

# Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

*(The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod)*



## "The Good News of Christmas"

**Order of Worship December 21, 2025 | 10:00 AM**

**Rev. Dr. Matthew Cephus**

**3014 McKinley Street NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418  
612-781-1989**

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**Pianist: Karrie Kikeh**

# Welcome to God's House!

*The Mission of Gloria Dei is Caring. Sharing. Serving. Reaching.*

*We strive to be the local church in the community of Northeast Minneapolis, who are here to help people come to KNOW Jesus, GROW in their faith and GO into the world equipped to SERVE others. GLORY TO GOD!*

**Today's Topic:** The season of Advent reminds us of Christ "The Rescuer" of all mankind who came to save us from the hopeless situation we were in. God did not stay in heaven; He came down to where we are.

*A special welcome to visitors and guests; we are pleased that you have joined us today! If you have no church family, and if we can be of any assistance to you, please speak with the Pastor after the service or via the church office. We pray you will feel God's love for you and be empowered to live as God's child this week. We look forward to seeing you again.*

***Is there something you'd like us to pray for today?*** If you have family members or friends who require our prayers, please use the prayer request cards found in each pew. They will be added to the Prayer list. You can hand your request to an usher before the service or during the offering. They will be given to the Pastor to be included in the prayers for today. ***Other prayer requests can be made by contacting the church office at 612.781.1989.***

***Children are welcome in worship!***

***The Lord's Supper is celebrated.***

When we receive the true Body and Blood of Jesus Christ,

- we express the belief that Jesus is the Son of God and Son of Man;
- that Jesus is our Savior and only way for salvation;
- that Jesus offers us His Body and Blood in a mysterious yet real way;
- that Christ's sacrificial death grants the forgiveness of our sins;
- and that God is strengthening us in this Sacrament to live a more godly life and to amend with the help of the Holy Spirit, those areas not in conformity with God's will.

We declare these statements because it is our concern for people to not be hypocritical between their faith and celebrate the blessings of God's Table at the Altar.



# The Fourth Sunday of Advent

**AS WE GATHER:** Remember that JESUS is the reason for the season, and YOU are the reason for which He came.

+ *CONNECT* +

## WELCOME

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Lighting of Advent Candle (Week 4) – LOVE**

**Morelli's**

## OPENING SONG

**"Joy to the World"**

**LSB 387**

*Text & Tune: Public domain*

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her 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 men their songs employ,  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make His blessings flow  
Far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found  
Far as, far as, the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove  
The glories of His righteousness  
And wonders of His love, and wonders of His love,  
And wonders, wonders, of His love.

## INVOCATION

- L: Our worship begins the way our lives in Christ begin in baptism: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C: **Amen.**

## CONFESSION OF OUR SINS

- L: Let us confess our sins to God our Heavenly Father who truly loves us.
- C: **God of mercy, in your gracious presence we confess our sin and the sin of this world. Although Christ is among us as our peace, we are a people divided against ourselves as we cling to the values of a broken world. Lord, have mercy upon us; heal and forgive us for not worshipping you as we should. Forgive us for not being tender-hearted and compassionate. Cleanse us of our pride and stubbornness in Jesus' name. Amen.**

## FORGIVENESS IS ANNOUNCED

+ *NURTURE* +

## SONG OF PRAISE

### "Silent Night"

**LSB 363**

*Text & Tune: Public Domain*

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.

## 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 shone. 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: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God!**

### **EPISTLE READING**

**Galatians 4:4-7**

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God!**

### **HOLY GOSPEL**

**Matthew 1:18-23**

L: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

C: **Glory to You, O Lord!**

#### ***The Birth of Jesus Christ***

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).

L: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

C: **Praise to You, O Christ!**

## **HYMN OF THE DAY**

## **"Angels We Have Heard on High"**

**LSB 368**

*Text & Tune: Public Domain*

Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains;  
And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.  
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be; Which inspire your heav'nly song?  
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see, Him whose birth the angels sing;  
Come adore on bended knee, Christ the Lord, the newborn King.  
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

## **MESSAGE**

## **"The Good News of Christmas"**

**Rev. Dr. Matthew Cephus**

## **CONFESSION OF FAITH: Apostles' Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## **GATHERING OF THE OFFERINGS**

*+ EMPOWER +*

## **PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**

*(Prayer response – P: Lord, in your mercy, C: Hear our 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.**

## **PREFACE TO HOLY COMMUNION**

**L:** The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

**L:** Lift up your hearts.

**C: We lift them to the Lord.**

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

**C: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

## **PROPER PREFACE**

**L:** It is our duty and delight at all times and everywhere to give thanks to You, O Lord, Holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for You have enlightened us by the working of the Holy Spirit. Grant that the Spirit, who has called and gathered us, would guide us in all things, that we be enabled to speak the Gospel to others and rejoice in sharing the gift of salvation that is our treasure. This we ask through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who, with You and the Holy Spirit, is one God, through whom with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name.

