



Thursday, December 25

Christmas Day Divine Service
w/Holy Communion - 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 28

First Sunday after Christmas
Divine Service w/Holy Communion - 9:00 a.m.
Adult Bible Class and Sunday School (K-12th grade)
10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, December 31

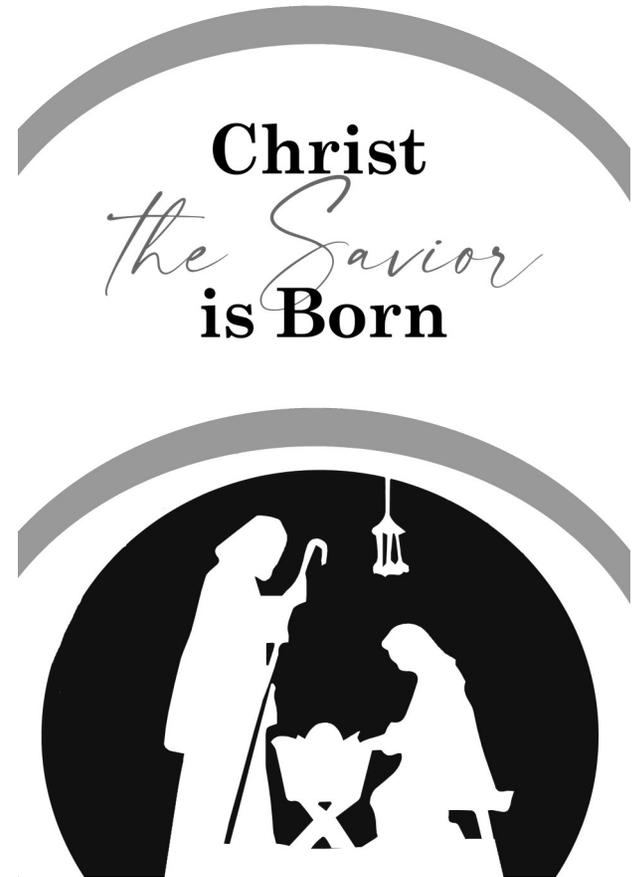
New Year's Eve Divine Service
w/Holy Communion - 6:30 p.m.
Snacks following Worship

February 18, 2026 ~ Ash Wednesday Divine Service 6:30 p.m.

Lent Services ~ February 25, March 4, 11, 18, 25

Holy Week

April 2 ~ Maundy Thursday
April 3 ~ Good Friday
April 4 ~ Holy Saturday
April 5 ~ Easter Sunday



Christmas Eve

December 24, 2025

St. Mark Lutheran Church

St. Mark Lutheran Church

2000 Clay Avenue Waco, Texas 76706

Rev. Peter C. Kolb, Pastor

254-754-0644

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Our Mission Statement: *Learning, Living and Sharing Christ's Love*



Serving in God's House This Evening

Sermon: Pastor Kolb

Directed by: Melissa Phillips

Organ: Phil Mott

Participants: The children of St. Mark Lutheran Church

EVERY HEART PREPARE

Hymn "O Come, Little Children" *My First Hymnal* p. 48

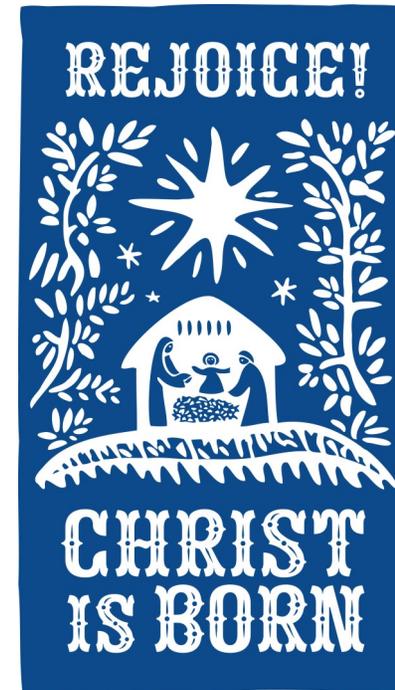
O come, little children, O come, one and all,
To Bethlehem haste to the manger so small.
God's Son for a gift has been sent you this night
To be your Redeemer, your Joy, and Delight.

