, the Promised One.

So let the flame of Advent glow, each candle shines that all may know
The hope we need, so long foretold will soon be here for us to hold.

Text: Phillip Doddridge (1702-1751), additional lyrics Mark Patterson, © 2013 Choristers Guild, OneLicense.net #A-705005

Music: Mark Patterson, © 2013 Choristers Guild

Third Reading: A Branch will come from the stem of Jesse

Isaiah 11:1-10

Response: The Rose of Bethlehem

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
From a tender stem has sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming
As those of old have sung.
Sent by God whose loving favor rests in Him,
Filled with wisdom, pow'r and might,
Shall be born this holy night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
This Rose we have in mind;
And with Mary we behold it,
She the virgin mother kind.
Bound by faith good Joseph kept his solemn vow,
That no harm would come to them,
On their way to Bethlehem.

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.

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.

*Text: Theodore Baker, Charlotte Lee, and Phillips Brooks
Music: arr. Douglas E. Wagner, © 2011 Lorenz Publishing Company*

Fourth Reading: Bethlehem will be the birthplace of the Savior

Micah 5:2-4

Hymn: 376 - Once in Royal David's City

All Once in royal David's city
 Stood a lowly cattle shed,
 Where a mother laid her baby
 In a manger for His bed:
 Mary was that mother mild,
 Jesus Christ her little child.

All He came down to earth from heaven,
 Who is God and Lord of all,
 And His shelter was a stable,
 And His cradle was a stall;
With the poor and mean and lowly
Lived on earth our Savior holy.

Women For He is our childhood's pattern,
 Day by day like us He grew;
He was little, weak, and helpless,
 Tears and smiles like us He knew;
And He feels for all our sadness,
And He shares in all our gladness.

Men And our eyes at last shall see Him,
 Through His own redeeming love;
For that child so dear and gentle
 Is our Lord in heav'n above;
And He leads His children on
To the place where He is gone.

All Not in that poor, lowly stable
 With the oxen standing by
Shall we see Him, but in heaven,
 Set at God's right hand on high.
Then like stars His children, crowned,
All in white, His praise will sound!

Text: Cecil F. Alexander (18-95), alt.

Tune: Henry J. Gauntlett (1805-76)

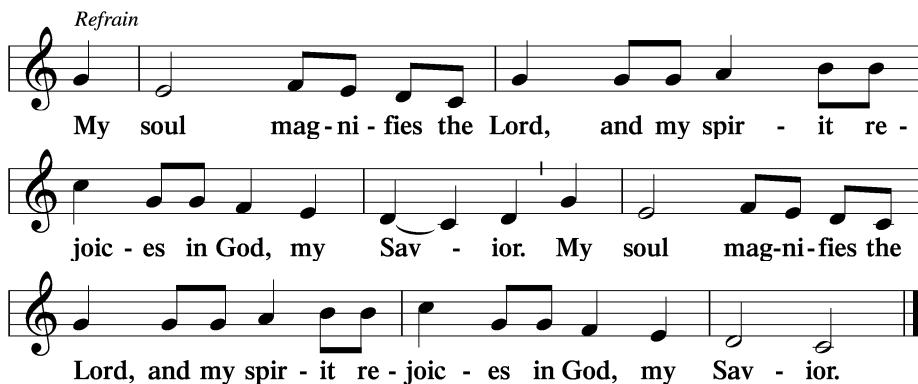
Music for strings: setting by Robert J. Powell, © 2006, GIA Publications, Inc.

Fifth Reading: The angel Gabriel visits Mary

Luke 1:26-38

Canticle: Magnificat

Luke 1:46-55



Refrain

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior. My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior.

A Refrain

C Refrain

A For He has regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden.

For behold, from this day all generations will call me blessed.

For the Mighty One has done great things to me, and holy is His name; and His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation.

C Refrain

A He has shown strength with His arm;

He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones and has exalted the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent empty away.

He has helped His servant Israel in remembrance of His mercy as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever.

C Refrain

A Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

C Refrain

Lutheran Service Book, p. 248, from Evening Prayer.

Refrain: David Schack, © 2006 Concordia Publishing House. Used with permission.

Verses: Paul J. Grime, © 2006 Concordia Publishing House. Used with permission.

Sixth Reading: Jesus is born in Bethlehem

Luke 2:1-7

Response: Cry Out

Cry out, cry out, shout the glory of God,
Come sing the good news; come sing the good news.
Cry out, cry out, shout the glory of God, our Jesus the Savior is born.

Born in a stable in Bethle'm town, Jesus Christ is born.
Born in a stable in Bethle'm town, Jesus Christ is born.
Glory to the great Creator, glory to the Son,
Cry out, sing, glory to the Holy Spirit, blessed three in one.

Cry out, cry out, shout the glory of God,
Come sing the good news; come sing the good news.
Cry out, cry out, shout the glory of God, our Jesus the Savior is born.

Cry out, cry out, shout tidings of joy,
Come sing the good news; come sing the good news.
Tell of the birth of the blessed boy, our Jesus the Savior is born.

Cry out, and shout, sing,
Cry out, and shout, sing,
Cry out and shout the glory of God.
Cry out and shout!

