

# LIVING SAVIOUR LUTHERAN CHURCH

## CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA



**FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS**  
**DECEMBER 28, 2025**

*Living Saviour Lutheran Church is a faith community  
striving to live and love as Jesus did, eagerly welcoming all  
and bringing healing, help, and hope to the world.*

## **WELCOME TO WORSHIP!**

### **WORSHIP ASSISTANTS TODAY:**

Assisting Minister - **Marty Jenkins**

### **INSTRUMENTALIST TODAY:**

Trumpet - **Gordon Hann**

Woodwinds - **Barbara Tobin**

**THE ALTAR FLOWERS** are given by Linda Poley in honor of her family and to the Glory of the Season.

**THIS WORSHIP FOLDER** contains all elements of the worship service. It is designed to encourage your participation. Please read the words in bold print and join in the singing of all hymns. Italicized words are instructions.

**RESTROOMS** are located at the back of the sanctuary and down the short hallway.

### **WE WELCOME CHILDREN IN OUR WORSHIP SERVICES!**

Parents, you are always welcome to bring your children to worship with you. If you are comfortable and prefer having them in supervised childcare, it is available and is under the very capable and loving supervision of Ms. Carla. The Childcare Room is down the steps as you enter the gathering area outside the sanctuary. Someone will be happy to direct you there.

- **CHILDREN'S WORSHIP BULLETINS** for readers and non-readers are available on the welcome table where the worship folders are located.
- **QUIET BAGS** for use by children during worship have been updated and arranged by age groups. They are located to the left as you enter the sanctuary. Please feel free to pick one up and replace it on the hooks when you leave.
- **SPARK FAMILY MAGAZINES** are available on the welcome table and are free for the taking!

**NEIGHBOR BAGS** have been assembled and are located in the blue bin outside of the sanctuary. Please take a few to keep in your car and hand out when the opportunity arises.

**WEEKLY ACTIVITIES** are on page 18.

## **DECEMBER 2025 HEALTH AND WHOLENESS**

The December theme for Health and Wholeness is Creating Peace on Earth.

**Tip#4:** Create peace within. Practice mindfulness and self-care. Regular meditation and prayer calms your mind and helps you stay present. Spend time in nature. Step away from social media and your phone. Love and appreciate yourself. Celebrate small achievements and be happy as a beloved child of God. Improved sleep, blood pressure, and improved self-esteem will result.

**John 14:27** Peace I leave you; my peace I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

## WE GATHER IN CHRIST'S NAME

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### PRELUDE

"One Quiet Moment"  
(Glenda and Ray Kilminster)

Stan Pethel

*Please stand as you are able.*

### GATHERING DIALOGUE

In the name of the Father,  
and of the ✚ Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

Love came down at Christmas,  
**Love all lovely, Love divine;**  
Love was born at Christmas;  
**star and angels gave the sign.**

Worship we the Godhead,  
**Love incarnate, Love divine;**  
worship we our Jesus,  
**but wherewith for sacred sign?**

**Love shall be our token;**  
**love be yours and love be mine;**  
**love to God and others,**  
**love for plea and gift and sign.**

-Christina Georgina Rossetti (1885)

*Please turn to face the processional cross.  
As the cross passes your row, please turn to the altar.*

## GATHERING HYMN

"Angels, from the Realms of Glory"

ELW 275:1,2,4



- 1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
- 2 Shep-herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch-ing o'er your flocks by night,
- 3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem-pla-tions, bright-er vi - sions beam a - far;
- 4 All cre - a - tion, join in prais-ing God, the Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son,



once you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:  
God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon-der shines the in - fant light.  
seek the great de - sire of na-tions, you have seen his na - tal star.  
ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing to the e - ter - nal Three in One.

*Refrain*



Come and wor-ship, come and wor-ship, wor-ship Christ, the new-born king.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt., sts. 1–3; *Salisbury Hymn Book*, 1857, st. 4  
Music: REGENT SQUARE, Henry T. Smart, 1813–1879

## GREETING

Rejoice! A child has been born to us!

