



# LESSONS *and* CAROLS

“Helping others receive grace, purpose and direction by proclaiming Christ’s love.”

17 East 27<sup>th</sup> Street  
Scottsbluff, NE  
(308) 632-8023  
[calvarylutheranscottsbluff.org](http://calvarylutheranscottsbluff.org)

**Sunday Morning Worship**  
**10:00 a.m.**  
**December 31, 2023**

## First Sunday of Christmas A Service of Lessons and Carols

**A Warm Welcome** to all as we gather as God's people to worship our Lord. We pray our worship together would strengthen your faith and desire to know and serve the One who loves us with an everlasting love as made known to us in Jesus Christ.

*Visitors, if you are worshipping with us today, we are glad to have you with us.*

*(In preparation for our worship together, you are invited to take a moment of silence to offer your own prayers of worship and praise.)*

**KEY:** ELW and any page number = Worship hymnal (cranberry),  
OSB = Other Song Book (red), W&P = Worship & Praise (purple).

\* Indicates please stand if able. Congregational responses are printed in **BOLD** type.

### Prelude Music

### Welcome and Announcements

### Opening Dialogue

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

**The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness, on them light has shined.

**We have beheld Christ's glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.**

To us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

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

Jesus is the light of the world.

**In the Word was life, and the life was the light of all people.**

Hymn:

"The Bells of Christmas"

ELW # 298

vv. 1,4&6

1. The bells of Christmas chime once more;  
the heav'nly guest is at the door.  
He comes to earthly dwellings still  
with new year gifts of peace, good will.

**4. Oh, join with me, in gladness sing,  
to keep our Christmas with our king,  
until our song, from loving souls,  
like rushing mighty water rolls!**

**6. Come, Jesus, glorious heav'nly guest,  
and keep your Christmas in our breast;  
then David's harpstrings, hushed so long,  
shall swell our jubilee of song.**

**\*Prayer of the Day**

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

Let us pray. Almighty God, you have filled us with the new light of the Word who became flesh and lived among us. Let the light of our faith shine in all we do; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**First Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7**

<sup>2</sup> The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness —  
on them light has shined.

<sup>3</sup>You have multiplied the nation,  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.

<sup>4</sup>For the yoke of their burden,  
and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

<sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup>For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
<sup>7</sup>His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.  
He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onward and forevermore.  
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

**Hymn:**

**“Of The Father’s Love Begotten”**

**ELW # 295  
vv. 1&4**

**1. Of the Father's love begotten  
ere the worlds began to be,  
he is Alpha and Omega,  
he the source, the ending he,  
of the things that are, that have been,  
and that future years shall see,  
evermore and evermore.**

**4. Let the heights of heav'n adore him;  
angel hosts, his praises sing;  
pow'rs, dominions, bow before him  
and extol our God and King;  
let no tongue on earth be silent,  
ev'ry voice in concert ring  
evermore and evermore.**

**Second Reading: Micah 5:2-5a**

<sup>2</sup> But 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.

<sup>3</sup>Therefore 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.

<sup>4</sup>And 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;

<sup>5</sup>and he shall be the one of peace.  
If the Assyrians come into our land  
and tread upon our soil,  
we will raise against them seven shepherds  
and eight installed as rulers.

**Hymn:**

**“O Little Town of Bethlehem”**

**ELW # 279**

**1. 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.**

**2. 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!**

**3. 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.**

**4. 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;  
oh, come to us, abide with us,  
our Lord Immanuel!**

**Third Reading: Luke 1:26-35, 38**

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

<sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>The 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. <sup>38</sup>Then 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.

**Hymn:**

**“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming”**

**ELW #272  
vv. 1&4**

**1. Lo, how a rose e'er blooming  
from tender stem hath sprung!  
Of Jesse's lineage coming  
as seers of old have sung,  
it came, a flow'r so bright,  
amid the cold of winter,  
when half-spent was the night.**

**4. O Savior, child of Mary,  
who felt our human woe;  
O Savior, king of glory,  
who dost our weakness know:**

**bring us at length, we pray,  
to the bright courts of heaven  
and into endless day.**

**Fourth Reading: Luke 2:1-7**

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

**Hymn:**

**“From Heaven Above to Earth I Come”**

**ELW #268  
vv. 1-3**

- 1. "From heav'n above to earth I come  
to bear good news to ev'ry home!  
Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
to all the world, and gladly sing:"**
- 2. "To you this night is born a child  
of Mary, chosen virgin mild;  
this newborn child of lowly birth  
shall be the joy of all the earth."**
- 3. "This is the Christ, God's Son most high,  
who hears your sad and bitter cry,  
who will himself your Savior be  
and from all sin will set you free."**

**Fifth Reading: Luke 2:8-16**

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."

<sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

<sup>15</sup>When 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." <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

**Hymn:**

**"Angels, from the Realms of Glory"**

**ELW #275  
vv. 1&2**

**1. Angels, from the realms of glory,  
wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
once you sang creation's story,  
now proclaim Messiah's birth:  
Come and worship, come and worship,  
worship Christ, the newborn king.**

**2. Shepherds, in the fields abiding,  
watching o'er your flocks by night,  
God with us is now residing,  
yonder shines the infant light.  
Come and worship, come and worship,  
worship Christ, the newborn king.**

### **Sixth Reading: Luke 2:21-38**

<sup>21</sup>After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

<sup>22</sup>When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord <sup>23</sup>(as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), <sup>24</sup>and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

<sup>25</sup>Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. <sup>26</sup>It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. <sup>27</sup>Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, <sup>28</sup>Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

<sup>29</sup>"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word;



<sup>30</sup>for my eyes have seen your salvation,  
<sup>31</sup>which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,  
<sup>32</sup>a light for revelation to the Gentiles  
and for glory to your people Israel."

<sup>33</sup>And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. <sup>34</sup>Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed <sup>35</sup>so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed — and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

<sup>36</sup>There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, <sup>37</sup>then as a widow to the age of eighty- four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. <sup>38</sup>At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

**Hymn: "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly" ELW #276**

**Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall;  
oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the child is Lord of all.  
Swiftly winging, angels singing, bells are ringing, tidings bringing:  
Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!**

**Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new  
saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a gospel true.  
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing, greet the morrow:  
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!**

**Hymn: "It Came Upon A Midnight Clear" ELW #282  
vv. 1&3**

**1. It came upon the midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth  
to touch their harps of gold:  
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,  
from heav'n's all-gracious king."  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
to hear the angels sing.**

- 3. And you, beneath life's crushing load,  
whose forms are bending low,  
who toil along the climbing way  
with painful steps and slow:  
look now, for glad and golden hours  
come swiftly on the wing;  
oh, rest beside the weary road  
and hear the angels sing!**

## **The Offering & Hymn**

**Offertory Hymn:**

**“What Child Is This”**

**ELW #296**

- 1. What child is this, who, laid to rest,  
on Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet  
while shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the king,  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
haste, haste to bring him laud,  
the babe, the son of Mary!**
- 2. Why lies he in such mean estate  
where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here  
the silent Word is pleading.  
Nails, spear shall pierce him through,  
the cross be borne for me, for you;  
hail, hail the Word made flesh,  
the babe, the son of Mary!**
- 3. So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;  
come, peasant, king, to own him.  
The King of kings salvation brings;  
let loving hearts enthrone him.  
Raise, raise the song on high,  
the virgin sings her lullaby;  
joy, joy, for Christ is born,  
the babe, the son of Mary!**

*(Ushers bring forward the offerings of the Church on Verse 3)*

## **The Prayers of the Church**

Glory to God in the highest.

**and peace to God's people on earth.**

Blessed are you, Prince of peace.

You rule the earth with truth and justice.

**Send your gift of peace to all nations of the world.**

Blessed are you, Son of Mary.

You share our humanity.

**Have mercy on the sick, the dying, and all who suffer this day.**

Blessed are you, Son of God.

You dwell among us as the Word made flesh.

**Reveal yourself to us in the word and sacrament that we may bear you light to all the world.**

## **The 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.**

## **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.

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

**Amen.**

1. 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!"

*Refrain:* Hark! The herald angels sing,  
 "Glory to the newborn king!"

2. 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, incarnate deity!  
 Pleased as man with us to dwell,  
 Jesus, our Emmanuel! *Refrain*

3. Hail the heav'n-born 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 we no more may die,  
 born to raise each child of earth,  
 born to give us second birth. *Refrain*

## Postlude

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## In Our Thoughts and Prayers✝

Prayers for healing: **Ruth Harris** (recovery from a fall), **Jan Martin** (health problems—Susan Martin's relative), **David Pickett** (Healing—son of Virginia Pickett), **David Stevens** (recovering), **Joy Arnold** (Cancer), **Joni** (stage 4 cancer), **Aimee Roos** (colon cancer & critical kidney disease—Penny Stevens' nephew's wife), **Kathy Johnson** (health issues), **William Gibbs** (Cancer—brother of Larry Gibbs), **Vicki Schmidt** (cancer treatment), **Linda Spomer**, **Catherine Rahrs** (Val Rahrs' mother), **Patty** (cancer—Jim Dorn's sister-in-law).

Prayers for comfort and safety: **Jeffery Christeleit** (deployed—Brian & Jodi Christeleit's son and Jim & Sheila Miller's grandson).



Jack Schmidt 12/31; Kathrine Fulk, 1/1

If we have missed your birthday, please let the office know. Thanks.



### YOUR GIVING ONLINE

Scan the **QR code** to the right, go to our website: [www.calvarylutheranscottsbluff.org](http://www.calvarylutheranscottsbluff.org) and click on the **Give Online** button OR download the **Vanco Now App** on your smartphone. It's safe and secure.



### JANUARY FOOD DONATIONS REQUESTED

**FOOD PANTRY:** Cereal

**BACKPACKS:** 16oz Peanut butter

Containers are located outside Fellowship Hall.

Thanks for your generosity.



**Endowment Fund** application forms are now available in the office. These funds may be used for outreach: Churchwide, Nebraska Synod, and local. The deadline is January 31, 2024.



