



Community of Christ Lutheran Church
Second Sunday of Christmas
January 5, 2025, 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.
Pastor Stephen C. Bond



THE GATHERING

Welcome

Pastor Steve Bond

Musical Prelude

“Come Down, O Love Divine” by Michael Burkhardt

Eric Dickey

WE REMEMBER OUR BAPTISM

“Confession and Forgiveness”

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God-with-us, we confess that we have turned away those seeking shelter, claiming there is no room when we have plenty. We have made power and wealth our idols, while you show us true glory: a baby in a manger. We have overlooked the shepherds, expecting good news in prettier packaging. Too often, we have valued violence instead of your peace. Turn us from our ways to your ways. Grant us the grace to begin again. Free us from all that keeps us bound, and forgive our sin, through Jesus Christ, who gives himself for us. Amen.

Hear the good news and rejoice! You are God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, † forgiven in Christ and freed to respond in joy. **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn

“Angels, from the Realms of Glory”

ELW 275

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.**

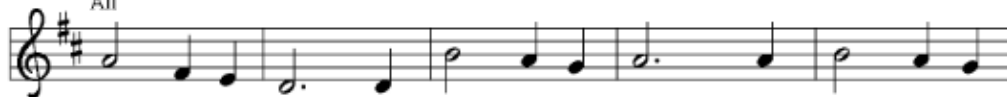
Refrain

Assisting minister

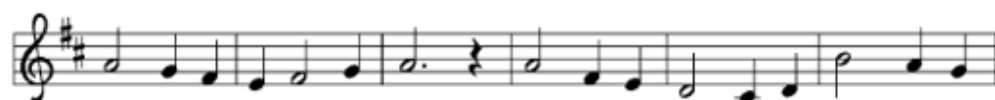


This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia.

All



1 Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow-er and rich-es and wis-dom and



strength, and hon-or and bless-ing and glo-ry are his.

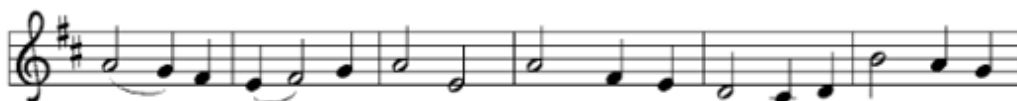
Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia.



2 Sing with all the peo-ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre-a-tion: Bless-ing and hon-or and glo-ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for-ev-er. A-men.

Final refrain

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain
has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **P Amen.**

Childrens Sermon

THE READINGS

The First Reading: Jeremiah 31:7-14

⁷ Thus says the LORD:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;
proclaim, give praise, and say,
“Save, O LORD, your people,
the remnant of Israel.”

⁸ See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north,
and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,
among them the blind and the lame,
those with child and those in labor, together;
a great company, they shall return here.

⁹ With weeping they shall come,
and with consolations I will lead them back,
I will let them walk by brooks of water,
in a straight path in which they shall not stumble;
for I have become a father to Israel,
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

¹⁰ Hear the word of the LORD, O nations,
and declare it in the coastlands far away;
say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him,
and will keep him as a shepherd a flock."

¹¹ For the LORD has ransomed Jacob,
and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

¹² They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,
and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD,
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and over the young of the flock and the herd;
their life shall become like a watered garden,
and they shall never languish again.

¹³ Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,
and the young men and the old shall be merry.

I will turn their mourning into joy,
I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

¹⁴ I will give the priests their fill of fatness,
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,
says the LORD.

L The Word of the Lord C Thanks be to God!

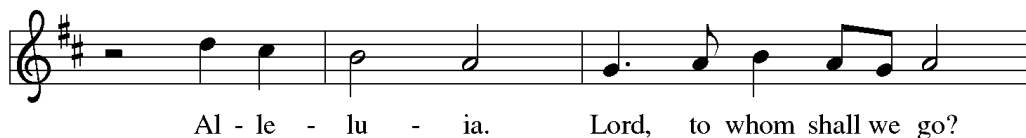
The Second Reading: Ephesians 1:3-14

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵ He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸ that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹ he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

¹¹ In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹² so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised

Holy Spirit; ¹⁴ this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

L The Word of the Lord **C** Thanks be to God!



The Holy Gospel: John 1:1-9, 10-18

P The Holy Gospel according to....**C** Glory to you, **O** Lord!

[¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.]

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

P The Gospel of the Lord! **C** Praise to you, **O** Christ!

