

CHESHIRE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Cheshire, Connecticut

The Rev. Dr. David Rowold, Pastor
The Rev. Louis Nuechterlein, Pastor Emeritus

CHRISTMAS EVE FESTIVAL COMMUNION

December 24, 2023

4:00 PM

Rejoice in the Lord whose birth and incarnation we remember this day. Welcome to our Christmas Eve Festival Communion Service. We are glad that you have joined us for worship this evening as we gather under the gentle reign of him whose birth we celebrate. May the grace and peace of this eucharistic celebration lead you to greater faith and service to our Lord.

THE ORDER FOR OUR FESTIVAL WORSHIP

PRELUDE - *“The First Noel” English Carol;*
arranged by Paxton

CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS

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

Amid the shadows of this world, let us confess
our sin and welcome the light of God’s for-
giveness.

(silence for reflection and self-examination)

God of grace and truth, **in Christ Jesus you
come among us as light shining in the dark-
ness. We confess that we have not welcomed
the light, nor trusted the good news of great
joy. Forgive us and renew our hope, so that
we may live in the fullness of your love,
trusting in the grace of Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

The angel said, You shall call his name Jesus
for he will save his people from their sins.
With great joy, as a called and ordained serv-
ant of the Word made flesh and by his authori-
ty I forgive you all your sins in the name of
the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy
Spirit. **Amen.**

(all stand)

PROCESSIONAL HYMN 379

we sing, standing

GREETING

Good news of great joy, light and life, grace
and peace be with you all. **And also with you.**

CHRISTMAS DIALOG

O God, the ruler of ages eternal, you are with-
out beginning or end: **Yet you choose to be
born an infant in time. Praise to you, O
Lord.**

O God, the invisible, you are the One whom
nobody has seen or can see: **Yet you assume
the face of the Son of Mary. Praise to you,
O Lord.**

O God, the all-powerful, you hold the moun-
tains in the palm of your hand: **Yet you let
yourself be wrapped in swaddling clothes.
Praise to you, O Lord.**

O God the eternal glory, innumerable angels
acclaim you endlessly: **Yet you choose to be
rocked to sleep by the songs of the daughter
of David. Praise to you, O Lord.**

O God, the infinite, heaven and earth cannot
contain you: **Yet you rest in the arms of
Mary. Praise to you, O Lord.**

O God the perfect joy, you are the source of
the happiness of heaven and earth: **Yet you
cry as a little child. Praise to you, O Lord.**

O God, the eternal Word, you are the light of

all created intelligence: **Yet you are laid in a
manger and cannot even speak. Praise to
you, O Lord. Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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

Let us pray. O God, You make this most holy
night to shine with the brightness of the true
Light. Grant that as we have known the mysteries
of that Light on earth we may also come to the
fullness of His joys in heaven; through the same
Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and
reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God,
now and forever. **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON - Isaiah 9:2-7

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to
God.**

ANTHEM - *Parish Choir, “Sing Gloria” by
Katherine Davis; Frank Vasi, saxophone soloist*

SECOND LESSON - Titus 2:11-14

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to
God.**

GOSPEL PROCESSIONAL HYMN 368
vs 1 & 3 - *we sing, standing*

CHRISTMAS GOSPEL - Luke 2:1-20
Before, all shout: Glory to you, O Lord!
After, all shout: Praise to you, O Christ!

HYMN 380 - *we sing, seated*

CHRISTMAS SERMON

NICENE CREED *(last page hymnal)*
all standing

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

all may kneel

Response: **Hear our Prayer!**

PRESENTATION OF OUR OFFERINGS -

*During the gathering, the Parish Choir sings
“Cradle Carol” by Victor Johnson*

OFFERTORY HYMN 370 vs 1 & 3

we sing, standing

page 177 - **SERVICE OF THE SACRA-
MENT**

page 178 - **SANCTUS**

LORD’S PRAYER

page 179 - **THE WORDS OF OUR LORD**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

page 180 - **AGNUS DEI**

HOLY COMMUNION

During the distribution we sing **HYMNS 361,
364 and 374**

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

POST-COMMUNION HYMN 363

we sing, standing

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

BENEDICTION

RECESSIONAL HYMN 387

we sing, standing

DISMISSAL *(face church entrance)*

Filled with the joy of Christ’s birth, go in peace
to love and serve our Lord. **Thanks be to
God!**

POSTLUDE - *“Angels Sing!” by N. Schram*

+ + +

*All are invited to commune who have been
baptized and instructed in the Faith; who repent
of their sins; are committed to Christ and to the
mission of his church; and believe with us that
we receive and share our Jesus’ very Body and
Blood in, with, and under the bread and the
wine of the Sacrament - which bring us his gift
of forgiveness and make us one Christian
family.*

*All who commune, kindly sign your names in
our Communicant Register, which is located
on the narthex shelf along side our Guest
Register.*

WORDS OF WELCOME! Once again, we stand amazed at the miracle of the Incarnation - Immanuel, God with us. Let us fill the sanctuary of the Lord with praise, "Glory to God in the highest." As the family of God, we greet one another. A special welcome to those visiting with us today. Please sign our guest book in the narthex as you leave the church today.

THE RED POINSETTIAS adorning our chancel and nave are a gift from Steve and Jonathan Manke of Tower Farms; we thank them for their generosity. After tonight's Services of Worship they will be given to various members of our congregation.