

**Welcome to Christ Lutheran Church & Preschool
January 5, 2025**

Second Sunday of Christmas

Rev. Paul Pfeffer

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Member of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
(*ELCA* – www.elca.org)



All Are Welcome – All the Time!

You do not need to be a member of this church or Lutheran to participate in any part of worship.

If you wish to take communion, we ask that you desire a relationship with Jesus.

His body and blood were given and shed for you.



Christ Lutheran Church & PreSchool is a community committed to the work of equity and inclusion, bringing justice and support for all of God's beloveds. We welcome those who are seeking God's love and grace for the first time or as a life-long believer. We welcome because Jesus shows us how to welcome, regardless of race, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, economic resources, relationship status, health challenges or anything else that too often divides us. It is in our welcome which we commit ourselves to being an anti-racist space, a space where we seek daily to deepen our work of inclusion in the life of our church. Our unity is in Christ. All are welcome here.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & SHARING OF PRAYER CONCERNS

By Kathy Davis, who will provide updated Prayers of Intercession

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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

– Silence for reflection –

Most merciful God,

We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves.

**We have sinned against you in thought, word and deed,
by what we have done and what we have left undone.**

We have not loved you with our whole heart.

We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.

For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ have mercy on us.

**Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may
delight in your will and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together in Christ. By grace we have been saved. In the name of + Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven.

Almighty God strengthen us with power through the Holy Spirit that Christ may live in our hearts. **Amen.**

SONG: O Come All Ye Faithful, ELW #283 (vs 1 & 2)

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!

O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;

Come and behold him, born the king of angels:

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,

O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

The highest, most holy, light of light eternal;

Born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;

Son of the Father, now in flesh appearing!

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,

O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and
the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you. **And also with you!**

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. **Amen.**

READING – Jeremiah 31:7-14

For 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.”

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. 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 where they shall not stumble, for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

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 does a flock. For the Lord has ransomed Jacob and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. 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.

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

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God

RESPONSIVE READING – Psalm 147:12-20

Extol the Lord, O Jerusalem!

Praise your God, O Zion!

For he strengthens the bars of your gates;
he blesses your children within you.

He grants peace within your borders;
he fills you with the finest of wheat.

He sends out his command to the earth;
his word runs swiftly.

He gives snow like wool;
he scatters frost like ashes.

He hurls down hail like crumbs –
who can stand before his cold?

He sends out his word and melts them;
he makes his wind blow, and the waters flow.

He declares his word to Jacob,
his statutes and ordinances to Israel.

He has not dealt thus with any other nation;
they do not know his ordinances. Praise the Lord!

READING – Ephesians 1:3-14

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, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. 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, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. 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; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

– *Please stand as you are able* –

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (SUNG) – ELW 172

Halle, halle, halle – Iujah. Halle, halle, halle – Iujah.
Halle, halle, halle – Iujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah!

THE GOSPEL – John 1:10-18

The Holy Gospel according to John. **Glory to You, O Lord.**

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

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. (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.' ") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

The Gospel of our Lord. Praise to You, O Christ.

SERMON – Rev. Paul Pfeffer

SONG: Love Has Come, ELW #292

Printed on bulletin insert or in hymnal

Love has come – a light in the darkness!

Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.

See, all heaven has come to proclaim it:

Hear how their song of joy arises:

Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!

Love! Love! Glory to God on high.

Love is born! Come, share in the wonder.

Love is God now asleep in the hay.

See the glow in the eyes of his mother;

What is the name her heart is saying?

Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers;

Love! Love! Jesus, Immanuel.

Love has come, and never will leave us!

Love is life everlasting and free.

Love is Jesus within and among us.

Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.

Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas.

Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

APOSTLES' CREED

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,

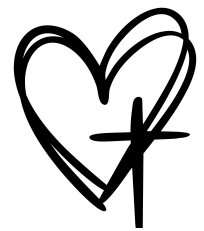
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

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.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION *(on separate sheet)*
God of grace... Receive our prayer.



PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. And also with you.
– *Please share a greeting or sign of peace* –

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks & praise.**



WORDS OF INSTITUTION *(not printed/Presider's book on altar)*

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION AT THE FRONT

All are welcome to receive the Real Presence of Christ in the bread and wine of Holy Communion. You do not need to be a member of this church or Lutheran to receive the sacrament. We ask that you desire a relationship with Jesus Christ. Those who are interested will be invited by an usher to come up the center aisle to the front to select a single-serving Communion kit from the tray, or to receive a blessing. Then return to your seat via the side aisle to open the kit and partake in Communion. An usher will offer a basket to collect the container. *For those worshipping at home, please consider joining in Holy Communion by taking a bit of bread or cracker and a sip of wine or juice. All are welcome.*

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

BENEDICTION

May the Lord bless you and keep you.
May the Lord's face shine on you and be gracious to you.
May the Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.
In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

SONG: Hark the Herald Angels Sing, ELW #270

Printed on bulletin insert or in hymnal

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild; God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful all you nations, rise; Join the triumph of the skies;
With angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Christ by highest heat'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, incarnate diety!
Please as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel!
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Hail the heav'n born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun or righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die;
Born to raise each child of earth; Born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. Thanks be to God!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Christmas Un-Decorating** – We plan to take down the Christmas Tree next week – on **Sunday, January 12**. Thank you for any help. It goes very quickly with just a few hands to help.
- **Congregation Meeting** – TBD but likely February 2 or 9 after Sunday worship. Materials will be provided prior. Thank you for making plans to participate – and let Lynn know if one day is better for you.
- **Thank You for the Gift Bags** – Holly and Theresa worked with the PreSchool and our congregation to create gift bags for approximately 60 children (and one puppy) served by Sue's Pantry here in Vernon Hills. Thank you for your generosity.
- **Supporting the Homeless** – Thank you to all who sent items for the camp near Pastor Pdraig's home in Chicago. There was so much we must send a second load. Thank you!
- **Caring Hands** – Saturday, January 18 from 9a to noon. Making prayer shawls, comfort blankets, hats/mittens. (CaringHandsVernonHills@gmail.com)
- **Donating to Storm/Fire Victims** – ELCA's Lutheran Disaster Response is one of the oldest, most effective and most respected organizations for getting money where it can be put to good use. Donate at ELCA.org.
- **Scouting!** – Boys and girls ages Kindergarten through high school have an opportunity to build skills and have fun through Scouting. Thanks for supporting our Pack and Troop!
- **PreSchool Prayers** – Keep the children, families and staff of our PreSchool in prayer.
- **Support for Anelly** – Our ministry partner Anelly, a young mother of two who has supported refugees in Chicago, has a recurrence of cancer and other challenges. Please lift her in prayer and consider supporting the Meal Train (HollySJ@earthlink.net).
- **Sue's Pantry** – Call for toilet paper! And anything needed to keep a home and family clean – dish soap, laundry detergent, body wash, shampoo.
- **Love INC** – Housewares, nonperishables and volunteers. Want to learn more? Have a family in need of a bundle of clothes or housewares? Give the details to Natalie she will get us covered! (Thanks, Natalie.) (<https://loveinclakecounty.org/>)
- **COOL Ministries** – We support the COOL pantry in Waukegan with non-perishables. Collection bins in hallway or give online. (CoolMinistries.org)
- **Prayer concerns?** Consider reaching out so that our network of Prayer Warriors can pray. You may remain anonymous. Email ChristLutheranVH@aol.com with your request.
- **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.** Your presence in worship is very important. Thank you for being part of this community of faith. If you would like to support our service, we welcome donations, which can be provided by credit card or Paypal through the link at the bottom of our webpage, ChristLutheranVH.org. Thank you!