



"Angel & Shepherds"

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CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24, 2024

Seven O' Clock

PRELUDE Variations on Christmas Carols

Please enjoy the prelude as a time of silent preparation for worship.

CHORAL INTROIT

WELCOME The Rev. Dr. Randall Bush

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Eternal God, on this holy night we gather -

People: To stand with shepherds, amazed at your glory;

Leader: To sit with Mary and Joseph, cradling your love;

People: To sing with angels, rejoicing in your power.

Leader: Once more the candles are lit as we lift our voices to tell the world good news of great joy: that to us is born a Savior, who is Christ the Lord!

* CAROL 119 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing *Mendelssohn*

* OPENING PRAYER (Unison) The Rev. Teresa Larson

O God, from the tabernacle of heaven to the poverty of a stable, your radiant light shines forth in a tiny baby wrapped in rags; such humble love astounds us. In Jesus you have become one with us that we might become one with you. Open our hearts to receive this blessing that he may be born in us, and we in him, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

* CAROL 113 Angels We Have Heard on High *Gloria*

READINGS & SCRIPTURES Revs. Bush, Larson, Ater

The Nativity by J. Barrie Shepherd

The Christmas Manger by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

CAROL 129 Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming (remain seated)

Es Ist Ein' Ros'

LITANY OF "LAS POSADAS"

Leader: Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and eat with you, and you with me. (Rev. 3:20)

People: Our names are Mary and Joseph. We are weary from our travels. Will you give us lodging?

Choir: No, we don't care what your name is. We will not let you enter. You are strangers. Let us sleep!

Leader: He was in the world, and the world came into being through him yet the world did not know him. He came to his own people, but they did not accept him. But to all who received him and believed in his name he gave power to become children of God. (John 1:10-12)

People: Who are the children of God?

Leader: All who are led by the Spirit are children of God. (Romans 8:14)

People: What does the Spirit guide us to do?

Leader: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. (Matthew 22:37, 39)

People: How do we know that we love the Lord and have faith?

Leader: If someone is naked and lacks daily food, and you do not supply their needs, what good is that? Faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead. (James 2:15-17)

People: Then enter Mary and Joseph! We will gladly give you lodging. There is room in our home and room in our hearts.

All: Almighty God, lead us to walk in the light of your love, following Jesus Christ, who came to visit us with great humility. Help us to welcome others, so that when Christ comes again in glory to judge the living and the dead, he will welcome us into his eternal home, where he lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

CHORAL ANTHEM O Magnum Mysterium M. Lauridsen

O magnum mysterium et
admirabile sacramentum ut
animalia viderunt Dominum
natum, ja centem in praesepio!
Beata Virgo, cujus viscera
meruerunt portare Dominum
Christum. Alleluia!

O great mystery, and wondrous
sacrament, that animals should see
the new-born Lord, lying in their
manger!
Blessed is the Virgin whose womb
was worthy to bear the Lord Jesus
Christ. Alleluia!

THE SCRIPTURES Luke 2:1-14 (NT 58)

Leader: *The Word of the Lord.*

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON "The Incarnation Committee" Dr. Bush

THE WORSHIP OF GOD WITH OFFERINGS

Please sign the red Friendship Folder and greet one another following the service.

Online worshippers please indicate your presence using the link on the website.

OFFERTORY Still, Still, Still Manz

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation and Great Thanksgiving Revs. Larson & Ater

Leader: *The Lord be with you.*

People: And also with you.

Leader: *Lift up your hearts.*

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Leader: *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Leader: *It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and
praise, O holy God, creator and ruler of the universe...*

*Therefore, we join our voices with the celestial choirs, and
with the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to
the glory of your name.*

Sanctus (*all sing: tune Angels We Have Heard on High*)

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power, God of might

Heav'n and earth are glory-filled,

Singing praises day and night.

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Leader: *You are holy, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ,
Your Son, our Lord...*

Lord's Prayer

Words of Institution

Revs. Bush & Larson

Communion of the People

Prayer after Communion

Rev. Ater

Christ Jesus, born among us, as a mother feeds her child with her body, so you feed us with yours, giving us the bread to eat and the cup to drink.

May these gifts of grace nourish us deeply, that we may become your body in the world and live as instruments of your great love. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE John 1:1-5, 14 (NT 91)

* LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

* ANTHEM Peace, Peace *Powell arr. Bock*
*Peace, peace, peace on earth and good will to all. This is a time for joy.
This is a time for love. Now let us all sing together of peace on earth.*

* CAROL Silent Night, Holy Night *Stille Nacht*

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, heavenly 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 Thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming
grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Silent night, holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.

* BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE God Rest You Merry Gentlefolk *Held*

*The flowers are given to the glory of God
in loving memory of William and Esther Best by Bob Schweers.*

All are invited to enjoy holiday refreshments around the Parlor tree following the service. **The hosts** this evening are Jim and Lynda Peterson, Sue and Rabah Rennane, Justin Mayer, Susan Kraeblen, Pam Mahnke, and Nancy Snyder.

Welcome! If you are visiting Immanuel Church today, we welcome you to Milwaukee's first church, marking its 187th anniversary this year. Today's congregation of over 500 members comes from next door, neighborhoods throughout the city, and as far north as Port Washington, as far south as Kenosha, and as far west as Summit. Our livestream worship extends our community across the country.

A "crying room" on the second floor offers sight and sound of the Sanctuary for parents with small children who prefer an alternate space during the worship service. Nursery care and Church School for children and youth resumes Sunday, January 5.