**JAM & EPIC on Christmas Break until  
January 10, 2024**



### Laundry Love

Calvary has partnered with St. Francis Episcopal Church and First Presbyterian Church to provide a monthly Laundry Love Event in our community. Calvary will host Laundry Love every 3rd month; our next event is January 20th. In preparation for that day we will need quarters as well as laundry detergent, dryer sheets and softener. So save your quarters and drop them in the Laundry Bottle outside the pastor's office.

## WORSHIP LEADERS

**PMA Bill Huelle**

**This Sunday – December 31**

**USHERS:** Rick & Lynn Margheim

**LAY READER:** Becky & Susan Martin

**POWERPOINT:** Maunette Loeks-Van Patten

**ACOLYTES:** Jack & Max Judy

**MEDIA:** Chris Jensen

**AUDIO:** Jeff Van Patten

**ALTAR GUILD:** Andi Dorn, Shelly Koehler

**PIANIST:** Dee Brady

**COFFEE & FELLOWSHIP:** *Please sign up!*

**Next Sunday – January 7**

**USHERS:** Kent & Dawn Holub

**LAY READER:** Jack Martin

**HEAD COMMUNION ASST:** Vicki Howell

**COMMUNION ASSTS:** Deb Brown & Marlene Downer

**POWERPOINT:** Andi Dorn

**ACOLYTES:** Merrick Walsh & DaKota Newsom

**MEDIA:** Jeff Van Patten

**AUDIO:** Jim Dorn

**ALTAR GUILD:** Abby Newsom, Maunette Loeks-Van Patten, Barb Jensen, Nannie Walsh

**ORGANIST:** Tahnee Hutchinson

**COFFEE & FELLOWSHIP:** *Please sign up!*

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Sunday, December 31**

10 a.m. – Worship

11 a.m. – Coffee & Fellowship

**Monday, January 1**

***Happy New Year's***

Office Closed

**Wednesday, January 3**

**NO JAM or Confirmation**

7p.m. – Choir Practice

**Thursday, January 4**

11:30 a.m. – Exec. Comm.

**Saturday, January 6**

5:30 p.m. – Worship

6:30 p.m. – Social Ministry Party

**Sunday, January 7**

10 a.m. – Worship

11 a.m. – Coffee & Fellowship

DECEMBER 31, 2023  
FIRST SUNDAY AFTER  
CHRISTMAS



*Praise God for salvation and all of creation.*

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS**

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Luke 2:22-40	Jesus presented in the temple
Monday	Isaiah 61:10—63:3	Rejoice in the Lord
Tuesday	Galatians 4:4-7	Adoption as God's children
Wednesday	Psalm 24	Entrance into the temple
Thursday	Romans 8:18-25	Future glory
Friday	Job 12:7-10	If you want to learn
Saturday	Psalm 148	All creation praises God
Sunday	Mark 1:4-11	The baptism of Jesus

**SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK**

*Let them [all parts of creation] praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven.*

Psalm 148:13 (NRSV)

**PRAYERS AND BLESSING**

**A Prayer for the Week:**

Creator God, help us to see how deep and wide your saving work for all creation is, a love that is seen most clearly through Jesus, the one born in Bethlehem. Amen.

**Mealtime Prayer:**

Dear God, with sheep and cattle and all creation, we thank you for feeding us each day with food from the earth and with your saving grace through Jesus. Amen.

**A Blessing to Give:**

May God give you and all creation peace through Jesus.

DECEMBER 31, 2023  
HYMN OF THE WEEK  
*Away in a Manger*

**WEEKLY MILESTONES**

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

**CARING CONVERSATIONS**

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What does creation care mean to you?
- How do you show praise to God for all that God has created?

**DEVOTIONS**

Read: Psalm 148.

Psalm 148 states that creation belongs to God, and God has promised creation a future forever (v. 6). Jesus being born in Bethlehem places creation front and center as part of the saving work of God. From angels to sun and moon to shining stars, from earth to sea monsters, from fire and hail to stormy winds, the list goes on and on to include all of creation as the recipients of God's saving work. God's saving grace is not just for humans. The Apostle Paul names this when he writes in Romans 8:21, "*creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay.*" What God has done in bringing us a Savior far exceeds all that we can imagine, even half of creation join us in praise to God. When we look through the verses in many Christmas hymns, we are reminded that creation is often part of the Christmas message. *Discuss:* How does Psalm 148 help you think anew about God's saving work in Christ? *Pray:* O God, our creator and redeemer, we thank you for your love that extends to all of creation through Jesus Christ, born to us in Bethlehem. Amen.

**SERVICE**

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, in what way can you show care for God's creation?

**RITUALS AND TRADITIONS**

When Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple, Simeon and Anna, prophets who had waited all their lives for Jesus, recognized him as the Promised One. Luke 2:29-32 is known as the *Nunc Dimittis*, Latin for "now let depart." This is Simeon's song of praise making it clear that God acted in a way that gives peace for all people. The words of Simeon's song are often used for evening worship. Write a list of words that give you peace. *Pray:* Loving God, we thank you for Simeon, Anna, and all those throughout history who have lifted-up Jesus as the hope and peace for all the world. Amen.



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