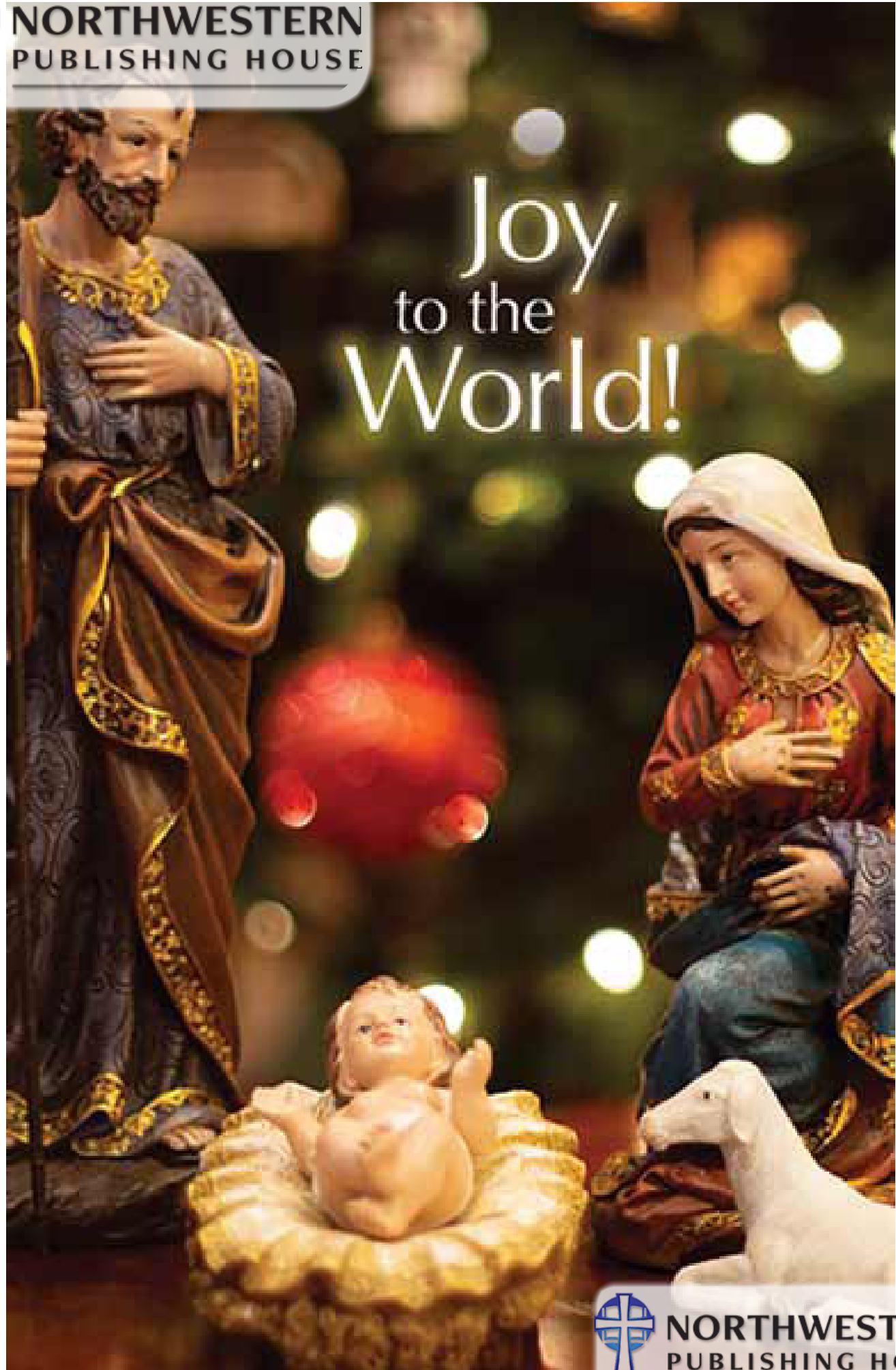


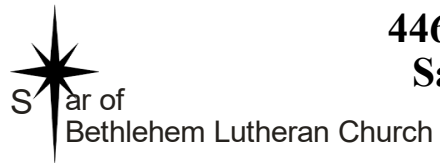


**NORTHWESTERN
PUBLISHING HOUSE**

Joy
to the
World!



**NORTHWESTERN
PUBLISHING HOUSE**



4465 South Blosser Road
Santa Maria, CA 93455
Office: 805-937-0339
www.starlutheran.org
Pastor Michael Foley

Worship Service

Monday, December 25, 2023 10:00 a.m.

