

A lit white candle is the central focus, surrounded by greenery and red berries. The background is a soft, out-of-focus brown. The text is overlaid on the image.

SILENT NIGHT!  
HOLY NIGHT!

SON OF GOD,  
LOVE'S PURE LIGHT...

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE  
WITH CAROLS AND HOLY COMMUNION  
December 24, 2025**

# Peace Lutheran Church

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## December 24, 2025

**We welcome you in the name of the Lord Jesus.** We are honored with your presence. If you do not have a church home, you are invited to join us regularly. Please introduce yourself to Pastor Jeremy Lucke or one of the Ushers as you leave today and sign the guest book in the entryway. We continue to observe the guidelines for health safety. If you have any questions, please see an usher. Everyone is welcome.

**The ringing of the bell** and the lighting of the Christ candle mark the beginning of our service and a time for quiet meditation, prayer and inward reflection as we begin our worship.

**Children are welcome at our worship services.** If you prefer, Peace Lutheran has a playroom equipped for children three years old and younger. The room is unstaffed and can be accessed in the fellowship hall where the service is also being live streamed for your convenience and enjoyment.

**Holy Communion** is celebrated every first and third Sunday and will follow the order of service in the bulletin. If you are a baptized Christian and share our faith in Jesus as Savior and have been instructed in the meaning and use of the Lord's Supper, you are invited to partake. We have pre-wrapped communion wine or juice and wafers. We also have gluten-free wafers available. If you desire a gluten-free wafer, ask the server. May the body and blood of Jesus, present in the bread and wine, be a blessing to you.

There are times during the service when you will be asked to stand if you are able. Please feel free to remain seated if standing is difficult.

**Offering.** Peace Lutheran Church understands and teaches that Offerings are voluntary and to be from the heart. Whether we give or do not give does not determine our salvation. Whether we give

much or little does not determine our standing before God. Sharing an Offering is an opportunity to quietly practice generosity with our neighbors.

**Serving You**

Pastor	Pastor Jeremy Lucke
Music Director	Colleen Schulze
Choir Director	Diane Crocker
Supt. Of Sunday School	Anne Schroeder & Karyn Stanley
Admin Assistant	Daniel Dusek
Parish Nurse	Kathy Durling
Webmaster	Jim Holroyd
Audio-Visual	Johnathon Holroyd, George Abele, Nicholas Abele, Merv Munster, Callie Santora, Oscar Gutbrod, Sam Worth, Rick Durling, Jim Holroyd, Debbi Weiler, Dan Dusek
Praise Team	Rick Durling, Patrick Kamins, Ginny Tonelli, Karyn Stanley, Nora Stanley, Diane Crocker, Anne Schroeder, John Mergl

**Today, December 24, 2025**

Musician	Colleen Schulze
Ushers	Debbi Weiler, Sharon Starr & Carole Gutbrod
Readers	Will Schroeder & Rob Schulze
Communion	Bill & Peggy Kreuger

**PRELUDE**

**AS WE GATHER.....** One of the great pleasures of the Advent and Christmas season is the singing of hymns and carols associated with the nativity of our Lord. Many of the texts of these well-loved songs were written specifically for services in the Christmas season; others were not. “Silent Night, Holy Night” was written to be first sung at a Christmas Eve service in Austria in 1818, and “O Little Town of Bethlehem” was initially included as part of a children’s Christmas program at Holy Trinity Church in Philadelphia in 1868. But another well-loved hymn associated with Christmas was not originally a Christmas song. “Joy to the World” was written as a paraphrase of the second half of Psalm 98 by the English hymnwriter Isaac Watts in 1719. When the text was printed as part of a collection of Psalms in English verse, he gave the song the heading “The Messiah’s Coming and Kingdom.” Our celebration of the coming to earth of Jesus as our Messiah and Lord gives us a great “resounding joy” that lasts all through our years as we await the fullness of His kingdom yet to come!

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# WELCOME

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## SERMON

***“Herod & Jesus: Up or Down?”***

**Pastor Jeremy Lucke**

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## CHRISTMAS EVE CAROL CELEBRATION

*Luke 2*

*Leader: We hear again the Good News from the Gospel according to St. Luke, Chapter 2. Following each section of the reading, we sing songs of Christmas joy, echoing the sounds of the angels on that first Christmas night.*

Reader: In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.

*Leader: God sent the angel Gabriel to a virgin, Mary, announcing that she would conceive the Savior by the power of the Holy Spirit and bring forth the Promised One into the world. Nine months later Jesus—the desire of the nations—was born in the little town called Bethlehem, fulfilling the hopes and dreams of God’s people. We take a moment to reflect upon the significance of the town of Bethlehem.*

## CAROL

**“O Little Town of Bethlehem”**

**LBW (Green Book) 41**

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893; Tune: Lewis H. Redner, 1831-1908 CCLI License #11470020

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.  
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;  
Oh, come to us, abide with us,  
Our Lord Immanuel!

