



**The Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 24, 2023**

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

142 Market Street, Williamsport, PA 17701

stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org

Office (570-323-4619) Fax (570-323-2452)

Rev. Brian D. Vasey, Pastor

bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org

Welcome to Saint Mark's!

*This is Christ's church. There is a place for you here. Join us as we seek,
"To know Christ and to make Christ known."*

An Order for Holy Communion (Veni Emmanuel Setting)

9:30 am

Please Note:

Hand sanitizer is available for your use; face masks are optional; offerings may be received by way of baskets as you enter or leave.

A guide to hymnal use: LBW, Green Book; WOV, Blue Book

**Please stand as you are able.*

INTRODUCTION TO TODAY'S WORSHIP

God keeps the promise made to David to give him an everlasting throne. Gabriel tells Mary that God will give David's throne to her son Jesus. She is perplexed by this and the news of her coming pregnancy, but she is able still to say, "Yes." We who know that Jesus is called king only as he is executed still find it a mystery hard to fathom, but with Mary today we too hear the news and say, "Yes."

PRELUDE *The Angel Gabriel* Unknown

WELCOME/ANNOUNCING THE DAY/ANNOUNCEMENTS

***BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

All may make the sign of cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the pastor begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who opens the heavens
and draws near to us with salvation.

Amen.

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance.

Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

Kneel/Stand

Everlasting God,

you love justice and you hate wrongdoing.

**We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness
that make us reluctant to work against oppression.**

We are complicit in systems of exploitation.

We choose comfort over courage.

We are careless with creation's bounty.

**Look upon us with mercy.
Turn our hearts again to you.
Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways
for the sake of our waiting world.**

Amen.

Hear these words of assurance:
God clothes you with garments of salvation
and covers you with robes of righteousness.
In the tender compassion of † Jesus Christ,
your sins are forgiven.
God's covenant is eternal,
and God's blessing rests upon us all.

Amen.

***HYMN O Little Town of Bethlehem (alt. Tune) Back Page**

***THE GREETING**

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

And also with you.

***KYRIE**

Musical notation for the first line of the Kyrie. It consists of two staves of music in G major (one sharp). The first staff is labeled 'Cantor' and the second 'All'. Both parts have the lyrics 'Lord, _____ have mer - cy.' below them. The melody is a simple, flowing line with a long note on 'mer' and a dotted note on 'cy.'

Musical notation for the second line of the Kyrie. It consists of two staves of music in G major. The first staff is labeled 'Cantor' and the second 'All'. Both parts have the lyrics 'Christ, _____ have mer - cy, _____' below them. The melody is a simple, flowing line with a long note on 'mer' and a dotted note on 'cy,'.

Musical notation for the third line of the Kyrie. It consists of two staves of music in G major. The first staff is labeled 'Cantor' and the second 'All'. Both parts have the lyrics 'Lord, _____ have mer - cy.' below them. The melody is a simple, flowing line with a long note on 'mer' and a dotted note on 'cy.'

***LIGHTING OUR ADVENT WREATH**

**Lord Jesus is coming and so we prepare,
Our homes and our lives for Messiah so fair.
It's Advent, we're happy, for Jesus is near,
O Come and live in us, our Savior so dear.**

*Words, B. Vasey, 1995
Tune, CRADLE SONG*

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray. Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE FIRST READING.....2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

¹Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²the king said to the prophet Nathan, “See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.” ³Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.”

⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. ⁷Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?” ⁸Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; ⁹and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. ¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 89:1-4, 19-26

1 Your love, O LORD, forever | will I sing;
from age to age my mouth will pro- | claim your faithfulness.
2 **For I am persuaded that your steadfast love is estab- | lished forever;**
you have set your faithfulness firmly | in the heavens.
3 “I have made a covenant with my | chosen one;
I have sworn an oath to Da- | vid my servant:
4 **I will establish your | line forever,**
and preserve your throne for all | generations.’ ”
19 You spoke once in a vision and said to your | faithful people:
“I have set the crown upon a warrior and have exalted one chosen out | of the
people.
20 **I have found Da- | vid my servant;**
with my holy oil have I a- | nointed him.
21 My hand will | hold him fast
and my arm will | make him strong.
22 **No enemy | shall deceive him,**
nor shall the wicked | bring him down.
23 I will crush his | foes before him
and strike down | those who hate him.
24 **My faithfulness and steadfast | love are with him,**
and he shall be victorious | through my name.
25 I will set his hand | on the sea,
and his right hand | on the rivers.
26 **He will say to me, ‘You | are my father,**
my God, and the rock of | my salvation.’

