

Christmas Eve

2023



Concordia Lutheran Church

Conover, North Carolina

Poinsettias in the Sanctuary are given...

In memory of...

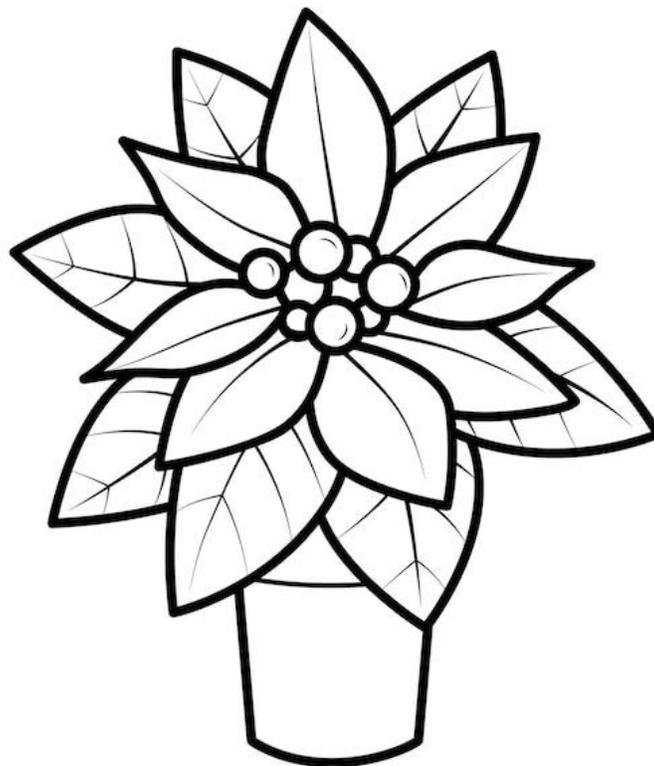
by...

Stuart Blackmon.....	Ann Marie Blackmon
Smitty Bolick.....	Opal & Family
Donald Bogert, Jr.....	Hunter & Dalton Bogert
Donald Bogert, Jr.....	Rick & Mary Anne Wike
Charles Brady.....	Doug Brady
Chloe Brady.....	Doug Brady
Steve Brewer & Junior.....	Philip, Nanny, Kaileigh, & Hadleigh
Wm. Allen Canrobert.....	the Family
Charlie Canrobert.....	the Family
Robert & Cora Belle Carpenter.....	Rick & Mary Anne Wike
Dr. Harvey Christensen.....	the Family
Joann Forte.....	Mike & Lesa Spake
George Gardner.....	the Family
Frank & Virginia Gilbert.....	Deb, Dan, Don, & David Kuehnert & Families
Nancy & Wes Hass, & Troy Goodin.....	Pree Christensen
Cody Harrelson.....	Roger & Vicki Shull
Cody Harrelson, Bobby Matthews, Charlsie Lutz.....	Frankie Matthews
Wally Henry.....	Annette, David, John, & Nancy
Hailey Grace Hill.....	Pree Christensen
Stine Isenhower.....	the Randy Isenhower Family
Carolyn Vaughn Isenhower.....	the Randy Isenhower Family
Jonathan Jones.....	wife, Deborah Jones
Mr. & Mrs. Howard Kaylor.....	grand daughter, Deborah Jones
Rev. Eldor & Paul & Marie Kuehnert.....	Deb, Dan, Don, & David Kuehnert & Families
Lila Gilbert Kuehnert.....	Deb, Dan, Don, & David Kuehnert & Families
Charlsie Lutz.....	Roger & Vicki Shull
Catherine McRary.....	Opal & Family
Bobby Matthews.....	Tom & Beverly Considine
Bobby Matthews.....	Roger & Vicki Shull
Robert & Metta Matthews.....	Roger & Vicki Shull
Richard & Revonda Matthews.....	Roger & Vicki Shull
Mary Nell & Jean Matthews.....	Roger & Vicki Shull
Charlie & Clara Moser.....	Roger & Vicki Shull
Tom Moser.....	Pat, Ginger, Julie, Matt, and the family
Jerry Murphy.....	Greg Murphy
Mr. & Mrs. Alphaeus Parham.....	grand daughter, Deborah Jones
Mary Phillips.....	Her Family
Carrie Powell.....	Ann Marie Blackmon
Solon & Kathleen Robinson.....	Roger & Vicki Shull
Vernon & Margaret Shull.....	Roger & Vicki Shull
Wilfred & Merle Sigmon.....	Gina, Greg, Betsy, Jason & Shan
David N. Smith.....	Sandy & family
Darlene Spake.....	Mike & Lesa Spake
Phyllis & Jack Spake.....	Mike & Lesa Spake
Grady & Fannie Wike.....	Rick & Mary Anne Wike
George Roscoe & Floy S. Yount.....	Sandra Yount Smith

In Honor of...

by...

