

CELEBRATING THE TRUTH WE HAVE FROM GOD

December 25, 2023



GLORIFY HIM ...

GROW IN HIM ...

GO WITH HIS GOSPEL

We are St. Mark's Church & School

A WELS†NorCal Ministry ... Other Locations

Foundation – Folsom, Hope – Penryn, Christ – Lodi, St. John – Vacaville

Christmas Day --- Truth & Peace on Earth

December 25, 2023

A place to call home: St. Mark's Lutheran Church & School

In the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, welcome home. We especially welcome to our house of worship our guests who have joined us today. We pray you will be strengthened by the good news about God's grace, love, and forgiveness to us through Jesus.

We say with the Psalmist, whether here on campus or viewing online, *"I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD'"* (Psalm 122:1).

May the Lord continue to help us grow in His grace and knowledge as we hear, speak, and sing His holy Word.

Some items to keep in mind as we gather for worship in this place:

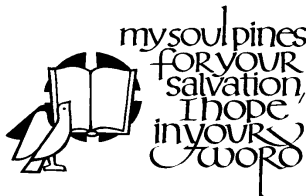
Members & our Guests ... Please pick up and fill out a **Connection Card** which can be found in the Entryway; before you leave place it in the box on the wall or in the basket labeled "Filled out Connection Cards." Thank you!

We do have **LARGE PRINT** copies of the Service; they can be found at the entrance to the Sanctuary.

Hymns from 'Christian Worship' (CW) are in the 'red' book / 'Christian Worship Supplement' (CWS) in the 'blue' 'Christian Worship' New (CWN) is our 2021 Edition (Copies found on Lobby Bookshelf)

Personal **hearing assistance** devices are available on the entryway wall near the west entrance. The Sanctuary is also 'looped' for those who have hearing aids that can pick up the signal.

Holy Communion is offered on the 1st, 3rd, & 5th Sundays. Since Holy Communion is a confession of faith, we ask that at this time only members partake of the Sacrament. If you are not a member and would like to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion, please reach out to our Pastor.



Explore our website. You will find information on Worship, Bible Study, Devotions, Children's Sunday School, and More.

Follow us to stay connected: Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/stmarksch; Follow us on Instagram: Instagram.com/stmarkslutheran; Subscribe to our videos on Vimeo: vimeo.com/channels/stmarksch.

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

Worship Focus: For a good number of people, when they walk into a dark room they reach for what? The light switch. Jesus Himself is light. As the light He exposes evil for what it is; as the light He also points out the way to be delivered from the evils of this world, so such will not follow us when we leave this earth. Christmas is a time for lights, and there is no better or brighter light to focus on than Jesus – the promised One. Merry Christmas thanks to Him who is the Light.

PRELUDE

Greeting & Invocation

Minister: O Lord, you are the King of heaven and earth.

Congregation: We give you praise and thanks. Alleluia!

M: We worship this Christmas Day in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen. Truth and Peace have come to earth.

HYMN

Musical Introduction ... See page 9 for the Song

God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen

Christian Worship New # 356

M: And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel. (*Genesis 3:15*)

C: For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (*John 3:16*)

M: The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love.

C: The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.

M: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

All: Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.

M: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and 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: Amen. Thanks be to God.

A READING FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE

Micah 5:2-5a

Jesus could be clearly identified as the One promised, along with what He has to offer us.

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.” ³Therefore Israel will be abandoned until the time when she who is in labor bears a son, and the rest of his brothers return to join the Israelites. ⁴He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth. ⁵And he will be our peace.

M: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

HYMN *by Choir & Congregation*

Once in Royal David's City

John Ness Beck ... © 1975 The Sacred Music Press

Congregation joins on Verse 2

Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed.
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.

**He came down to earth from heaven, who is God and Lord of all.
And his shelter was a stable and his cradle was a stall.
With the poor and meek and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.**

Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by,
We shall see him; but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high.
Then like stars his children crowned. All in white, his praise will sound.



A READING FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE

Galatians 4:4-7

Jesus has secured for us a gift without end.

But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. ⁶Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “*Abba*, Father.” ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

M: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

FOCUS ON THE SCRIPTURES**Based on John 1:1-18****“The Truth Is Among Us”**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. ⁶ There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸ He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. ⁹ The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹ He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹² Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God. ¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ (John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, “This is the one I spoke about when I said, ‘He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’”) ¹⁶ Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

M: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

OUR THANK OFFERING

Thank you for continuing to support our ministry. Your thank offering can be received in the following ways: placed in the box on the wall as you enter the Sanctuary, mail your thank offering to the church, give online through our website under the “Resources” tab, or give by texting 916.915.9552. The QR Code to the web giving link is at the end of the bulletin.

M: Lord God, all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works come from you. Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey your commandments. Defend us also from the fear of our enemies that we may live in peace and quietness, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

And we also pray ...

