

Faith Lutheran Church
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**Sunday School
Christmas Service**

December 21, 2025 - 10:30 a.m.

Pastor Daniel Ruiz

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Let Earth Receive Her
KING



Christmas for many Lutherans just wouldn't be Christmas without the season's special music. Without candlelight services and "Silent Night, Holy Night." Without preschoolers singing "Away in a Manger." Without the joyous harmonies of "Joy to the World," or "Angels We Have Heard on High."

For the most part, our favorite Christmas carols reflect trends in popular music from the times in which they were sung and written. Unlike hymns sung during the rest of the church year, the texts of Christmas carols are more like stories than moral tracts, their melodies and

refrains simple and almost dance-like. Indeed, the word “carol,” traced to the Greek word “choraules,” originally referred to a flute player who accompanied dancers.

In the lifespan of the Christian church, the Christmas carol is a relatively recent addition, dating from about the 15th century. Before then, the church discouraged making festive occasions out of holy days. But the emergence of the medieval mystery play, a religious dramatization, quite naturally led to musical accompaniments such as “The Coventry Carol” or “Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine.”

Because Christmas carols have folk origins and many were passed down orally before appearing in printed form, tracing the histories of individual songs is a rather speculative pursuit. Musicologists still debate the fine points regarding the origins of texts and tunes for several popular carols. But, despite the differing accounts of how particular carols came to be written, knowing their stories adds even more to the coming Christmas season.

Prelude - “Ring Christmas Bells” *A Ukrainian carol*

Conductor of the Ukrainian Republic Choir, Alexander Koshetz, commissioned Leontovych to create this song based on traditional folk chants, and the resulting new work for the choir, “Shchedryk,” was based on four notes that he found in an anthology.

The song was first performed by students at Kiev University in December 1916, but the song lost popularity in Ukraine shortly after the Soviet Union took hold. It was introduced to Western audiences by the Ukrainian National Chorus during its 1919 concert tour of Europe and the Americas, where it premiered in the United States on October 5, 1921 to a sold-out crowd at Carnegie Hall.

Good King Wenceslas, Elias Ruiz, piano

Silent Night, Adrianna Ruiz, piano

Welcome - Pastor Ruiz

Welcome, and thank you for joining us this morning. Today we will learn brief histories of eight different Christmas carols from around the world and then sing or listen to them. Throughout history, Christians have joined together to celebrate the birth of Jesus in song. We continue that celebration today.

Invocation

History of “O Come, Little Children”

...Many carols are addressed to children, reminding them that the real reason for the

sugarplums, candles, and Christmas trees is the celebration of the birth of the Christ Child...

Sunday School Children & Congregation “O Come, Little Children” *A German carol*

Children

1 O come little children, O come one and all,
To Bethlehem haste, to the manger so small,
God’s Son for a gift has been sent you this night
To be your Redeemer, your Joy, and Delight.

2 He’s born in a stable for you and for me,
Draw near by the bright gleaming starlight to see,
In swaddling clothes lying so meek and so mild,
And purer than angels the heavenly child.

Congregation

3 See Mary and Joseph with love beaming eyes
Are gazing upon the rude bed where He lies,
The shepherds are kneeling with hearts full of love,
While angels sing loud hallelujahs above.

4 Kneel down and adore Him with shepherds today,
Lift up little hands now and praise Him as they;
Rejoice that a Savior from sin you can boast,
And join in the song of the heavenly host.

Recitation of Luke 2:1-7 by the Sunday School Children

History of “Away in the Manger”

...The words and one of the melodies were most likely developed for the numerous children’s programs produced by American Lutherans for the 1883 observance of the 400th anniversary of Martin Luther’s birth...

Sunday School Children “Away in a Manger” (#119) *An American carol*

Recitation of Luke 2:8 by the Sunday School Children

History of “Rise Up Shepherd and Follow”

...Gathered during the time of the Civil War, it was the first and most influential collection of African-American songs to be published...