Alice Baker.....	Roger & Vicki Shull
Cliff & Leslie Brown.....	Roger & Vicki Shull
Jerri Alice, Maggie Lou, and Mary Elizabeth Carter.....	Roger & Vicki Shull
Pastor & Ruth Geml.....	Roger & Vicki Shull
Pastor & Mrs. Geml.....	Mike Spake
David & Matthew Hafer	Carla Hafer
Donna Hager.....	Roger & Vicki Shull
Susan Harman.....	Roger & Vicki Shull
Avery Hill.....	Pree Christensen
Frankie Matthews.....	Roger & Vicki Shull
Kyle McClure.....	Roger & Vicki Shull
My children and their families.....	Frankie Matthews
My children, Kelly, Kimberly, & Dan.....	Pree Christensen
My Family.....	Opal Bolick
Rick & Mary Anne Wike.....	Keith & Lisa Travis



Christ Mass Eucharist with Candlelight

December 24, 2023

8PM

PRELUDE

This time is used to prepare our hearts for worship.

✠ Gathering ✠

We stand and face the rear of the nave.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN "O Come, All Ye Faithful"



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, Joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
2 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



O come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a - dore Him,



O come, let us a - dore Him, Christ the Lord!

INVOCATION

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

C Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

John 1:14; Psalm 96:3; Psalm 98:1

P And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

C and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

P Declare His glory among the nations,

C His marvelous works among all the peoples!

P Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for He has done marvelous things!

C His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for Him.

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

P Joined in worship on this sacred night, let us make confession to our heavenly Father, confident of His forgiveness for Jesus' sake.

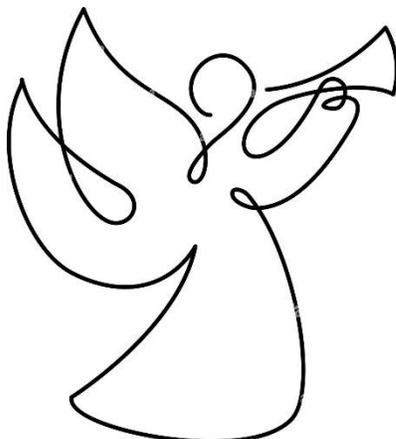
Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination

P Almighty Father,

C we confess that we are sinners by nature and by thought, word, and deed. We have not always given You the best of what we have and are, and have not fully made room for You in our lives. With repentant hearts, we turn to You for mercy, seeking Your grace. In Your loving kindness forgive, restore, and lead us so that we may be renewed and live to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

P With joy I announce God's Good News to You. Our gracious God in His mercy has given His Son to be born, to live, and then to die for you and to rise again in glory. For His sake God forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Be at peace and rejoice in the Lord.

C Amen.





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.

Refrain



Glo - - - - - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - - -



- ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - - o.

SALUTATION & PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P 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 Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

We sit.

ANTHEM

"The First Noel"

arr. Cathy Moglebust

✠ Word ✠

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 9:2–7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.
You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest,
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.
For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder,
the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.
For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult
and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire.
For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth 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.

ANTHEM

“Were You There on That Christmas Night”

Natalie Sleeth

EPISTLE LESSON

Titus 2:11–14

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

We stand and face the cross as it moves to the center of the nave.

GOSPEL PROCESSION

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

380



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!



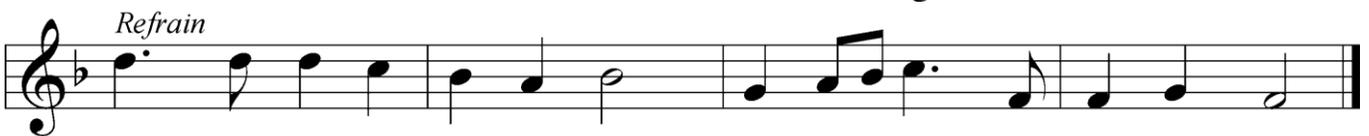
Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!”
Late in time be - hold Him come, Off - spring of a vir - gin’s womb.
Light and life to all He brings, Ris’n with heal - ing in His wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God - head see, Hail the in - car - nate De - i - ty!
Mild He lays His glo - ry by, Born that man no more may die,



With the an - gel - ic host pro - claim, “Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!”
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Je - sus, our Im - man - u - el!
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec - ond birth.



Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, “Glo - ry to the new - born King!”

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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

C Glory to You O Lord.

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 2:1–20

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. 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.

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.” 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!”

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 a manger. And when they 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.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

361



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!
2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, And, gath - ered all a - bove
3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly The won - drous gift is giv'n!
4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, De - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by;
While mor-tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won-d'ring love.
So God im-parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of His heav'n.
Cast out our sin, and en - ter in, Be born in us to - day.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing light.
O morn-ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
No ear may hear His com - ing; But in this world of sin,
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad tid - ings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to-night.
And prais - es sing to God the king And peace to all the earth!
Where meek souls will re - ceive Him, still The dear Christ en - ters in.
O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Im - man - u - el!

Text and tune: Public domain

We sit.

SERMON

“Master of None”

Rev. Michael A. Geml

We stand.

NICENE CREED

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.

PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

To each petition the assembly responds:

P Lord, in Your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

✠ *Sacrament* ✠

PREFACE

P The Lord be with you.