Sermon

"God Goes Tent Camping"

Pastor Stephen Bond

Hymn

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

ELW 270

The Apostles' Creed

C I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day, he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

WE DEDICATE OUR HEARTS IN PRAYER

P Filled with good news of great joy, let us offer our prayers for the church, the earth, and all people.

A brief silence.

AM O God, you reveal yourself in this assembly. In water, wine, and bread, show us again and again your grace upon grace, that your church boldly testifies to your love. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

AM You reveal yourself in creation. In seedlings and planets, microorganisms and galaxies, awaken us to the cry of the earth. As you nourish your people like a watered garden, empower us to nourish our creaturely companions. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

AM You reveal yourself in every land and in the farthest parts of the earth. Deliver people who suffer under oppressive regimes. Thwart the foolish plans of unjust leaders. Give wisdom to our elected officials. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

AM You reveal yourself in every human being. Help us recognize your image in our siblings in Christ who are in the strong grip of addiction, depression, anxiety, hopelessness, or other illness; **Tom Jennings, Sue & Jim Enk, Christal & Chad Pritchard, Frank O'Konski, Larry Geer, Luke Holtz, Susie Donnal, Ron Hetherwick, Martina Benton, Jake Cope, Debbie Carman, Jerry Reed, Jim Ayres, Paula Gruhler, Virginia Dillon....** and all those we remember in silence. Grant us compassion in our care for your people. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

AM You reveal yourself anew every day. In this new year, renew this congregation and its ministries in our witness to the good news of the incarnation. Transform the way we have always done things into your new future for us. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

AM You reveal yourself in the lives of your holy ones. We give you thanks for those who set their hope on you, trusting the inheritance we receive in you. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

P We commend these prayers to you, O God, trusting your grace made known to all, through the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

THE MEAL

All Christians are welcome to commune at our Altar. You do not have to be a member of this congregation to receive Communion. Grape juice is available in the inner ring of glasses for those desiring it. A "gluten-free" host option is available upon request as well.

Sharing of the Peace

P The Peace of the Lord be with you all! **C And also with you!**

Share an expression of peace with your neighbor, please.

The congregation continues to stand during Tithes and Offerings if you are able.

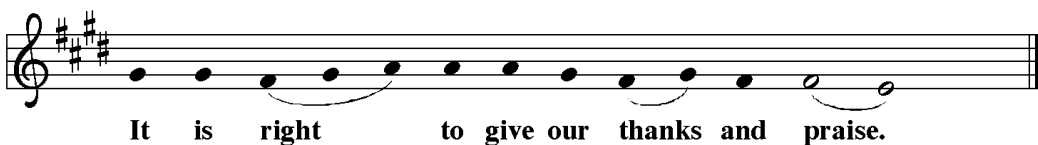
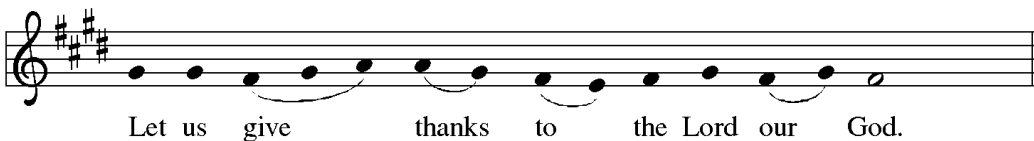
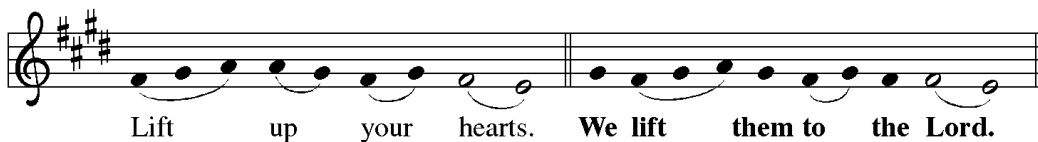
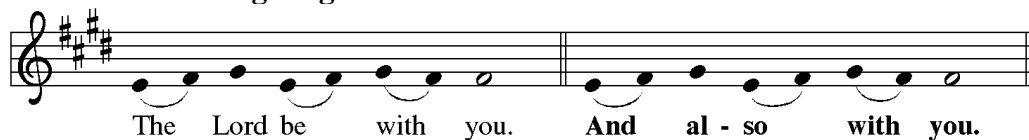
Our Tithes and Offerings *Bring your gifts to the Altar or you may offer gifts in the tray located at the rear of the sanctuary. Thank you.*

Offering Prayer

AM God of heaven and earth, from the beginning, you have called forth life, in which you take delight. The trees, the fields, and the seas sing for joy.