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take this, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the New Testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C: And also with you, Amen.**

## **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

**P:** Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy, You would strengthen us through the same, in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C:** **Amen.**

## **CLOSING HYMN**

### **"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"**

**LSB 803**

*Text & Music: Public Domain*

Joyful, joyful we adore Thee, God of glory, Lord of love!  
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before Thee, Praising Thee, their sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, drive the gloom of doubt away.  
Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day.

All Thy works with joy surround Thee, earth and heav'n reflect Thy rays,  
Stars and angels sing around Thee, center of unbroken praise.  
Field and forest, vale and mountain, flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,  
Chanting bird, and flowing fountain call us to rejoice in Thee.

Always giving and forgiving, Ever blessing, ever blest,  
Well-spring of the joy of living, Ocean-depth of happy rest!  
Loving Father, Christ our Brother, Let Your light upon us shine;  
Teach us how to love each other, Lift us to the joy divine.

Mortals, join the mighty chorus, Which the morning stars began;  
God's own love is reigning o'er us, Joining people hand in hand.  
Ever singing, march we onward, Victors in the midst of strife;  
Joyful music leads us sunward In the triumph song of life.

## **BENEDICTION**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

*+ Silent Prayer +*

## **POSTLUDE**

# + WE DEPART TO SERVE +

+ + +

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## **OUR WEEKLY CALENDAR**

<b>12/21 Sun</b>		<b>Fourth Sunday in Advent</b>
	<b>10:00 am</b>	<b>Worship Service w/Holy Communion w/Pastor Matthew Cephus</b>
	11:45 am	Royal Family Worship
	6:00 pm	NA
<b>12/22 Mon</b>	7:00 pm	Beginners AIAnon (downstairs)
	7:00 pm	AIAnon (upstairs)
<b>12/24 Wed</b>	<b>5:00 pm</b>	<b>Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Children's Program (joint with Royal Family) w/Pastor Matthew Cephus</b>
<b>12/25 Thurs</b>	<b>10:00 am</b>	<b>Christmas Day Service w/Holy Communion w/Pastor Matthew Cephus</b>
<b>12/26 Fri</b>	5:00 pm	Living Word Music Rehearsal
<b>12/27 Sat</b>	10:00 am	Living Word Worship & Fellowship
	6:00 pm	Living Word Prayer Night
<b>12/28 Sun</b>		<b>First Sunday after Christmas</b>
	<b>10:00 am</b>	<b>Worship Service w/Holy Communion w/Pastor Matthew Cephus</b>
	11:45 am	Royal Family Worship
	6:00 pm	NA

## **SERVING TODAY**

**Elder: Karmon Christopherson**

**Reading: Julie Cross**

**Ushers: Dale Raschke and Wade Billmeyer**

**Altar Care: The Morelli's**

**Counters: Dale Raschke and Wade Billmeyer**

**Attendance: 12/14/2024: 22**

**BIRTHDAYS:** None  
**ANNIVERSARIES:** None

**ETERNAL CANDLE:** Shirley Holzinger – In Memory of Rudy and Greg  
**FLOWERS:** Open

### **PRAYER CONCERNS**

**KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS:** Karmon & Meridel Christopherson, Tom Farrell, Robert & Dolores Kluwe, Al Morelli, Roselyn Norman, Larry Schlais, Pat Scott, Alec Schwandt and all our shut-ins

**Jennifer** (Amy Rich's sister) recently treated for breast cancer, recovering

**Danielle Ohnstad** continued prayers as she struggles with breast cancer

**Marie Padmore** (Roselyn's sister) prayers for positive test results

**Aaron Morelli** upcoming testing

**Pastor Martin Cornes'** father-in-law, Dan, recently diagnosed with cancer; has undergone surgery. He is now staying in a transitional care facility; discussions regarding future treatment options are forthcoming

**Roger Kropelniki** (Ken Biebighauser's BnL) underwent esophagus surgery and is suffering from lung issues

**Karen Charpentier** (Ken Biebighauser's sister) going through cancer treatment

**Diane Sharbono** undergoing cancer treatment

**Dorie** (Shirley Holzinger's sister-in-law) addressing unexpected issues.

**Roxie Johnson** (Morelli's niece) heart issues (pacemaker), prayers as she gets stronger

**Kim Morelli and Amy Rich** (Morelli's DnLs) continued prayers for good health after cancer treatments

**Mudy Mason** dealing with an autoimmune disease. Pray for strength, peace, hope, believing in God, Family, Mindset.

**James Norman, Sr.** (James' dad) Continued prayers, prostate cancer seems to be getting worse, he is having increasing pain and decreased mobility