2 Timothy 4:22

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

Colossians 3:1

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Psalm 136

C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

P Blessed are You, Lord our God, for You have had mercy on us and entered human history in the person of Your Son so that we might enter Your eternal kingdom. He fulfilled the prophecy and was born of the Virgin so that He might die on a cross and thereby give us eternal life. As we celebrate His birth, we give thanks for our new birth, for His abiding with us throughout our journey, and for the assurance of heaven He won for us. Grant us now that we may in true faith receive Him under bread and wine, together with the blessings of forgiveness, life, and salvation. To You—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—be all praise and glory, now and forever.

C Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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 birth to be among us, Your life, death and resurrection. As we celebrate Your coming, we now await Your final coming to reign over all. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

THE 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 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.**

PAX DOMINI

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

We sit.

DISTRIBUTION

“For Unto Us a Child Is Born”

G. F. Handel

“It Came upon the Midnight Clear”



1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, That glo-rious song of old,
 2 Still through the clo-ven skies they come With peace-ful wings un-furled,
 3 All you, be-neath your heav-y load, By care and guilt bent low,
 4 For lo, the days have come to pass By proph-ets seen of old,



From an-gels bend-ing near the earth To touch their harps of gold:
 And still their heav'n-ly mu-sic floats O'er all the wea-ry world.
 Who toil a-long a drea-ry way With pain-ful steps and slow:
 When down in-to the cir-cling years Came Christ as was fore-told.



“Peace on the earth, good-will to all, From heav'n's all-gra-cious king.”
 A-bove its sad and low-ly plains They bend on hov-'ring wing,
 Look up, for gold-en is the hour, Come swift-ly on the wing,
 His word of peace shall to the earth God's an-cient prom-ise bring,



The world in sol-lemn still-ness lay To hear the an-gels sing.
 And ev-er o'er its ba-bel sounds The bless-ed an-gels sing.
 The Prince was born to bring you peace; Of Him the an-gels sing.
 And all who take this gift will hear The song the an-gels sing.

Text and tune: Public domain

“Away in a Manger”



1 A-way in a man-ger, no crib for a bed,
 2 The cat-tle are low-ing, the ba-by a-wakes,
 3 Be near me, Lord Je-sus; I ask Thee to stay



The lit-tle Lord Je-sus laid down His sweet head.
 But lit-tle Lord Je-sus, no cry-ing He makes.
 Close by me for-ev-er and love me, I pray.

The stars in the sky _____ looked down where He lay,
 I love Thee, Lord Je - sus! Look down from the sky,
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in Thy ten - der care,

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 And stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.
 And take us to heav - en to live with Thee there.

Tune and text: Public domain

More Hymns will be added as needed.

We stand.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

P You, Lord, who came into the world long ago as an infant, have come to us this night in Your body and blood. Thank You for providing this bread of life and cup of salvation. Join us together as one Body called to love one another as You have loved us; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.



✠ Sending ✠

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

The Pastor, taking a large candle, lights it from a candle on the Advent Wreath, symbolizing Christ, the Light of the World. Then the Pastor says:

P Arise, shine; for your Light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you . . . And nations shall come to your Light. Jesus said, “I am the Light of the World; He who follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” “You are the light of the world . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in Heaven.”

The Pastor gives light to the ushers, they in turn give light to the first worshipper in each pew, who passes it on.

(please tip only your unlit candle to receive the flame.)

CANDLE LIGHTING HYMN

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

**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!**

Raise candle: **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.**



BENEDICTION

P Help us, Lord Jesus, to carry this light into the world in our words and in our actions.

C May we, who have celebrated the birth of Jesus our Light and our Hope, be signs of light and hope to those around us.

P As the light of these little candles lightens this darkness, make us ablaze with the light of life, Christ himself, so that others may know the true Light.

C Hear us, O Lord, as the brilliance of the Light of Christ opens our hearts, and hands and voices to serve with great joy.

P Christmas peace and joy through Christ, His only-begotten Son, be yours. The blessing of God almighty—Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit—be and abide with you forever.

C Amen.

Please extinguish your candles.

Following the recessional, you may place your candles in the boxes at the exits.

RECESSIONAL HYMN

“Joy to the World”

387



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive her
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their songs em -
3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow Nor thorns in - fest the
4 He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the na - tions



King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare Him
ploy, While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
ground; He comes to make His bless - ings
prove The glo - ries of His righ - teous -



room And heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture
plains Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing
flow Far as the curse is found, Far as the curse is
ness And won - ders of His love, And won - ders of His



sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, Far as, far as the curse is found.
love, And won - ders, won - ders of His love.

POSTLUDE

“Hallelujah Chorus”

G. F. Handel



SERVING IN WORSHIP TONIGHT

The Reverend Michael A. Geml.....Senior Pastor

Cristal Rager.....Lector

Larkyn Gerken, Peyton Gerken, Rose Long, Sean Roth.....Worship Assistants

The Elders of Concordia Lutheran Church.....Sacramental Ministers

The Choir of Concordia Lutheran Church

The Concordia Handbell Choir

Cameron Warner, Mark Denton.....Trumpets

Benjamin Kress.....Horn

Jake Holden.....Trombone

Ryan Dant.....Tuba

Kyle McClure.....Organist, Minister of Music