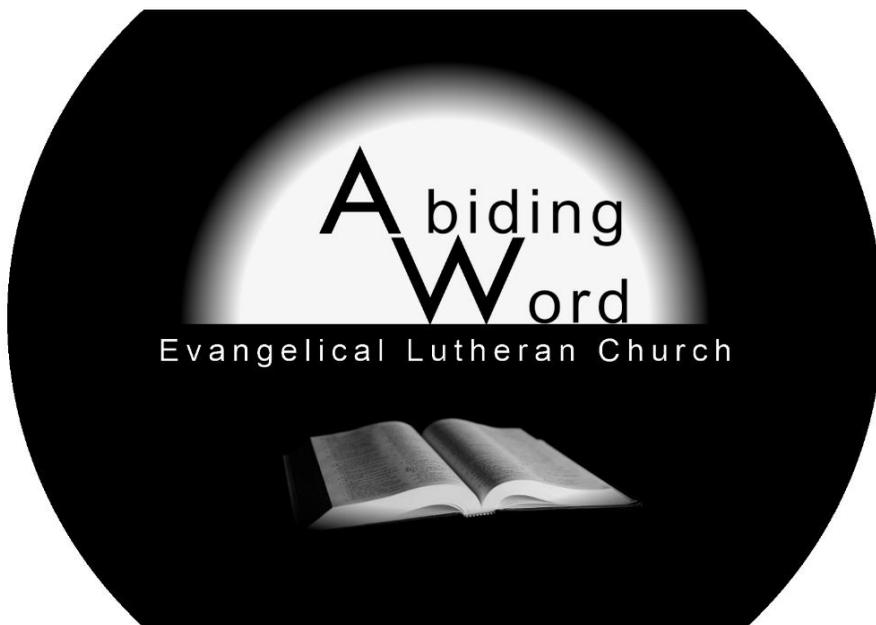


December 25th, 2025
The Nativity of Our Lord



8470 Landen Drive Maineville, Ohio

*At Abiding Word
We gather around the Word (worship)
We grow in the Word (education)
And we share the Word with the world (outreach).*



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Welcome!

To all who have gathered here this morning we welcome you in the name of Christ our Lord. Through him we have access to God in boldness and confidence. (Ephesians 3:12)

CHRIST THE SAVIOR IS BORN

“Silent Night” was written originally in German by Joseph Mohr, with music composed by Franz Gruber.

The carol was first performed on Christmas Eve in 1818 at St. Nicholas Church in Oberndorf, Austria. Legend says the church organ was broken, prompting Gruber to compose a simple guitar accompaniment. Subsequently accompanied by many instruments and translated into many languages, the text paints the picture of the incarnation. The last phrase is repeated, so in the second stanza we hear it twice: “Christ the Savior is born!” Every word of that phrase is significant, and every line of the Christmas carol describes a Bible truth. We use the beloved hymn to ponder the profound message of the Twelve Days of Christmas.

HOLY INFANT SO TENDER AND MILD

From eternity, Jesus has been God, holy and majestic. When we look tenderly at the holy infant, we are looking at the same God who once told the prophet Moses, “No one may see me and live.” Yet, Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds all saw their holy God and survived. How? God became human, hiding his glory within flesh, so that he could come to us without instilling fear or dread. A famous theologian once said, “We are to think of the Lord’s birth, where the Word became flesh, not as a past event which we recall, but as a present reality on which we gaze.” It’s not that Christ the Savior *was* born. It’s that Christ the Savior *is* born.

DIALOGUE OF PRAISE

In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The time has come. The time we have prepared for has arrived. The Father has sent his greatest blessing, his only Son, born by the power of the Holy Spirit.

In his name we begin our worship.

In the beginning, God made the heavens and the earth.

We gather to worship our Creator.

When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman.

We gather to worship our newborn King.

The Christ child grew in time and fulfilled his mission when he rose from the dead.

We gather to worship our risen Lord.

Our Savior came as a baby and will come again in glory. The time will come. We will wait for his return. Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

Glory to God in the Highest! Alleluia!

Let us join in singing the song of the angels:

Sing to the tune of Angels We Have Heard on High.

Glory be to God above! Glory to the Lord we love!

Blessing, worship, thanks and praise Sing we now and all our days!

Gloria in Excelsis Deo! Gloria in Excelsis Deo!

Lord, You take our sin away; Send Your mercy now we pray.

Lord, You take our sin away; Listen to the prayer we say.

Gloria in Excelsis Deo! Gloria in Excelsis Deo!

O Lord God, be glorified By Your Church both far and wide!

Now we sing adoringly, Praise to You, great Trinity!

Gloria in Excelsis Deo! Gloria in Excelsis Deo!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: Let us pray

C: **Almighty God, grant that the birth of your one and only Son in the flesh may set us free from our old bondage under the yoke of sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**
Amen.