THE SECOND READING.....Romans 16:25-27

25 Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages 26 but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—27 to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.


*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

All



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

2



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

*THE GOSPEL.....Luke 1:26-38

The holy gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ according to St. Luke, the first chapter.

All



Glo-ry to you, O _____ Lord.

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He 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 ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of the Lord.

6

All



Praise to you, O _____ Christ.

THE SERMON

***HYMN My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness**

WOV, "Blue", 730

***THE NICENE CREED**

Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith:

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all there is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary,
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven**

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.**

**With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

After each petition, “Merciful Lord/Hear Our Prayer”

***THE PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you. *The ministers and congregation greet each other.*

***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 and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new. And so, with your Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

1 Cantor

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and God of might.

2 All

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and God of might.

3 Cantor

Heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.

4

Ho-san - na in the high - est, ho-san-na in the high - est.

5 All

Ho-san - na in the high - est, ho-san-na in the high - est.

6 Cantor

Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

7

Ho-san - na in the high - est, ho-san-na in the high - est.

8 All

Ho-san - na in the high - est, ho-san-na in the high - est.

Holy God, mighty Lord, glorious Father:
Endless is your mercy and eternal your reign.
You have filled all creation with light and life;
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Through Abraham you promised to bless all nations.
You rescued your chosen people who were slaves in Egypt.
Through prophets you renewed your promise;
and at this end of all ages, you sent your Son,

who in words and deeds proclaimed your kingdom
and was obedient to your will,
even to giving his life.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often we eat this bread
and drink from this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Therefore gracious Father we await his coming in power
to share with us the promised feast.

Amen. Come Lord Jesus.

Send now your Holy Spirit,
the spirit of our Lord and of his resurrection,
that we who receive our Lord's body and blood
may live to the praise of your glory
and receive our inheritance with all the saints in light.

Amen. Come Holy Spirit.

Join our prayers with your servants of every time and place,
and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest
until he comes as victorious Lord of all.

Amen.

*OUR LORD'S PRAYER

Lord as you have taught us, so now we pray,

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name,

thy kingdom come,

thy will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those

who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory,

forever and ever. Amen.

*LAMB OF GOD

Cantor

Je sus, wis - dom and might - y Lord, you take a way the sins___ of the
Je - sus, true branch of Jes - se's Tree
Key of Dav - id and Day - spring from on high.
De sire of na - tions, our Em - man - u - el,

2 1.2.3. All
world: have mer - cy on us. Have mer - cy on us.

3 4. All
world: Grant us___ peace. Grant us___ peace.

*INVITATION TO COMMUNION *All Are Welcome to Receive.*

Persons may come forward to the chancel to receive Holy Communion. This format will be more "continuous" noting the following procedure:

- *Communicants as directed by ushers are asked to come forward by way of the center aisle, take a cup from the tray provided and receive the bread.*
- *Once receiving the bread, communicants will proceed to one of two stations (left or right) to receive wine from the pouring chalice.*
- *After receiving wine, communicants will place the empty cup in the designated tray and return to their pew by way of the side aisles.*

In this meal righteousness and peace dwell together. Come take your place at the table.

Thanks be to God.

THE COMMUNION

***AFTER COMMUNION**

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Generous God,
in bread and cup you have revealed your glory
for all people to see together.
Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim
your good news of liberation and release,
brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior.

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 upon you with favor
and ☩ give you peace.

Amen.



***PLACING CHRIST IN THE MANGER**

Behold, Christ comes among us, born of a woman, born under the law that we might know the riches of God's grace.

Come, let us adore him!