Reader: And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

*Leader: So what hopes were wrapped up in those swaddling cloths and laid in a manger? The Old Testament is full of promises and prophecies that point to Christ as the hope of people. After Adam and Eve had sinned, God found them. In that moment, God spoke the first promise of the Savior that would fuel the hopes of people for many years. In fact, so great was Eve's hope for the Savior that when she gave birth to her firstborn son she thought she had given birth to the Savior. God's promise of the one Child was not fulfilled in Eve's son. His promise, however, was fulfilled in Jesus—the baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and laid in a manger. God kept His promise!*

## CAROL

## “Away in a Manger” LBW (Green Book) 67

“Away in a Manger” Text: American 1885; Tune American 19th cent. CCLI License #11470020

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;  
The stars in the sky...looked down where he lay,  
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay  
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in your tender care  
And fit us for heaven to live with you there.

Reader: And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”

*Leader: The angel certainly shared great joy that night. What kind of joy is this? For Christians, joy is not evaluated by the shifting standards of the world. Rather, joy, is grounded in Jesus, who remains for us a refuge and ever-present help in time of need. Joy for the disciple is realized in Jesus, who gives us rest from our burdens as God lifts us up as on wings of an eagle. None of life’s woes, sorrows, or afflictions can take away the joy that we have in Christ nor prevents us from inheriting the joy that awaits us. This is the news of comfort we need to hear and be reminded of in our life. These are the glad tidings of comfort and joy that remain ours even today, giving us rest and making us merry.*

## **CAROL**

### **“God Rest You, Merry Gentlemen”**

Charles Winfred Douglas; Arranged by Jay Althouse; Alfred Publishing Co., Inc. CCLI License #11470020

God rest you merry gentlemen  
Let nothing you dismay  
Remember Christ our Savior  
Was born on Christmas Day  
To save us all from Satan's pow'r  
When we were gone astray  
Oh tidings of comfort and joy  
Comfort and joy  
Oh tidings of comfort and joy  
From God our heav'nly Father  
A blessed angel came  
and unto certain shepherds  
brought tidings of the same  
How that in Bethlehem  
was born the son of God by name

Oh tidings of comfort and joy  
Comfort and joy  
Oh tidings of comfort and joy

Reader: And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!”

*Leader: The joy that was experienced by the angel and heavenly host on seeing the Savior the first Christmas was so great they could not keep it to themselves—neither could the shepherds. Like a child who gets a star on his paper, the shepherds went out and told everyone they met about the Child born of Mary, who was born to be the Savior of the world. Indeed, we are still in the business of spreading that same joy. As those who have heard and believed the news about the Child of Mary, we are to repeat the joy and repeat it and repeat it and repeat it. We are to proclaim and to shout from the mountaintops how that Child, the Son of God born of the Virgin Mary, was born into the world to deliver us from sin and to give us the joys of His kingdom.*

## CAROL

## “Joy to the World” LBW (Green Book) 39

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1784, Tune: George F Handel, 1685-1759, adapt. © 1978 by LUTheran Church in America, The AMerican Lutheran Church, The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada, The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod CCLI License #11470020

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive its King;  
Let ev’ry heart prepare him room  
And heav’n and nature sing, And heav’n and nature sing,  
And heav’n, and heav’n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!  
Let all their songs employ,  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat the sounding joy  
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

Reader: When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known

to us.” And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger.

*Leader: A sense of peace must have overcome the shepherds upon seeing Mary, Joseph and the baby. God’s promise of peace is intended for all people. The Apostle Paul wrote, “The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:7).” This peace is ours. We are no longer weighed down by shame and guilt. We are no longer burdened by brokenness and sorrow. We now take a moment in wonder to sing about our Prince of Peace.*

## **CAROL**

### **“Angels, from the Realms of Glory” LBW (Green Book) 50**

“Angels From the Realms of Glory” Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt. Tune: Henry T. Smart, 1813-1879 CCLI License #11470020

Angels, from the realms of glory,  
Wing your flight o’er all the earth;  
Once you sang creation’s story;  
Now proclaim Messiah’s birth:  
Come and worship,  
come and worship,  
Worship Christ, the newborn king.

All creation, join in praising  
God, the Father, Spirit, Son,  
Evermore your voices raising  
To the eternal Three in One.  
Come and worship,  
come and worship,  
Worship Christ, the newborn king.