Bless now these gifts, received from your bounty, that we may join the chorus of creation to tell of your salvation from day to day. **Amen.**

The Great Thanksgiving



**The Eucharistic Prayer Continues.....



The Words of Institution

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Jesus said, Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Jesus said, Do this for the remembrance of me.

The Lord's Prayer

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray... **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.**

Communion Hymns

“Lamb of God”



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the



sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

Hymn

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

ELW 295

“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”

ELW 272

Post Communion Blessing

Prayer after Communion

AM Merciful God, we thank you for Jesus, who is our heavenly food. Strengthened by this goodness, send us forth to announce your peace, comfort the afflicted, and share the good news of great joy. **Amen.**

Prayer at the Sending of Communion

Compassionate God, as Jesus called disciples to follow him, bless those who go forth to share your word and sacrament with those who are *sick/homebound*. May these gifts be signs of our love and prayers, that through the sharing of the body and blood of Christ, all may know your grace and healing revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

THE SENDING

Milestones & Announcements:

The Blessing

P The God of love, Father, ✚ Son, and Holy Spirit, lavish you with grace, illumine your path, and increase your joy, today and always. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn

“Love Has Come”

ELW 292

Dismissal

AM Go in peace. The Word of God dwells in you richly. **Thanks be to God.**

AM And next week, **C Bring a friend!**

“Making Jesus Known”

Welcome to Community of Christ! Our family welcomes you to the house of the Lord today! We ask God to bless His Holy Word and Sacrament today so that his people might receive strength for living out our days! If you are looking for a church home, we hope you will consider Community of Christ!

We WELCOME YOU to worship with us at one of our TWO worship services. Join us at 8:00 a.m. or 10:00 a.m. in person or on Facebook Live. We look forward to seeing you and as always **BRING A FRIEND!!!!**

Thursday Bible Study Series “Things Seen and Unseen”

Our Thursday Afternoon Bible Study, co-led between Pastor Steve and Vicar Natalie, exploring angels and other spiritual beings in the Bible, what we do (and don’t!) know about them, and what difference their existence makes in our lives. Have you ever been curious about what angels look like, or where some people get the idea of “guardian” angels from? Don’t know your “cherubim” from your “seraphim”? Wonder why the first words out of the angels’ mouths in the Bible are so often, “Do not be afraid!”? Well, as we begin a new calendar year, we’ll resume with the second half of our series on angels, picking up again on Jan. 2 and running through January 16 as we explore Things Seen and Unseen: An Introduction to Angels in our Thursday Afternoon Bible Study, at 1:00 p.m. in the Council Room. If you need handouts from past sessions, see Pastor Steve or Vicar Natalie, and you can always check out our video summaries for each session on the church’s Facebook page! We’d love to have you around the table as we explore *things seen and unseen!*

Adult Sunday School Series: “Jesus—The Wonder Years”

What would it have been like to raise the child Jesus? Have you ever wondered what Jesus’ childhood was like, or why there are so few stories from that part of his life? And with the handful of stories we do have from the Bible, what do they mean and why do they matter for our lives? This January, we’ll be starting a new series in our Sunday morning Adult Class, looking at important episodes from the early life of Jesus across the gospels, in what we do—and don’t—know. Join us for these conversations from 9:15-9:45 a.m. (between services) on Sunday mornings:

- Jan. 5—“What’s In A Name?”—An Overview of Names and Titles for Jesus with Vicar Natalie

What's In a Name? Exploring the Names of Jesus: Jesus' name was given by God and had significant meaning to the people who heard it. Jesus is also known by other names throughout the biblical text that related to his redemptive work among the people and on the cross, along with his divine identity. We will explore through scripture the names of Jesus that he called himself and also those declared by other people.

- Jan. 12—The Visitation of the Magi and Epiphany
- Jan. 19—Jesus the Refugee and the Flight into Egypt
- Jan. 26—The Presentation in the Temple, Part 1
- Feb. 2—The Presentation, Part 2 (Simeon and Anna)
- Feb. 9—No Class—Congregational Breakfast in the fellowship hall
- Feb. 16—the Child Jesus in the Temple

Join us for any or all of these studies on Sunday mornings here at Community of Christ this January and February!