**Nonie Wakeman** (Shirley Slagle's SnL) diagnosed with Lung Cancer

**Karen** (Karmon's sister) Recently diagnosed with cancer (Warren's wife)

**Kurt Nowacki** (Bruce & Julie Cross' Brother-in-Law) recently diagnosed with 'myopathy,' a degenerative muscle disease

**Bruce** (Wenda Schwoch's BnL) has stage 4 prostate cancer and **Ashley** (Wenda's niece) continued prayers

**Warren** (Karmon's BnL) continued prayers as he continues treatment for Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma

**Amy Price** (Morelli's niece) dealing with continued health concerns

**For First Responders/Health Care Workers**, including James Norman, an ICU nurse

**THOSE SERVING OUR COUNTRY IN DANGEROUS AREAS**

## **TODAY'S LUTHERAN HOUR**

**December 21**

**"Everybody Is Somebody"**

**Romans 1:7**

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

God sends His people—the Church—to be His letters to the world, delivering His Word of promise.

## **NEXT WEEK ON THE LUTHERAN HOUR**

**December 28**

**"Get Ready for the Best"**

**Luke 12:36-37**

Guest Speaker: Rev. Germán Novelli Oliveros

Christ will return—maybe this year, maybe even today! Pastor German Novelli helps us to prepare for the blessings and challenges of a new year.

On Sunday mornings, listen on 830 AM WCCO AM at 6:05 am, or 1110 AM, Omaha, at 6:30 am, or XM 170 Satellite Radio on Sundays at noon or listen anytime at [www.lutheranhour.org](http://www.lutheranhour.org)

**STEWARDSHIP:** *Advent 4 - Philippians 4:4*

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice." Life was no easier for the Philippians than it is for us. They had the same sorrows, sicknesses, and disappointments as we have. And yet St. Paul tells them to rejoice in the Lord. We have an abiding joy, a peace which passes all understanding, because we know our Lord Jesus and His love for us. This gives us confidence in the face of every hardship; it gives us strength to lead lives in imitation of Jesus' own generous love.

## **LUTHERANS FOR LIFE:**

"As we celebrate the birth of our Lord, let us pray for all mothers who find themselves pregnant and afraid. Abortion is never the answer. We pray daily that the Lord will strengthen all expectant mothers who find themselves alone and seemingly without hope and that He will help them choose life. Every human being's life is a precious and beautiful miracle." *Judie Brown, American Life League – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • [lutheransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org)*

**Main Street Living** airs each Sunday at 9 am on WFTC Channel 29/9-2 with an episode of *This Is the Life*. This week's episode is **"Christmas on Main Street."** The Christmas message at a mission brings a grandson and his grandfather together. The worship service begins at 9:30 am with Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison, President of the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, presenting a Christmas message. This program is interpreted and closed-captioned for the deaf and hard of hearing. For more information or to watch the program, go to [www.mainstreetliving.com](http://www.mainstreetliving.com) select the "Twin Cities" tab.

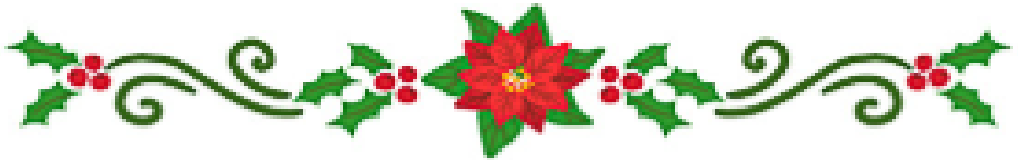
## Gloria Dei Invites You to Join Our Christmas Services

### Christmas Eve Candlelight Service:

December 24 at 5 pm, this joint service with Royal Family will include a short children's program

### Christmas Day Service:

December 25 at 10 am with Holy Communion



**January - March 2026 Portals or Prayer available at the back of the Church. Help yourself!**

### Holiday Gift Basket Delivered!

The Social Ministry Committee assembled Holiday Gift baskets, filled with fruit, treats and goodies. Ten baskets were delivered to our dear shut-ins. Each basket also received a handwritten card with holiday greetings and well wishes.



*The toys and gifts were delivered to the Salvation Army on Wednesday, December 10<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to everyone's generosity, Gloria Dei was able to donate \$623 worth of toys and gifts. Also to note, GDLC recently donated 90 pounds of food to their Food Shelf and in November, 21 backpacks we donated for their after school program. Wow!*

### *Immaculate Conception Pancake Breakfasts*

Enjoy a breakfast of sausage, potatoes, eggs, pancakes and beverages on **Sunday, December 21**. Breakfast is served downstairs in the Fellowship Hall from **8:30-11:30 am**. Adults \$13, ages 5-12 \$7, ages 4 and under free. Credit and debit cards accepted. All proceeds benefit Immaculate Conception Church, 4030 Jackson Street NE.