**God's Son has been given to us:**

**Emmanuel, God with us.**

**Alleluia!**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

O Lord God,

**you know that we cannot place our trust in our own powers. As you protected the infant Jesus, so defend us and all the needy from harm and adversity, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

## **WE HEAR THE WORD OF GOD**

### **READING: Isaiah 63:7-9**

A reading from Isaiah.

*God does not delegate divine intervention to a messenger or angel. God's own presence brings salvation. The prophet and all who read these words join in celebrating God's gracious deeds. God trusts that God's people will not act falsely.*

<sup>7</sup> I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord,  
the praiseworthy acts of the Lord,  
because of all that the Lord has done for us  
and the great favor to the house of Israel  
that he has shown them according to his mercy,  
according to the abundance of his steadfast love.

<sup>8</sup> For he said, "Surely they are my people,  
children who will not act deceitfully,"  
and he became their savior

<sup>9</sup> in all their distress.

It was no messenger or angel  
but his presence that saved them;  
in his love and pity it was he who redeemed them;  
he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM: Psalm 148

*Please read responsively.*

<sup>1</sup> Hallelujah! Praise the LORD from the heavens;  
praise God in the heights.

<sup>2</sup> **Praise the LORD, all you angels;  
sing praise, all you hosts of heaven.**

<sup>3</sup> Praise the LORD, sun and moon;  
sing praise, all you shining stars.

<sup>4</sup> **Praise the LORD, heaven of heavens,  
and you waters above the heavens.**

<sup>5</sup> Let them praise the name of the LORD,  
who commanded, and they were created,

<sup>6</sup> **who made them stand fast forever and ever,  
giving them a law that shall not pass away.**

<sup>7</sup> Praise the LORD from the earth,  
you sea monsters and all deeps;

<sup>8</sup> **fire and hail, snow and fog,  
tempestuous wind, doing God's will;**

<sup>9</sup> mountains and all hills,  
fruit trees and all cedars;

<sup>10</sup> **wild beasts and all cattle,  
creeping things and flying birds;**

<sup>11</sup> sovereigns of the earth and all peoples,  
princes and all rulers of the world;

<sup>12</sup> **young men and maidens,  
old and young together.**

<sup>13</sup> Let them praise the name of the LORD,  
whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.

<sup>14</sup> **The LORD has raised up strength for the people and praise  
for all faithful servants,  
the children of Israel, a people who are near the LORD.  
Hallelujah!**

*Please stand as you are able to welcome the gospel.*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**      "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"      ELW 288:1,2



- 1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice      with heart and soul and voice;  
2 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice      with heart and soul and voice;  
3 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice      with heart and soul and voice;



give ye heed to what we say:      Je - sus Christ is born to - day;  
now ye hear of end - less bliss:      Je - sus Christ was born for this!  
now ye need not fear the grave;      Je - sus Christ was born to save!



ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.  
He has o - pened heav - en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.  
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.



Christ is born to - day!      Christ is born to - day!  
Christ was born for this!      Christ was born for this!  
Christ was born to save!      Christ was born to save!

Text: Medieval Latin carol; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866  
Music: IN DULCI JUBILO, German carol, 14th cent.

## **GOSPEL: Matthew 2:13-23**

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>13</sup> Now after [the magi] had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." <sup>14</sup> Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt <sup>15</sup> and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

<sup>16</sup> When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the magi.

<sup>17</sup> Then what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

<sup>18</sup> "A voice was heard in Ramah,  
wailing and loud lamentation,  
Rachel weeping for her children;  
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more."

<sup>19</sup> When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, <sup>20</sup> "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead." <sup>21</sup> Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel.

<sup>22</sup> But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. <sup>23</sup> There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazarene."