Thank you to this evening's volunteers: Candle lighters - Henry Densmore, Will Densmore, Chase Dominguez, Sarah Dominguez, Sara VanderHaagen, and Phoebe Verkaik; Welcome Team - Virginia Riggs, Kate Perry, and Dave Perry; Ushers - Tom Neubauer, Linda Neubauer, Mark Connelly, and Bill LeFeber; Camera operator - Jim Peterson.

WELCOME! Are you new to Immanuel?

Join us for a Membership Welcome and Orientation

Please go to https://bit.ly/IPC_MembershipWelcome_Winter2025 and let the Session know of your interest and availability on three possible Sundays: January 12, January 19, or February 2 following worship from 11:20 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Designed for new friends considering church membership, participants will have an opportunity to hear our story and learn about our shared mission and ministry. Childcare available. For more information about church membership or this event, please speak with Rev. Rob Ater (robertater@immanuelwi.org).

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

The Christmas Joy Offering has been a Presbyterian tradition since 1931. It offers an opportunity to extend the joy of Christmas to retired church workers with special needs for help and to support students of color at schools and colleges related to the Presbyterian Church (USA). Special offering envelopes are available in the pews or you may mail your gift to the church office noting "Christmas Joy" in the memo line. For more information or to make your gift online, go to: <https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/offering/christmas-joy/> or https://bit.ly/IPC_ChristmasJoyOffering.

119 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

1 Hark! The her - ald an-gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king.
2 Christ, by high - est heaven a-dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3 Hail the heaven-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 the vir-gin's womb.
Light and life to all he brings, risen 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 we no more may die,

with the an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em-man - u - el.
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king!"

113 Angels We Have Heard on High

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 ti - dings be which in - spire your heaven - 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 - -

This French carol probably dates from the 1700s, though it was not printed until the following century. Because it uses a vernacular language for the narrative stanzas and Latin for the refrain, it belongs to a special category called "macaronic" or mixed-language texts.

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

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming 129

1 Lo, how a rose e'er bloom-ing from ten - der stem hath sprung,
 2 I - sa - iah 'twas fore - told it, the rose I have in mind;
 3 This flower, whose fra-grance ten - der with sweet-ness fills the air,

of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing, by faith - ful proph - ets sung.
 with Mar - y we be - hold it, the vir - gin moth - er kind.
 dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor the dark - ness ev - ery - where.

It came, a flower - et bright, a - mid the cold of
 To show God's love a - right she bore for us a
 En - fleshed, yet ver - y God, from sin and death he

win - ter, when half spent was the night.
 Sav - ior, when half spent was the night.
 saves us and light - ens ev - ery load.

Although the early copies of this 15th-century German text include many more stanzas than are printed here, this simpler, shorter form has much to commend it. This early 17th-century harmonization of the traditional chorale melody invites and rewards singing in parts.

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS
Student & Young Adult Lunch at *The Knick*

THIS Friday, December 27 at noon

The ministers and deacons will host a luncheon for Immanuel students and young adults who are home for break on Friday, December 27. If you are a college student or have one in your household, and haven't already responded, please email Rev. Ater (robertater@immanuelwi.org).

"CIRCLE OF CARING" GATHERING
NEXT Sunday, December 29 from 11:20 - noon
in the Upper Room Chapel

The last Sunday of the calendar year reminds us both of the transitions navigated in 2024 as well as the opportunities awaiting us in 2025. The past months have not always been easy. Many of us have experienced personal loss, the ending of a work career, or the move to a different home. The New Year will likely bring more change, including a new political administration and lingering uncertainty over the state of the world. Our faith can serve as a calming, steadying resource in seasons of transition. If you are open to a time of reflection, sharing, listening and prayer, please join the "Circle of Caring" conversation NEXT Sunday, December 29 from 11:20 until noon in the Upper Room Chapel. Contact Dr. Bush for more information (randybush@immanuelwi.org).

CHRISTMAS at IMMANUEL

The First Sunday of Christmas
Sunday, December 29 at 10:00 a.m.

Litany for Christmas

Christmas Carols – Bring a Bell to Ring!
Dedication of the Christmas Joy offering
Rev. Ater preaching

Epiphany Sunday
Sunday, January 5 at 10:00 a.m.
The Sacrament of Holy Communion
Dr. Bush preaching

WEEKLY CALENDAR & UPCOMING EVENTS

TONIGHT	8:00	Christmas Coffee Hour in the Parlor
December 25-26		Church Office Closed
December 27	noon	Student & Young Adult Lunch
December 29	10:00	Morning Worship ; Rev. Ater preaching <i>Bring a bell to ring!</i>
January 1		Church Office Closed



Bulletins returned to the tables in the Narthex will be recycled.



IMMANUEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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A congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Randall K. Bush	Interim Pastor
Robert W. Ater	Associate Pastor
Teresa A. Larson	Associate Pastor
Susan J. Stoll	Part-time Associate Pastor for spiritual care
Steven J. Jensen	Organist
John S. Komasa	Choir Director
Crystal Stinemates	Program and Office Administrator
Sarah Campbell	Financial Administrator
Nathan Wesselowski	Sexton
Deborah A. Block	Pastor Emerita
William H. Johnstone	Pastor Emeritus
Jean Dow	Associate Pastor Emerita
James C. Fisher	Parish Associate
Sister Karlyn Cauley	Ecumenical Associate

This depiction of the angels awakening the shepherds to tell of the Christ child's birth comes from the noted artist James He Qi, who studied at the Nanjing University and Hamburg Art Institute, and is currently the artist-in-residence at Fuller Theological Seminary (CA). It shows the angel telling the shepherds, "Be not afraid, for behold I bring you good news of great joy for all the people" (Luke 2:10)