CHRISTMAS DAY

Thought for the day: God's Word for us this day raises us up above the cute and the trite and the trivial; for so many people that is all that Christmas is about. But there is nothing trite or trivial in what has happened today: The deepest lowliness is but the mask for the greatest glory — the glory of him who came to be our Savior!

WELCOME

A warm welcome to our friends and visitors! Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church is eager to share with you the blessings of its Christ-centered ministry. If you are a new or long-time resident of the Central Coast looking for a church home, we invite you to meet with us at the close of this worship service or at your convenience. All are welcome to stay for refreshments in the fellowship hall.

Families are encouraged to worship together. If you need to step out with your children, the service can be seen and heard in the fellowship hall or narthex area. Feel free to enter and return at any time.

OUR MISSION

Our congregation exists for the purpose of "HOLDING OUT THE WORD OF LIFE." This is accomplished by faithfully preserving and proclaiming all of God's inerrant word, and administering the Sacraments as they were instituted by Christ.

OPENING HYMN: Psalm 84

Refrain



Let us go re-joic - ing to the house of the Lord.

Psalm tone



How lovely is your dwelling place,*
O LORD Almighty!

My soul yearns, even faints,*
for the courts of the LORD.

Blessed are those who dwell in your house;*
they are ever praising you.

Refrain

Better is one day in your courts*
than a thousand elsewhere;

I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God*
than dwell in the tents of the wicked.

O LORD Almighty,*
blessed are they who trust in you.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Refrain

Please stand as you are able:

Minister: We begin this Christmas Day service in the name of the only true God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Congregation: **We proclaim the greatness of the Lord, for he has looked with favor on the humble state of his people.**

M: We are in the presence of the true and living God, before whom all angels veil their faces and bow in humble adoration.

C: **We acknowledge his glory as the only true God, and we offer to him the praise of our hearts and our lips.**

M: Let all the earth stand in awe of our God, who has visited and redeemed his people.

C: **Blessing and honor and glory and power be to our God forever and ever! Amen.**

(Introduction is played, and then congregation sings:)

♪ **Come from on high to me; I cannot rise to thee.
Cheer my wearied spirit, O pure and holy Child;
thro' thy grace and merit, blest Jesus, Lord most mild,
draw me unto thee! Draw me unto thee!**

M: Beloved in the Lord! In the beauty of this glorious celebration of our Savior's birth, our sins against a pure and holy God are still evident. Let us come before Him to make confession and be assured of His forgiveness.

C: **Be gracious to me, God, according to your mercy. Erase my acts of rebellion according to the greatness of your compassion. Scrub me clean from my guilt. Purify me from my sin. For I admit my rebellious acts. My sin is always in front of me.**

M: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the miraculous birth, the perfect life and the innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

C: *(Spoken)* **Amen**

♪ **Now through his Son doth shine the Father's grace divine.
Death was reigning o'er us through sin and vanity
till he opened for us a bright eternity.
May we praise him there! May we praise him there!**

PRAYER FOR THE DAY:

All: Almighty God, we thank you for the birth of your Son in the flesh that sets us free from our old bondage under the yoke of sin and the law. Give us your Holy Spirit to help us rejoice in the peace you have provided for us. We ask this in the name of our Savior who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit as one God, now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated.

HYMN: “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (CW #333:1,2)

**♪ O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**

**For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wond’ring love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King and peace to all the earth.**

OLD TESTAMENT READING: Micah 5:2-5

**²But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
from you, will go out the one who will be the ruler for me
in Israel.**

**His goings forth are from the beginning,
from the days of eternity.**

**³Therefore the LORD will give them up,
until the time when the woman who is in labor bears a child.
Then the remaining survivors from his brothers will return to
the people of Israel.**

**⁴He will stand and shepherd with the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
They will dwell securely, for at that time he will be great to the
ends of the earth.**

⁵This one will be their peace.

HYMN: “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (CW #333:3,4)

♪ **How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv’n!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav’n.
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.**

**O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Immanuel!**

PRAYER

HYMN: “From Heaven Above to Earth I Come” (CW 331:1,3,4)

♪ **“From heav’n above to earth I come
to bear good news to ev’ry home;
glad tidings of great joy I bring,
whereof I now will say and sing:**

**“This is the Christ, our God most high,
who hears your sad and bitter cry;
he will himself your Savior be
from all your sins to set you free.**

**“He will on you the gifts bestow
prepared by God for all below,
that in his kingdom, bright and fair,
you may with us his glory share.”**

EPISTLE READING: Galatians 4:4-7

⁴But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son to be born of a woman, so that he would be born under the law, ⁵in order to redeem those under the law, so that we would be adopted as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts to shout, “*Abba, Father!*” ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but a son. And if you are a son, then you are also an heir of God through Christ.