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

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 alleluias above.

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.

Text: German carol. Public domain





THE MESSAGE PRESENTED BY THE CHILDREN

+ EVERGREENS +

- Naomi: Around this time of year, we begin to see signs that Christmas is coming! Christmas trees are decorated, and wreaths are hung. Nativities are set up, and lights are strung. Gifts are wrapped, and carols are sung! Today, we look at some of these “decoration preparations” to see how they prepare us for Christmas—and for the coming of our Savior, Jesus!
- Charlotte: We call the four weeks before Christmas *Advent*, which means “coming.” During the Advent season, we prepare for Jesus’ first coming as a baby in the manger. But we also look forward to His second coming, when Jesus will return in glory and take all believers to live with Him forever.
- Natalie: From Christmas trees to garlands to wreaths, evergreens are some of the first Christmas decorations we see in Advent. The green color of evergreens signifies life. It reminds us that Jesus came to restore the eternal life that had been lost when sin came into the world. When Adam and Eve sinned, death came into the world. But our loving God promised to send a Savior who would defeat death and give us new life in Him.
- Katie: God’s people waited thousands of years for the Savior. At just the right time in history, the angel Gabriel came to Mary to announce that the Savior was finally coming. The Savior would come as a baby, carried and born by her. We hear from Luke 1:30–33: “The angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus. 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 father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.’”

Pastor's Message

APOSTLES' CREED

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father
Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and
the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life † everlasting. Amen.

RESPONSIVE READING

adapted from LSB 354:4

- P** Prepare our hearts, Lord Jesus;
C turn not from us aside,
P and help us to receive You
C this blessed Adventtide.
P From stall and manger low come now to dwell within us;
C we'll sing Your praises gladly and forth Your glory
show.

+ CRÈCHE +

Naomi: There is one Christmas decoration that is very clearly Christian: the crèche. *Crèche* comes from the Latin word for “cradle” or “crib,” referring to Jesus’ “crib,” the manger! A crèche is a model of the nativity scene, and it tells the true story of Christmas. Figures of Mary, Joseph, and the baby Jesus are set in a stable, often with shepherds and animals looking on. The crèche reminds us that Jesus’ birth was a real, historical event! God came down from heaven to live as one of us. Jesus is Immanuel, God with us!

Charlotte: The birth of Jesus Christ from Luke 2: “In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn” (vv. 1–7).

Hymn

“What Child is This?”

LSB 370

CHILDREN'S SONG

“Away in a Manger”



+ CHRISTMAS CAROLS +



Caleb: Turn on the radio or walk into any store during Advent and you will hear them: Christmas carols! Singing Christmas carols is a beautiful way to prepare our hearts for Christmas. These carols invite us to sing with the angels, proclaiming good news of great joy—a Savior has been born to us! We hear the Christmas story continued from Luke 2:

Jesse: “And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, ‘Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!’” (vv. 2:8–14).

Natalie: “When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.’ And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them” (Luke 2:15–20).

Hymn: “Angels We Have Heard on High” *LSB 368*

+ GIFTS +

Naomi: We know Christmas is getting close when gifts start appearing under the tree! Giving gifts is one way we show friends and family that we love and care about them. But all our gifts in fancy wrapping paper seem like nothing compared to the real gift of Christmas—Jesus! God the Father gave us the gifts of forgiveness and eternal life when He sent His Son, Jesus, to earth on that first Christmas night. Jesus came to earth because of His great love for us and all people. The gift of Jesus the Savior is for everyone, for the whole world!

Katie: God showed His desire for all to be saved when He placed a star in the heavens to guide Wise Men from the East to the Savior of the world. That special star guided the Wise Men to the place where Jesus was. Matthew writes, “The star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house they saw the child with Mary His mother, and they fell down and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered Him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh” (Matthew 2:9–11).

Anthony: Soon, Christmas will be here! As we enjoy our Christmas decorations, we remember what they point to: the greatest gift ever given, Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world.

Hymn: “Silent Night” *LSB 363*