The 2025 offering envelopes are now available on the table in the hallway! These envelopes cover weekly offerings as well as special services like Lenten Wednesdays, Holy Week, Easter, Thanksgiving, Advent, and more. If you have any questions about how to complete your weekly offering or are unable to locate your envelopes, please feel free to reach out to the church office. For those who prefer to give electronically, we offer the Simply Giving option, which allows for automatic withdrawals from your account. For more details, please contact Michelle at secretary@commofchrist.org. **Thank you for your generous support of the Lord's work at Community of Christ and beyond!**

A Warm Welcome to Our New Member! We're thrilled to welcome Rev. Holli Burkard to our Community of Christ family!

Monthly Singing Visit to Blue Creek Nursing Home—January 14 at 10:00 a.m. Every month, volunteers from Community of Christ gather at Blue Creek Nursing Home (11239 Waterville Street here in Whitehouse) on the *second Tuesday* at 10:00 a.m. to share a brief (30 min) time of singing, prayer, and fellowship. We can use singers every month, whenever you are able, but we would love to have your help and voice coming up this January when it can be so easy for folks to feel down after the hoopla and festivity of Christmas has passed for another year. Join us on January 14th to help brighten the day of residents at Blue Creek! If you want to join us, you can just meet us at Blue Creek on January 14 at 10:00 a.m., or if you have questions, see Cinda Pontsler, Cheryl Fischer, or Pastor Steve!

Scam Alert!!!! Please be aware that text, email phishing, and Facebook scams are circulating again. If you receive a message claiming to be from Pastor Steve or any of the staff, especially asking, "Can you do me a favor?"—it's a scam. After receiving a response, the scammer often asks for money or gift cards.

****Do not respond**** to these messages and be sure to report or block the number or email address. Remember, Pastor Steve or any church staff will never solicit requests for money or gifts via text, email, or Facebook. Please contact the church office directly if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you for helping to keep our community safe!

Social Action Ministry Meets January 13 at 10:00 a.m.

Our re-energized and reorganized Social Action Ministry is meeting on January 13 as we plan out events, causes, and ministries for the year, and we would LOVE your voice and presence around the table! After Christmas time collections for Salem Lutheran area youth and the Luther Home of Mercy, we're ready to look forward to new directions and important new ministries getting started in Northwestern Ohio that we can partner with, as well as long-standing agencies that we can support in new ways. We are exploring a partnership with a new foster-care support ministry called Isaiah 117 House that is getting started in the Toledo area, and we are also looking at new ways to connect with Genacross in their work with both at-risk youth and low-income seniors in the area, too. We would love your input, your presence, and your passion to help us serve and love neighbors through the Social Action Ministry! Come to our January meeting to see if this might be a place where you can share your gifts and channel your energy!

The **2025 Altar Flower** sponsored weekends are now available. Tags and envelopes can be found in the hallway to the left as you enter the front doors. After selecting your weekend, please **rehang** the tag on the bulletin board. Payment envelopes for sponsored weekends must be submitted by the Sunday prior in order to be included in the bulletin. If you have any questions, please contact the church office. Your sponsorship is greatly appreciated— thank you!



Worship Services
Available on the net
at www.commofchrist.org

OR you can use your cell phone camera to access our website with our QR code!

What's Happening This Week?



Visitation Ministry
Monday, January 6, 10:30 a.m.
LWR Quilt Ministry
Tuesday, January 7
Choir Practice
Wednesday, January 8, 7:00 p.m.
Outreach
Wednesday, January 8, 7:00 p.m.
Pastor's Bible Study
Thursday, January 9, 1:00 p.m.
Bell Choir
Thursday, January 9, 7:00 p.m.
Blood Drive
Friday, January 10, 12 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Confirmation Field Trip to the Synagogue
Time to be announced



Did one of our Bible readings capture your attention today? Was there a story you could picture in your mind? Did a phrase from a hymn or a thought from the sermon start some new ideas or inspire some reflection? Did a Scripture passage spark a question for you to think about? Use this space here as an open canvas for your faithful imagination: you can draw a picture of something you pictured, write a question, take

notes from the message or scriptures, or doodle your faith into a visible form here. Then, either take it with you or leave your thoughts and images here to be shared in an ongoing collection here at Community of Christ!