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**



*Please be seated.*

## CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

### SERMON

**Pastor Charlie Zimmerman**

*Please stand as you are able.*

### HYMN OF THE DAY

"Gentle Joseph Heard a Warning"

ACS 1060



1 Gen - tle Jo - seph heard a warn - ing from an an - gel in the night;  
2 Tar - gets of a ty - rant's ar - my, seek - ing safe - ty, flee - ing strife,  
3 Give us, God, such faith and cour - age when we move from place to place,



val - iant Mar - y, maid - en moth - er, roused from sleep, pre - pared for flight:  
leav - ing house and land and kin - dred, spurred by dreams of peace - ful life;  
and to those who come a - mong us, make us chan - nels of your grace.



thus the Christ - child's fam - 'ly lived out what the proph - et had fore - told,  
through the des - ert of un - know - ing and the night of doubt they went,  
Let us see in ev - 'ry strang - er ref - u - gees from Beth - le - hem,



that he might be called from E - gypt as God's peo - ple were of old.  
guid - ed by God's prom - ised pres - ence, by that trust made con - fi - dent.  
help us of - fer each one wel - come and re - ceive the Christ in them.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944

Music: PLEADING SAVIOR, J. Leavitt's *Christian Lyre*, 1830

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## **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.

God of grace, you show us mercy not according to our worthiness, but according to the abundance of your steadfast love. Grant us the courage to go into the world and do likewise.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

God of abundance, the sun and moon praise you and the shining stars sing of your love. Where we have desecrated your creation, make us into a healing balm for what we have broken.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

God of righteousness, when leaders fail to fulfill their calls to enact justice, you suffer alongside us. Propel those in power to see you reflected in the faces of all they serve.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

God of life, you claim us as your own and care for us as Christ's siblings. Pour out your compassion in every place your people suffer, and protect them in the palm of your hand, especially those we name silently or aloud...

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

God of compassion, you nurture children as the apple of your eye. As you sheltered your son Jesus from Herod's grasp, shelter all children in danger. As you comforted Rachel, comfort all who have lost children to violence.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

God of love, you console those who weep for lost beloved ones. Even as we mourn, we offer thanks for those who have gone before us, trusting in your comfort and protection.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

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.**

## **PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*After exchanging the peace with those near you, please be seated.*

## **WE SHARE THE SUPPER OF THE LORD**

### **INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

God has gifted us with his love, revealed in the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ. Out of gratitude for this great gift, let us offer our gifts with joyful hearts.

*The offering plate is passed. You may also give electronically using the QR code on the back cover.*

### **OFFERTORY**

"The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy"  
(Barbara Tobin, flute)

Stan Pethel

*Please stand as you are able.*

### **OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.

Eternal God, you make the desert bloom and send springs of water to thirsty ground.

**Receive these simple gifts of bread, wine and money,  
and make us messengers of your mercy and love  
for all in need of your healing and justice.**

**We ask this through Christ our Savior.**

**Amen.**

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our privilege and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places  
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,  
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh  
you have opened the eyes of faith  
to a new and radiant vision of your glory,  
that, beholding the God made visible,  
we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see.  
And so, with all the choirs of angels,  
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



## **THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

*The celebrant continues with the Words of Institution*

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

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

**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.  
Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

*Please be seated.*

*An usher will direct you forward to receive Communion.*

*Communion is served at the head of the aisle.*

*We use wheat wafers, white grape juice and wine. If you need a gluten free wafer, please make that known to the pastor.*

*For any who desire a blessing, please come forward with your arms crossed.*

## SHARING OF THE BREAD AND WINE

*The body of Christ given for you.  
The blood of Christ shed for you.*

## COMMUNION HYMN

"Lamb of God"



- 1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away;  
you suffered death our lives to save:  
have mercy now, we pray.**
- 2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away;  
you set us free from guilt and grave:  
have mercy now, we pray.**
- 3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away;  
eternal peace with God you made:  
give us your peace, we pray.**

## MUSIC DURING SHARING OF BREAD AND WINE

*Please join in singing the hymns.*

"Holy Child Within the Manger"


WOV 638



1 Ho - ly Child with - in the man - ger, long a -  
 2 Once a - gain we tell the sto - ry— how your  
 3 Ho - ly Child with - in the man - ger, lead us



go yet ev - er near; come as friend to ev - 'ry  
 love for us was shown, when the im - age of your  
 ev - er in your way, so we see in ev - 'ry



stran - ger, come as hope for ev - 'ry fear.  
 glo - ry wore an im - age like our own.  
 stran - ger how you come to us to - day.