HYMN: “From Heaven Above to Earth I Come” (CW 331:9,14,15)

♪ Ah, Lord, though you created all,
how weak you are, so poor and small,
that you should choose to lay your head
where lowly cattle lately fed!

My heart for very joy must leap;
my lips no more can silence keep.
I, too, must sing with joyful tongue
that sweetest ancient cradle song:

Glory to God in highest heaven,
who unto us his Son has given,
while angels sing with pious mirth
a glad new year to all the earth!

PRAYER

HYMN: “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” (CW # 350:1,2)

♪ Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;
peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;
with th’ angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

Christ, by highest heav’n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, hail th’ incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel!
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

GOSPEL READING: Luke 2:13,14

¹³Suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude from the heavenly army, praising God and saying, ¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward mankind.”

HYMN: “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” (CW # 350:3)

**♪ Hail, the heav’nly Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, ris’n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that man no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth,
born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”**

CONFESSION OF FAITH

We believe, teach, and confess that God’s Son from eternity has been a particular, distinct, entire, divine person. Yet He is true, essential, perfect God with the Father and the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time He received also the human nature into the unity of His person. He did not do this in such a way that there are now two persons or two Christs. Christ Jesus is now in one person at the same time true, eternal God, born of the Father from eternity, and a true man, born of the most blessed Virgin Mary.

We believe, teach, and confess that now, in this one undivided person of Christ, there are two distinct natures: the divine, which is from eternity, and the human, which in time was received into the unity of the person of God’s Son. These two natures in the person of Christ are never either separated from or mingled with each other. Nor are they changed into each other. Each one abides in its nature and essence in the person of Christ to all eternity.

On account of this personal union and communion of the natures, Mary, the most blessed Virgin, did not bear a mere man. But, as the angel testifies, she bore a man who is truly the Son of the most high God. He did all his miracles by the power of this personal union. For example: In death, when He died not simply as any other man, but in and with His death conquered sin, death, devil, hell, and eternal damnation.

Now He has ascended to heaven. He also truly fills all things, being present everywhere, not only as God, but also as man. Since in the Holy Scriptures Christ is called a mystery upon which all heretics dash their heads, we admonish all

Christians not to arrogantly indulge their reason in crafty investigations about such mysteries. They should simply believe, and rejoice without ceasing in the fact that our flesh and blood is placed so high at the right hand of God's majesty and almighty power. In this way we will certainly find constant consolation in every difficulty and remain well guarded against deadly error. (Formula of Concord, Article VIII)

OFFERING

PRAYER:

All: Gracious God, we celebrate this day of our Lord's birth as the fulfillment of your promise of redemption from sin. We welcome you, Jesus, as the Savior of the world and the Lord of our hearts, who now lives and rules with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER:

♪ (Tune of "Away in a Manger" CW #341)

**Our Father in heaven, all praise to Your name!
Your kingdom among us, Your will done the same
By mortals and angels, Come, Lord, reign alone;
Oh, hear us and bless us from heaven's high throne.**

**The bread that we yearn for, provide us each day;
As we forgive others, our sins take away;
In time of temptation, to lead us, be near;
From evil deliver Your children most dear.**

**For Yours is the kingdom, o'er all things You reign.
And Yours is the power; all things You maintain.
To You be the glory, resounding again
From all of creation, forever! Amen.**

♪ Song: The Benediction (“Adeste Fidelis” *CW*, # 354)

M: The Lord bless and keep you,
Look with love upon you,
Be gracious, and cause his face
To shine with peace.

C: **Glory to Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
The Savior close beside us,
God’s love from harm to hide us,
The Spirit’s pow’r to guide us
Evermore.**

CLOSING HYMN: “Joy to the World” (*CW* 353:1,2,4)

**♪ 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.**

**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.**

Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

- 2 Corinthians 9:15



- † **Please feel free to take a poinsettia home with you.**
- † **BIBLE STUDY** every Sunday at 9:00 before worship;
also Thursdays at 10:00.
- † **WORSHIP SERVICE** is at 10:00 a.m. on Sundays.
- † **Our Worship services are streamed and archived at:**
starlutheran.org



www.starlutheran.org