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them up to the Lord.

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my ✝ body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my ✝ blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE SACRAMENT

The Ushers will direct Communicants by way of the center aisle, returning by way of the outer aisle. Either pick up a Wafer from the table by the Baptism Font or receive a Wafer in your hand from the Communion Assistant. Note: Tinted cups in the center of the Trays are filled with Grape Juice. Your empty Cup can be placed on the backside of the Rail. If seated on the east side, approach the Rail from left to right; if on the west side, right to left. When at the Rail, you may kneel or stand. If you need Communion in the Pew, please let an Usher or the Pastor know of this.

As a reminder: Since Holy Communion is a confession of faith, we ask that at this time only members and those who spoke with the Pastor ahead of time partake of the Sacrament. In the future, if you would like to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion, please reach out to our Pastor following the Service / during the week.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

Musical Introduction ... See page 11 for the Song

Where Shepherds Lately Knelt

Christian Worship New # 345



M: O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! (Ps 8)

**C: I will praise you, O LORD, with all my heart; I will tell of your wonders. I will be glad
and rejoice in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.** (Ps 9)

M: May the love of the Lord Jesus draw us to Himself. May the power of the Lord Jesus make us
strong to do His will. May the peace of the Lord Jesus fill our lives.

C: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

Musical Introduction ... See page 12 for the Song

Joy to the World

Christian Worship New # 353

POSTLUDE

Announcements

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Scripture Quotations: From the *Holy Bible, New International Version* (NIV 2011), copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc

Presiding Minister: Jonathan Kolander

Accompanist: Jodi Rowe



Upcoming Worship Services

Sunday, December 31 ... 8:00 & 10:45 AM

Sunday, January 7 ... 8:00 & 10:45 AM

Services are livestreamed

***Come, worship Jesus ...
the Light of the world, and sing of His praises!***

**TRUTH ON EARTH ...
PEACE ON EARTH ...
IT IS POSSIBLE ...
IN CHRIST JESUS.**

To connect to our website and the auto giving option:



356 God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen



- 1 God rest you mer - ry, gen - tle - men, let noth - ing you dis - may;
- 2 From God our heav'n - ly Fa - ther a bless - ed an - gel came
- 3 "Fear not," then said the an - gel, "let noth - ing you af - fright;
- 4 Now to the Lord sing prais - es, all you with - in this place,



re - mem - ber Christ, our Sav - ior, was born on Christ - mas Day
and un - to cer - tain shep - herds brought ti - dings of the same,
this day is born a Sav - ior, the true and ra - diant light,
and in true love and fel - low - ship each oth - er now em - brace;



to save us all from Sa - tan's pow'r when we were gone a - stray.
how that in Beth - le - hem was born the Son of God by name.
to free all those who trust in him from Sa - tan's pow'r and might."
this ho - ly tide of Christ - mas is filled with heav'n - ly grace.



O ti - dings of com - fort and joy, com - fort and joy,



O ti - dings of com - fort and joy.

330 Peace Came to Earth



1 Peace came to earth at last that cho-sen night when an - gels
 2 And who could be the same for hav-ing held the in - fant
 3 You show the Fa - ther none has ev - er seen, in flesh and
 4 How else could I have known you, O my God! How else could



clove the sky with song and light and God em - bod - ied
 in their arms and lat - er felt the wound - ed hands and
 blood you bore our griefs and pain, in bread and wine you
 I have loved you, O my God! How else could I em -



love and sheathed his might— Who could but gasp: Im-man-u - el!
 side, all doubts dis-pelled— Who could but sigh: Im-man-u - el!
 vis - it us a - gain— Who could but see: Im-man-u - el!
 brace you, O my God! Who could but pray: Im-man-u - el!



Who could but sing: Im - man - u - el!
 Who could but shout: Im - man - u - el!
 Who could but thrill: Im - man - u - el!
 Who could but praise: Im - man - u - el!

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345 Where Shepherds Lately Knelt



1 Where shep-herds late - ly knelt and kept the an - gel's word,
 2 In that un - like - ly place I find him as they said:
 3 How should I not have known I - sa - iah would be there,
 4 Can I, will I for - get how Love was born, and burned



I come in half - be - lief, a pil - grim strange - ly stirred;
 sweet new - born babe, how frail! And in a man - ger bed:
 his proph - e - cies ful - filled? With pound - ing heart I stare:
 its way in - to my heart— un - asked, un - forced, un - earned,



but there is room and wel - come there for me,
 a still, small voice to cry one day for me,
 a child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me,
 to die, to live, and not a - lone for me,



but there is room and wel - come there for me.
 a still, small voice to cry one day for me.
 a child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me.
 to die, to live, and not a - lone for me?

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353 Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow nor thorns in -
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her King; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his right - eous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
 plains re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing
 flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.