As you lived to heal the bro - ken, greet the  
 Come, en - light - en with your wis - dom, come and  
 In our lives and in our liv - ing give us



out - cast, free the bound, as you taught us love un -  
 fill us with your grace. May the fire of your com -  
 strength to live as you, that our hearts might be for -



spo - ken, teach us now where you are found.  
 pas - sion kin - dle ev - 'ry land and race.  
 giv - ing and our spir - its strong and true.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: JOYOUS LIGHT, Marty Haugen, b. 1950

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"Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

ELW 276



1 In - fant ho - ly, in - fant low - ly, for his bed a cat - tle stall;  
2 Flocks were sleep - ing, shep - herds keep - ing vig - il till the morn - ing new



ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know - ing Christ the child is Lord of all.  
saw the glo - ry, heard the sto - ry, tid - ings of a gos - pel true.



Swift - ly wing - ing, an - gels sing - ing, bells are ring - ing, tid - ings bring - ing:  
Thus re - joic - ing, free from sor - row, prais - es voic - ing, greet the mor - row:



Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!  
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

Text: Polish carol; tr. Edith M. G. Reed, 1885–1933, alt.  
Music: W ŻŁOBIE LEŻY, Polish carol

*Please stand as you are able.*

**COMMUNION BLESSING**

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the gifts of his body and blood,  
strengthen, keep and unite us now and forever.

**Amen.**



## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray.

All-powerful and unseen God,  
**the coming of your light into our  
world has brightened weary hearts with peace.**  
**Call us out of darkness, and empower us to proclaim the birth  
of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and  
reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**  
**Amen.**

## **WE ARE SENT TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS**

### **BLESSING**

May the Word that Mary brought to birth  
carry you into a new and abundant life.  
**Amen.**

May the Word that Joseph cradled in his arms  
enfold you with love and strength.  
**Amen.**

May the Word that angels proclaimed in song  
bring harmony to our world.  
**Amen.**

And the blessing of almighty God,  
the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be upon you and remain with you always.  
**Amen.**



1 Love has come— a light in the dark - ness! Love shines forth in the  
 2 Love is born! Come, share in the won - der. Love is God now a -  
 3 Love has come and nev - er will leave us! Love is life ev - er -



Beth - le - hem skies. See, all heav - en has come to pro - claim it;  
 sleep in the hay. See the glow in the eyes of his moth - er;  
 last - ing and free. Love is Je - sus with - in and a - mong us.



hear how their song of joy a - ris - es: Love! Love! Born un - to  
 what is the name her heart is say - ing? Love! Love! Love is the  
 Love is the peace our hearts are seek - ing. Love! Love! Love is the



you, a Sav - ior! Love! Love! Glo - ry to God on high.  
 name she whis - pers; Love! Love! Je - sus, Im - man - u - el.  
 gift of Christ - mas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Text: Ken Bible, b. 1950

Music: UN FLAMBEAU, F. Seguin, *Recueil de noëls composés en langue provençale*, 1856

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## DISMISSAL

Glory to God in the highest!

**And peace to God's people on earth!**

Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **THIS WEEK AT LIVING SAVIOUR**

### **Sunday: December 28**

- 9:15 a.m. Chancel Choir
- 10:30 a.m. Worship

### **Tuesday: December 30**

- 9:30 a.m. Yoga 4 You

### **Thursday: January 1 - New Years Day - Office Closed**

### **Saturday: January 3**

- 10:00 a.m. Yoga 4 You

### **Sunday: January 4**

- 9:15 a.m. Chancel Choir
- 9:15 a.m. Adult Faith Formation
- 10:30 a.m. Worship

#### **Credits/Acknowledgements**

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# LIVING SAVIOUR

Lutheran Church

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