Small ensemble “Rise Up Shepherd and Follow” *An African-American Spiritual*

Recitation of Luke 2:9-14 by the Sunday School Children

History of “Angels We Have Heard on High”

...They would call “Gloria in excelsis Deo,” which is Latin for “glory to God in the highest”...

Congregation Hymn “Angels We Have Heard on High” (#116) *A French carol*

1 Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo;
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

3 Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the new-born king.
Gloria in excelsis Deo;
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav'nly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo;
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

4 See, within a manger laid,
Jesus, Lord of heav'n and earth,
Lend your voices, lend your aid
To proclaim the Savior's birth!
Gloria in excelsis Deo;
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Sermonette

History of “I Am So Glad When Christmas Comes”

...Written to sing on Christmas Eve when the tree was being decorated, it tells parents how they should teach their children about the faith as they trim the tree...

Congregation Hymn “I Am So Glad When Christmas Comes” (#127) *A Norwegian carol*
v. 1, 2, 4, 6

1 I am so glad when Christmas comes,
The night of Jesus' birth,
When Beth'lem's star shone as the sun

And angels sang with mirth.

2 The little Child of Bethlehem,

The King of heav'nly grace,
Came down from His exalted throne
To save our fallen race.

4 I too would sing my Savior's praise,
My joy, my crown, my Lord;
For He has made me His own child

By Water and the Word.

6 I am so glad when Christmas comes:
Let anthems fill the air!
He opens wide for ev'ry child
His paradise so fair.

Recitation of Luke 2:15-18 by the Sunday School Children

History of "Mi Burrito Sabanero"

...The text tells the story of a little boy traveling with his donkey to see the baby Jesus in Bethlehem...

Small ensemble "Mi Burrito Sabanero" (My Little Burro of the Savannah) *A Venezuelan carol*

1 Con mi burrito sabanero voy camino de Belén.
With my donkey on the savannah, I'm going to Beth'lem.

Refrain: Si me ven, si me ven , voy camino de Belén.
If you see me, if you see me, I'm going to Beth'lem.

2 El lucerito mañanero me ilumina mi sendero.
The early morning light will shine my way.

3 Con mi cuatrico voy cantando, mi burrito va trotando.
With my guitar I am singing, and my donkey is trotting.

Offering

Recitation of Luke 2:19 by the Sunday School Children

History of "Silent Night"

...Mohr asked Gruber to write a melody to accompany the 3-stanza poem on guitar. Within hours, Gruber had composed a simple song for the service that night...

Children and Congregation “Silent Night” (#140) *An Austrian carol*

Children sing verse 1 in the original German

1 Stille Nacht! Heilige Nacht!
Alles schläft; einsam wacht
Nur das traute hoch heilige Paar.
Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,
Schlafe in himmlischer Ruh!
Schlafe in himmlischer Ruh!

Congregation

2 Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight.

Glories stream from heaven afar;
Heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia;
Christ the Savior is born!
Christ the Savior is born!

3 Silent night! Holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Recitation of Luke 2:20 by the Sunday School Children

History of “Joy to the World”

...Based on Psalm 98, Isaac Watts never intended his poem to be a Christmas song, or any kind of song, for that matter...

Congregation Hymn “Joy to the World” (#138) *An English carol*

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

3 No more let sins and sorrows grow
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.

4 He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.

Postlude - "Joy to the World" arr. by Bryce Inman

This service is based on an original program first written and compiled by Rhonda Eisenbeis of Apple Valley, Minnesota.

CALENDAR & ANNOUNCEMENTS for December 21, 2025

Sunday 9:00 AM: **Sunday School & Bible Study**
 10:30 AM: **Divine Service**

Christmas Services

December 24th, 5:30 PM - Christmas Eve Service

December 25th, 10:30 AM - Christmas Day Service

Youth Group

We are starting a high school age youth group. Meetings will be the first Sunday of every month beginning January. We are anticipating other local congregations to join us throughout the year. These meetings will be informative and impactful for our youth. They will be not only studying the Bible but will take the lessons home to practice as well as several activities to include: community service projects, helping around the church, youth outings, building relationships and courage to represent God in all that they do. The goal is to help teens remain strong in their faith before entering adulthood.