***HYMN** **Away in a Manger** **LBW, "Green", 67**

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace; proclaim the good news!
Thanks be to God.

***POSTLUDE** *Festive Celebration* **Unknown**

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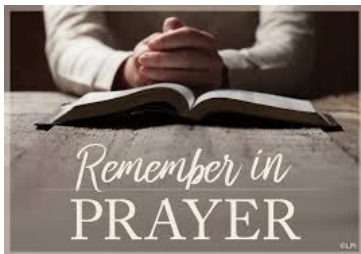
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Prayer List: Victims of COVID-19 and their families, Liz Ruesskamp, Grace Arner, Diane Damaska, Vanessa Morgan, Gary Clark, Charles Miller, Jerry Miller, Patricia Alexander, Richard Ritter, Ashton Ott, Lucille Sider, April Clark, Lenny Sherlinski, Ruth Sherlinski, Gary Cable, Elsie Sechler, Virginia Pulaskie, Susan Kalabacas, Bunny Ditchfield, Judy Fortin, Ezra Buckman, Sheila Brassard, Kevin Rosini, Kathy Eshelman, Micah, Deb Buckman, Linda Rosini, Mike Ford, Walt Haussmann, Kristin Rehm, Yvonne and Gerry Myers, Eileen Montgomery.



READ ANY GOOD BOOKS LATELY? Faith Formation has temporarily "moved some books" from our church library to the Front Lounge in order to make them more accessible. Stop by the Front Lounge and take a look!

WORSHIP LEADERS, 9:30 AM

December 24, 2023

Lector	Ralph Zeigler
Communion Assistants	Ralph and Lou Ann Zeigler
Organist	Sam Robinson
Ushers	Gary Weber, captain, Shelby Weber, Dick Reitz
Altar Guild	December Wanda Fortin and Mindy Wentzel

OUR STEWARDSHIP December 17, 2023

Regular Offering	\$2,512.00
Plate Offerings	70.00
Christmas and Advent	310.00
Christmas Flowers	8.00
Capital Fund	10.00
Flower Memorials / Tributes	30.00
Synod Benevolence	110.00
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	50.00
GRAND TOTAL	\$3,100.00



ALTAR FLOWERS today are given to the glory of God:



- +In Loving Memory of Shirley and Robert Miller by her children and grandchildren.
- +In Loving Memory of Cora and Clement Campbell by their grandchildren.
- +In Loving Memory of my Aunt, Roxy Larson by Roxie Cohrig.



When you or a family member are ill, have a crisis of faith, or have a personal concern of which you wish to make the pastor aware, please contact him directly by church office telephone (570-323-4619) or email (bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org). Do not assume the pastor will know of your need any other way.



When you or a loved one has a change of address, telephone number or email, please contact the church office at 570-323-4619 or stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org. Please direct your intentions whether or not to share this information with our church family.



Christmas 2023 We Remember and Honor.....

In Honor of Daughters,
Anna and Laura and James Zeigler

Dan and Diana Zeigler

In Memory of
Leon and Rosena Haines, Linda Kay Walter, Joann Zeigler

Dan and Diana Zeigler

In Memory of
Of my husband, Thomas, of my parents, Charles and Helen
Clokey and of my brother Robert Clokey

Helen Schramm

In Memory of
Josephine and Allen Malick and Judy and Phil Williams

Cheryl and Dave Williams

In Honor of
My Wife Charlotte

Dick Reitz



In Memory of
Clair E. Miller, father and Countess E. Miller,
mother

Robert Miller

In Memory of
William Hill

Shirley Hill

In Memory of
Our parents Eugene and Reba Jacobs

Linda Rosini, Dr. John and Holly Carlson

In Memory of
Robert and Anna Kuntz, William and Helen Kennedy, our
parents and Marty Kuntz, son.