Reader: And when the shepherds saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

*Leader: Each generation adds to the list of favorite Christmas songs as different nations and cultures enrich the repertoire. The spiritual “Go Tell It on the Mountain”, for many years limited to African American songbooks, has become a treasured addition to*

*hymnals not only in the United States but worldwide. The shepherds glorified and praised God as they returned to their fields and their lives. We shape our worship and lives with praise to God for the gift of the Savior, the baby Jesus born in Bethlehem.*

## **CAROL**

### **“Go Tell It on the Mountain” LBW (Green Book) 70**

Text: African American Spiritual, refrain; John W. Work II, 1873-1925, stanzas, alt. Tune: African American Spiritual; setting : Hugh Porter, 1897-1960 CCLI License #11470020

Go tell it on the mountain,  
Over the hills and ev’rywhere;  
Go tell it on the mountain  
That Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching  
O’er silent flocks by night,  
Behold, throughout the heavens  
There shone a holy light.

Go tell it on the mountain,  
Over the hills and ev’rywhere;  
Go tell it on the mountain  
That Jesus Christ is born!

Down in a lonely manger  
The humble Christ was born;  
And God sent us salvation  
That blessed Christmas morn.

Go tell it on the mountain,  
Over the hills and ev’rywhere;  
Go tell it on the mountain  
That Jesus Christ is born!

## **CHRISTMAS PRAYER**

*Leader: Let us pray for God’s great mercy, asking that He would hear our petition and grant them according to His gracious will.*

*Leader: As we recall the first Christmas, Lord, we thank You for the gift of Jesus Christ. Give us faith to never forget the magnitude and importance of His sacrifice for us in coming to earth to be our Savior, our Brother, and our Friend. Lord, in Your mercy,*

**People: hear our prayer.**

*Leader: As we remember Mary and Joseph, we thank You for the gift of family. Give us hearts to fully appreciate the gifts we receive through them and seek to be those who cherish and nourish our family associations. Lord, in Your mercy,*

**People: hear our prayer.**

*Leader: As we echo the song of the angels, we thank You for the gifts of poetry and music and for all of the writers and composers who have enriched our celebration with their devotion and creativity. Give us eagerness to ever seek to bring You all that is the best and most beautiful in our worship. Lord, in Your mercy,*

**People: hear our prayer.**

*Leader: As we think of the shepherds to whom the angel brought the greatest news, we thank You for those who serve in the various vocations of life, including those whose daily work often goes unnoticed. We commend to Your special care, Lord, those in the military, our first responders and medical personnel, and all whose labor on our behalf is specially challenging or hazardous. Lord, in Your mercy,*

**People: hear our prayer.**

*Leader: As we consider those who were at the inn surrounding Mary and Joseph and the baby Jesus, we pray for all situations and conditions of people, especially those on our hearts at this time (moment of silence). Be with them and bless them according to their needs, Lord, and give us opportunities to be of comfort and assistance in Your name. Lord, in Your mercy,*

**People: hear our prayer.**

*Leader: As we pray, gracious God, we remember our dear ones who have completed their earthly lives and now are in Your eternal keeping. As the brightness of the light of Christ shines on them, may we follow their footsteps in ways of peace and love throughout our lives as we live to Your glory. Lord, in Your mercy,*

**People: hear our prayer.**

*Leader: These and any other things You would have us ask of You, heavenly Father, grant to us for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.*

**People: Amen.**

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## THE LORD'S PRAYER

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**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**

**Special Song**

**“Mary Did You Know”**  
Sung by Nora Stanley

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

### THE DISTRIBUTION

*Leader: Luke writes that Mary “treasured up all these things in her heart.” That phrase “all these things” includes her personal experience of that first Christmas night with the angels and the shepherds and the promise of God coming true. God has kept His covenant with His people, and we are blessed by it. With renewing faith, growing hope, and expanding love on this most holy night, we sing.*

## CLOSING CAROL

**“Silent Night, Holy Night”**  
**LBW (Green Book) 65**

Words by: Joseph Mohr, Music by: Franz Xaver Gruber, John Freeman Young; Music: Public Domain, Words: Public Domain CCLI License #11470020

*(Individual candles will be lit during the singing and extinguished after the Benediction. Those with lit candles remain still as those without lit candles bend their candles to receive the light.)*

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.

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!

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

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

*Leader: Let us pray. O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true light. Grant that as we have known the mysteries of that light on earth we may also come to the fullness of His joys in heaven; through the same Jesus, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.*

**ALL: Amen.**

## **POSTLUDE**

***Join us for Worship on Sunday, December 28 at 10am.  
Sunday School will resume on Sunday, Jan. 4 at 9am.***