

# *FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS*

*DECEMBER 28, 2025*



*A SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS*

*St. James Lutheran Church*

*Rock Island, Illinois*

## WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS & PRELUDE

GATHERING SONG *Let All Together Praise Our God*

#287

## 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

Let us pray.

Gracious God of heaven and earth, you have thrown a lifeline to us in our darkness—a beam of light that shines through Jesus. Though born in a manger, he is the firstborn of all creation. Though crucified on a cross, he is the Lord of life. Fill us with the wonder and joy of his presence in the world and in our hearts. **Amen.**

## FIRST READING:

**Genesis 1:1–5, 14–18**

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, <sup>2</sup>the 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. <sup>3</sup>Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. <sup>4</sup>And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup>God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

<sup>14</sup>And 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, <sup>15</sup>and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth." And it was so. <sup>16</sup>God made the two great lights — the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night — and the stars. <sup>17</sup>God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, <sup>18</sup>to 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** *I Wonder as I Wander*

#642 *WOV*

**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.

**SECOND CAROL** *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

#279

**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.

**THIRD CAROL** *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* #272

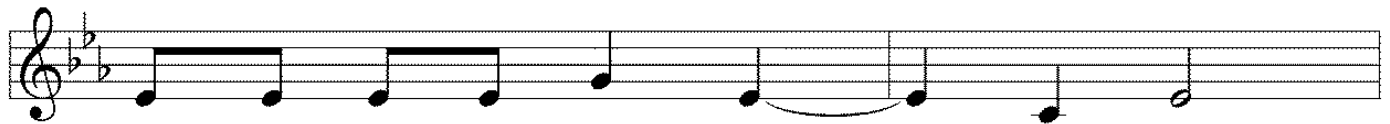
**FOURTH READING:**

**Matthew 1:18–25**

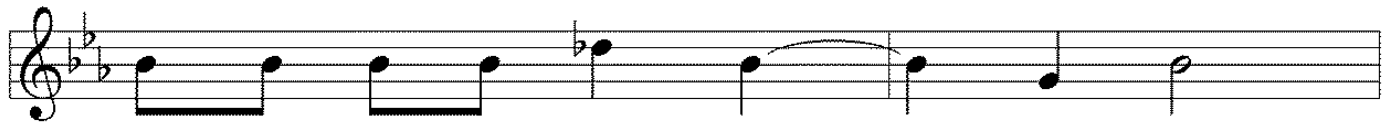
<sup>18</sup>Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. <sup>20</sup>But 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. <sup>21</sup>She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." <sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

<sup>23</sup>"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." <sup>24</sup>When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, <sup>25</sup>but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

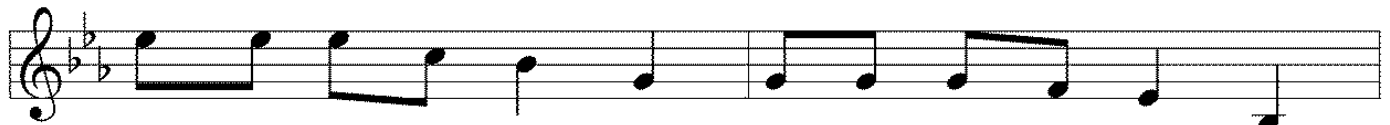
## FOURTH CAROL *Mary Had a Baby*



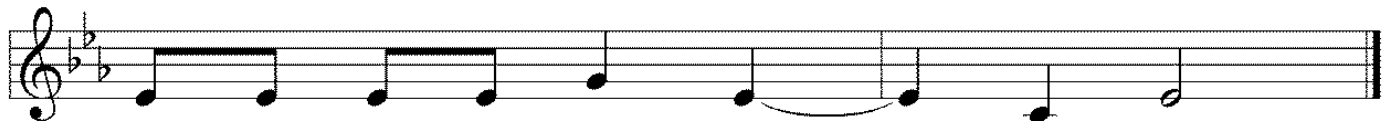
1 Mar - y had a ba - by, my Lord;  
 2 Where did . . . . she lay him, my Lord?  
 3 Laid him in a man - ger, my Lord;  
 4 What did . . . . she name him, my Lord?  
 5 Mar - y named him Je - sus, my Lord;



Mar - y had a ba - by, my Lord;  
 Where did . . . . she lay him, my Lord?  
 laid him in a mang - er, my Lord;  
 What did . . . . she name him, my Lord?  
 Mar - y named him Je - sus, my Lord;



Mar - y had a ba - by, Mar - y had a ba - by,  
 Where did . . . she lay him, where did . . . she lay him,  
 laid him in a man - ger, laid him in a man - ger,  
 What did . . . she name him, what did . . . she name him,  
 Mar - y named him Je - sus, Mar - y named him Je - sus,



Mar - y had a ba - by, my Lord.  
 where did . . . . she lay him, my Lord?  
 laid him in a man - ger, my Lord.  
 what did . . . . she name him, my Lord?  
 Mar - y named him Je - sus, my Lord.

Text: African American spiritual

Music: MARY HAD A BABY, African American spiritual

## FIFTH READING:

## Luke 2:8–20

<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. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

## **FIFTH CAROL**    *Silent Night*

#281

## **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, <sup>2</sup>asking, "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." <sup>3</sup>When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup>and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup>They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup>"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."

<sup>7</sup>Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>Then 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." <sup>9</sup>When 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. <sup>10</sup>When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup>On 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 *The First Noel*

#300

## SEVENTH READING:

## John 1:1–14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup>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.

**SEVENTH CAROL**    *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*    #288

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Empowered by the news of Christ's birth, let us pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need.

*Each petition concludes:*

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

*The prayers conclude:*

With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**Amen.**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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**

*The assembly may be seated.*

**BLESSING**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!

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

You are the shepherds telling the story.



You are the wise ones worshiping with thanksgiving.

You are the angels announcing peace.

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

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

**Amen.**

#290

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## WORSHIP LEADERS

Worship Leader.....?

Music Leaders..... Dr. John Hildreth

