**Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church**

**Sunday, December 29, 2024  
Lessons and Carols for Christmas**

**First Sunday of Christmas**

Welcome visitors! We have a weekly email update you can join to be notified about upcoming events (aageorge27@sbcglobal.net), as well as a website (www.sov-lc.org) and a Facebook presence.

Normal print indicates Worship Leader

L: indicates Lay Reader

**Bold** indicates congregational response

\*Those in the sanctuary are invited to stand

**GATHERING**

**PRELUDE: "O How Joyfully!" Arranged by Cindy Berry and "English Coventry Carol" Arranged by Teresa Wilhelmi**

**Worship Announcements and Prayer concern sharing**

**Ringing of the church bell**

**\*GATHERING SONG “Joy to the World” ELW #267**

**Joy to the World (Harmony).tif**

**\*DIALOGUE**

Jesus, the bright Morning Star, shines light in the world.

**By day and night he shines for all to see.**

Jesus was born in the midst of injustice and poverty

**that the world may see the justice and richness of God.**

God so loved the world that God sent Jesus,

**so that all who believe in him may not perish but have eternal life.**

Jesus is the light of the world.

**Jesus is the light of our lives.**

Sing to God a new song!

**A song of hope, joy, and peace around the world.**

**\*OPENING PRAYER**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Dear People of God: In this Christmas season, let it be our duty and delight to hear once more the message of the angels, to go to Bethlehem, and see the Son of God lying in a manger. Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of God’s loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against Him until the glorious redemption brought to us by His Holy Child Jesus, and let us make this place glad with our carols of praise. And because He particularly loved them, let us remember the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry, and the oppressed, the sick and those who mourn, the lowly and unloved, the aged and little children, as well as those who do not know or love the Lord Jesus Christ. Finally, let us remember before God His pure and lowly Mother, and that whole multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh and with whom, in Jesus, we are forever more. The Almighty God bless us with His grace; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life; and to the fellowship of the citizens above, may the King of Angels bring us all.

**Amen**

**WORD**

**FIRST READING: Genesis 1:1–5, 14–18**

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, 2the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. 3Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. 5God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. 14And God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, 15and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth." And it was so. 16God made the two great lights — the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night — and the stars. 17God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, 18to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.

**\*FIRST CAROL “’Twas in the Moon of Wintertime” ELW #284**

'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime (Melody).tif

**SECOND READING: Micah 5:2–5a**

2But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. 3Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. 4And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; 5and he shall be the one of peace.

**\*SECOND CAROL “Once in Royal David's City”  ELW #269**

**Once in Royal David's City (Harmony).tif**

**THIRD READING: Luke 1:26–35, 38**

26In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, 27to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." 29But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. 30The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. 32He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. 33He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." 34Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I

am a virgin?" 35The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. 38Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

**\*THIRD CAROL “The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came” ELW #265**

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came (Melody).tif

**FOURTH READING: Matthew 1:18–25**

18Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. 19Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. 20But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." 22All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 23"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means, "God is with us." 24When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, 25but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

**\*FOURTH CAROL “That Boy-Child of Mary” ELW #293**

**That Boy-Child of Mary (Melody).tif**

**FIFTH READING: Luke 2:8–20**

8In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: 11to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. 12This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." 13And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 14"Glory to God in the highest heaven,and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" 15When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." 16So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. 17When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; 18and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. 19But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. 20The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

**\*FIFTH CAROL “On Christmas Night” ELW #274**

**On Christmas Night (Melody).tif**

**SIXTH READING: Matthew 2:1–11**

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, 2asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." 3When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; 4and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. 5They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 6'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" 7Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. 8Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." 9When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. 10When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. 11On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

**\*SIXTH CAROL “In the Bleak Midwinter” ELW #294**

**In the Bleak Midwinter (Harmony).tif**

**\*GOSPEL READING: Matthew 2:13-23**

13Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” 14Then Josephgot up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, 15and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.” 16When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. 17Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: 18“A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.” 19When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 20“Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” 21Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. 22But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. 23There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazorean.”

**\*SEVENTH CAROL “Love Has Come” ELW #292**

Love Has Come (Melody).tif

**\*RESPONSIVE PRAYER**

It is you, loving God, who lights our path with truth.

**Your Word, Jesus, is truth.**

In his light, draw all to the manger

**to gather in wonder with the shepherds.**

In his light, draw all to the manger

**to kneel in reverence with the wise ones.**

In his light, draw all to the manger

**to sing for joy with the angels.**

In the brightness of his life

**cast away the darkness of injustice, poverty,** **and hunger in the world.**

It is you, loving God, who meets us on our way.

**In the light of Jesus, show the world the way of life. Amen.**

**SILENT PRAYER**

Please be seated for a short time of silent prayer.

**\*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

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

*A brief silence.*

**L:** For those who teach and those who learn, we pray. Bless the education ministries of our church. Guide Sunday school teachers, college and seminary professors, and Bible study leaders in our ongoing faith formation and curiosity. God of grace, **receive our prayer**.

**L:** For the thriving of creation, we pray. Protect the habitats of pangolins and porcupines, penguins and parrots, and all wild animals and creeping things. Increase our knowledge of the natural world and the care of its inhabitants. God of grace, **receive our prayer**.

**L:** For the nations of the world, we pray. Raise up rulers who lead with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Let your peace rule in their hearts and in all lands, especially the Middle east and Ukraine. God of grace, **receive our prayer**.

**L:** For the well-being of your people, we pray. Keep watch over all who travel this holiday season. Accompany those who are alone or ill. Console parents and children whose relationships are strained or severed. God of grace, **receive our prayer**.

**L:** For the ministry of Shepherd of the Valley, we pray. Let the word of Christ dwell among us. In times of conflict, clothe us in love and move us to forgiveness. God of grace, **receive our prayer**.

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

**L:** For your holy, beloved, and chosen ones of every time and place, we give thanks. Draw us all into everlasting praise and joy. God of grace, **receive our prayer**.

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.

**\*SHARING OF THE PEACE**

**\*THE LORD’S PRAYER**

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| **Our Father in heaven,**  **hallowed be your name,**  **your kingdom come,**  **your will be done,**  **on earth as in heaven.**  **Give us today our daily bread.**  **Forgive us our sins**  **as we forgive those**  **who sin against us.**  **Save us from the time of trial**  **and deliver us from evil.**  **For the kingdom, the power,**  **and the glory are yours,**  **now and forever. Amen.** | **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.** |

**SENDING**

**\*BLESSING AND DISMISSAL**

Let us bless the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels,

the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ Child. Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!

**Praise God, all creatures here below!**

You are the shepherds telling the story.

**We tell it in the streets and across the land.**

You are the wise ones worshiping with thanksgiving.

**We worship with gifts of song and service, talents and treasures.**

You are the angels announcing peace in a world of violence.

**We live with joy and go now in peace.**

Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

**\*SENDING SONG “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice” ELW #288**

**Good Christian Friends, Rejoice (Harmony).tif**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**POSTLUDE: "Good Christian Men, Rejoice/He is Exalted" Arranged by Phillip Keveren**

*Please make your way downstairs to enjoy a time of fellowship with refreshments!*