HYMN: ALL MY HEART AGAIN REJOICES

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FIRST READING

ISAIAH 52:7–10

⁷How beautiful on the mountains
are the feet of those who bring good news,
who proclaim peace,
who bring good tidings,
who proclaim salvation,
who say to Zion,
“Your God reigns!”

⁸Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices;
together they shout for joy.
When the Lord returns to Zion,
they will see it with their own eyes.

⁹Burst into songs of joy together,
you ruins of Jerusalem,
for the Lord has comforted his people,
he has redeemed Jerusalem.

¹⁰The Lord will lay bare his holy arm
in the sight of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth will see
the salvation of our God.

HYMN: JOY TO THE WORLD

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SECOND READING

HEBREWS 1:1–9

¹In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. ³The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. ⁴So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

⁵For to which of the angels did God ever say,

“You are my Son;
today I have become your Father”?

Or again,

“I will be his Father,
and he will be my Son”?

⁶And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says,

“Let all God's angels worship him.”

⁷In speaking of the angels he says,

“He makes his angels spirits,
and his servants flames of fire.”

⁸But about the Son he says,

“Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever;
a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.

⁹You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions
by anointing you with the oil of joy.”

Gospel Acclamation

Galatians 4:4,5

Alleluia. But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son,
born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

JOHN 1:1-18

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

⁹The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹²Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

¹⁴The 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.'") ¹⁶Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No 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.

HYMN: OF THE FATHER'S LOVE BEGOTTEN

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SERMON ON TITUS 2:11–14

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. ¹²It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, ¹⁴who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

THE HYMN RESPONSE:

**Create my nature pure within And make my heart averse to sin;
Let Your good Spirit not depart, Nor hide Your presence from my heart.**

**I cannot live without Your Light, Cast out and banished from Your sight;
Your holy joys, my God, restore And guard me that I fall no more.**

**Oh, may Your love inspire my tongue! Salvation shall be all my song;
And all my powers shall join to bless The Lord, my strength and righteousness.**

Confession of Faith

Excerpts from the Athanasian Creed

Now this is the true Christian faith. It is necessary for eternal salvation truly to believe that our Lord Jesus Christ also took on human flesh. We believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, is both God and man.

He is God, eternally begotten from the nature of the Father, and he is man, born in time from the nature of his mother, fully God, fully man, with rational soul and human flesh, equal to the Father as to his deity, less than the Father as to his humanity; and though he is both God and man, Christ is not two persons, but one. One, not by changing the deity into flesh, but by taking the humanity into God; one, indeed, not by mixture of the natures, but by unity in one person; for just as the rational soul and flesh are one human being, so God and man are one Christ.

He suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose the third day from the dead. He ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty, and from there will come to judge the living and the dead. This is the true Christian faith.

LORD'S PRAYER *Sung to the tune of Angels We Have Heard on High*

**God our Father now we sing, To Your Name our praises bring.
May Your kingdom quick-ly come, And Your will in us be done.
Glo - - - ria in ex-cel-sis De-o; Glo - - - ria in ex-cel-sis De-o.**

**Daily Bread grant us each day, For for-give-ness, we do pray.
Make temptations fly away, Free us all from evil's sway.
Glo - - - ria in ex-cel-sis De-o; Glo - - - ria in ex-cel-sis De-o.**

**Tis Your kingdom this we know; May Your power in all things show.
Let our voi-ces ever ring, glory to our heav-'nly King!
Glo - - - ria in ex-cel-sis De-o; Glo - - - ria in ex-cel-sis De-o.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Eternal and gracious Lord, on this holy day we rejoice with hearts and voices because you sent your one and only Son from his majestic glory to save us from the slavery of sin and the agonies of death. He took on our human flesh that he might reveal your divine glory. He became our brother that we might become your children forever.

Give us quiet time during these busy days to reflect on your love and ponder the miracle of our Savior's incarnation. Help us look beyond our gift-giving and gift-receiving, and discover the greatest gift: the forgiveness of sins and life with you. Put the joys of Christmas into the perspective of our eternal celebration, and let music and art lift our hearts to Christ who is truly the center of the season.

Keep in your loving care all whose Christmas joys are diminished by sickness and sadness, by unhappy recollections and uncertain hopes. Comfort those who sense this Christmas may be their last, and raise their eyes to the brilliant lights of heaven. Soothe consciences that are troubled by guilt and regret, and show them the forgiving love of Christ.

We commend to your care all who proclaim the message of Christ during these holy days; all who care for people in hospitals, nursing homes, and prisons; and all who put themselves out to bring joy to others, especially children. Let the light of your grace shine through all ministries of mercy.

Send us your Holy Spirit, gracious Lord, that the proclamation of the Christmas gospel may lighten the load of guilt and fear and lift our hearts to confident faith and holy living. By the power of your Word, bring your light to hearts struggling to understand you and searching to find you that they may know the joys of this season as we do. Empower us to lead them to your love in our words and deeds.

All this we ask in the name of the newborn King, born in Bethlehem and now living and reigning forever in heaven. Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

Amen.

HYMN: NOW SING WE, NOW REJOICE

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