*Text and tune: David N. Davenport, © 1988 Richmond Music Press, CCLI #1994542
Music: arr. Douglas E. Wagner, © 1988 Lorenz Publishing Company*

Seventh Reading: The shepherds visit the manger

Luke 2:8-20

Response: How Great Our Joy

While by the sheep we watched at night,
Glad tidings brought an angel bright.
How great our joy.

There shall be born, so did he say,
In Bethlehem a Child today.
How great our joy.

There shall a Child lie in a stall,
This Child who shall redeem us.
This gift of God we'll cherish well,
That ever joy our hearts shall fill.

Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high!
Praise we the Lord!
How great our joy!

*Text: traditional German carol
Music: arr. Craig Courtney, © 2012 Beckenhorst Press, Inc.*

Eighth Reading: The Magi come from the East

Matthew 2:1-12

Response: We Three Kings

The refrain is sung by the congregation.

We three kings of Orient are,
Bearing gifts we traverse afar,
Field and fountain, moor and mountain,
Following yonder star.

Born a king on Bethlehem's plain
Gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never
Over us all to reign.

Refrain **O, star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light.**

Frankincense to offer have I,
Incense owns a Deity nigh;
Pray'r and praising, voices raising,
Worshiping God on high.

Glorious now behold him arise,
King and God and Sacrifice;
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Sounds through the earth and skies.

Text and tune: John H. Hopkins, Jr., (1820-1891) alt.

Music: arr. Craig Courtney, © 2010 Beckenhorst Press, Inc.

Ninth Reading: The Word is made flesh

John 1:1-14

Response: See Amid the Winter's Snow

Alleluia. Alleluia.

See amid the winter's snow, born for us on earth below,
See, the tender Lamb appears, promised from eternal years.
Hail, thou ever blessed morn! Hail, redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem: "Christ is born in Bethlehem."

Lo, within a stable lies He who built the starry skies,
He who, throned in height sublime, sits amid the cherubim.
Hail, thou ever blessed morn! Hail, redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem: "Christ is born in Bethlehem."

Sacred Infant, all divine, what a tender love was Thine.
Thus to come from highest bliss down to such a world as this!
Hail, thou ever blessed morn! Hail, redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem: "Christ is born in Bethlehem."

Text: Edward Caswall

Music: arr. Dan Forrest, © 2016 Beckenhorst Press, Inc.

Offering: Gifts received will support the "Music at Zion" concert series.

Lo! How a Rose E'er Blooming

arr. Cynthia Dobrinski, © 2004 Choristers Guild

Ding Dong Merrily on High

arr. Brad Howland, © 2014 Lassus Publications

Hymn: 368 - Angels We Have Heard on High

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

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?

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

Text and Tune: French; tr. The Crown of Jesus, Part 2, London (1862), alt.

Music for strings: setting by Kenneth T. Kosche, © 2000 Concordia Publishing House

Stand

Advent Prayer

P Heavenly Father, by the sending of Your Son, Jesus, You kept Your promise to a people long ago. We, too, thank You that Jesus became like us to save us from our sins, from death, and from the power of the devil. Make us able to live each day waiting for Jesus to come again and to take us to Himself in heaven. Hear us for our Savior's sake.

C Amen.

P The grace of our Lord  Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C Amen.

Hymn: 380 - 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 ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

- Ref. 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 the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel!

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 man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.

Text: Charles Wesley (1707-88), alt.

Tune: Felix Mendelssohn (1809-47)

Music for brass and choir descant: setting by S. Drummond Wolff, © 1991 Concordia Publishing House

Words of Welcome and Thanks

Pastor:	Rev. Mike Fieberkorn, Associate Pastor
Acolytes:	Joey Huls, Jack Dunbar
Ushers:	Kevin Bergfeld, Kevin Hanson
Organist:	Mark Thoelke, Director of Worship and Music
Music Assistant:	Teresa Thoelke
Pianist:	Karen Roche
Choirs:	Adult Choir Men's Chorus Treble Choir Joyful Noise, Zion Lutheran School – Junior High choir Jubilant Voice, Zion Lutheran School – 5 th grade choir
Handbells:	Jubilate Ringers – adult handbell choir
Brass:	trumpets – Dan Littles, Brad Holz trombones – John Israel, Sean Bippin
Percussion:	Chris Ranner
Woodwinds:	clarinet – Linda Phipps flute – Emily Weber
Strings:	violins – Kristin Holz, Rhonda Hefflinger viola – Robin Veale cello – Daniel Winfield
Readers:	Dean Feigenbaum Catherine Streuter Mike Wadley Jonas Coffman Olivia Kuhlmann Angela Gielow Ken Hartman Carol Martin Angie Steinbacher

Visual Art

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2025-2026 CONCERT SERIES

Hymn Festival

Sunday, October 19, 2025 – 3:00 PM

Featuring Zion's choirs and instrumentalists

Kevin Hildebrand, guest organist and composer

Service of Lessons & Carols

Sunday, December 7, 2025 – 6:00 PM

Featuring Zion's choirs, handbells, and instrumentalists

Mark Thielke, Director of Worship and Music

Sanctus Winds - St. Louis Community Band

Sunday, February 1, 2026 – 4:00 PM

Matt Janssen, Director

University Wind Symphony - Concordia University Nebraska

Saturday, April 11, 2026 – 7:00 PM

Dr. Robert Cody, Director