Charles and Ann Kintz

In Loving Memory
Of our Parents

Ray and Cindy Huff

In Loving Memory
Of Wayne and Betty Branden

Lou Ann and Ralph Zeigler



In Loving Memory
Of Ralph and Elda Zeigler
Lou Ann and Ralph Zeigler

In Memory of
Our mothers Ruth and Gloria and our children Riley and
Stefan
Gary and Shelby Weber

In Memory of
Our father, Ray Kinney and our mother, Carol Smith
Mike and Jackie Kinney

In Memory of
Shirley and Bob Campbell and their children
Mike and Jackie Kinney

In Memory of
Marion and Bill Waldeson
Wendy Hooper

In Honor of

Ruth Osbaugh and Carol Ann Mariano and Mary Lou Doeblen
Karen and Steve Mariano



In Memory of
Harry Osbaugh, Dominic Mariano and Frank Doeblen
Karen and Steve Mariano

In Memory of
Our Parents
Phil and Barb Thomas

In Memory of
Bill and Prudy
Herb Poff, Steve and Candy Dewar

In Memory of
Eleanor and Jack Whiting
Herb Poff, Steve and Candy Dewar

In Memory of
Jack and Margaret Dewar
Steve and Candy Dewar

In Memory of

Gwyn Rees, Ruth Ulmer, Harry Ulmer, Emma Geschwent

Ruth Rees



In Honor of
Grant and Lisa Rees

Ruth Rees

Local Hunger Relief

Ruth Rees

In Memory of
Roxie Larson

Nieces and Nephews

In Memory of
Art and Marion Larson

Grandchildren

In Memory of
Beryl Howard

Daughter

In Honor of
My grandchildren, Ezra Gillian and Asher
and my great granddaughter Ren

Deb Buckman

In Memory of
My parents, Dorsey T. and Mary Jane Ringles and my in-laws,
Sydney and Doris Buckman

Deb Buckman

In Honor of
My sons and their families, Nick and Claire, Sean and Megan
Deb Buckman



In Memory of
My spouse Jim Buckman
Deb Buckman

In Memory of
Edward and Mary Gair
Edward and Brenda Gair

In Honor of
Annika, Gabriella and Makensi
Walter and Margie Doebler

In Memory of
Wilson and Emily Doebler and Jim and Jane Horner
Walter and Margie Doebler

In Memory of
Mark Robert Kuntz
Ann L. Kuntz

Local Hunger Relief
In Loving Memory of Forrest and Margaret Klinger
Ron and Donna Baker

Thank you



Monday, December 18, -
Sunday, December 24, 2023

Monday, December 25
Tuesday, December 26
Wednesday, December 27
Sunday, December 31

Merry Christmas Church Office Closed
Church Office Closed
Church Office Closed
Holy Communion 8AM and 10:30AM

BIRTHDAYS

Hannah Ramsauer December 26 Helen Schramm December 28
Amalie Robertson December 30 Cynthia Huff December 31

ANNIVERSARIES

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

No Meetings scheduled this week

Please remember to let the administrative assistant know when committee meetings are scheduled, or changed, so it can be included in the bulletin.

If there is anything you would like to include in the “This Week at Our Church” please let the administrative assistant, Joe Baur, know at jbaur@stmarkswilliamsport.org



THE CELEBRATION OF OUR LORD'S

NATIVITY CONTINUES TONIGHT AT 7PM WITH A KID FRIENDLY SERVICE AND 10 PM WITH A MORE TRADITIONAL CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION. JOIN US!

COMMEMORATIONS

Stephen, Deacon and Martyr



Tuesday, December 26, 2023

Stephen was a deacon and the first martyr of the church. He was one of those seven upon whom the apostles laid hands after they had been chosen to serve widows and others in need. Later, Stephen's preaching angered the temple authorities, and they ordered him to be put to death by stoning.

John, Apostle and Evangelist



Wednesday, December 27, 2023

The son of Zebedee and brother of James, John was one of the twelve disciples and witness to the transfiguration. Tradition has named him as the author of the Gospel according to John, the three New Testament letters bearing his name, and the Book of Revelation.

The Holy Innocents, Martyrs



Thursday, December 28, 2023

This day commemorates the young children killed by Herod in Bethlehem in his jealous attempt to murder the baby Jesus, a sobering reminder of the evil that led Christ to be born for our salvation.



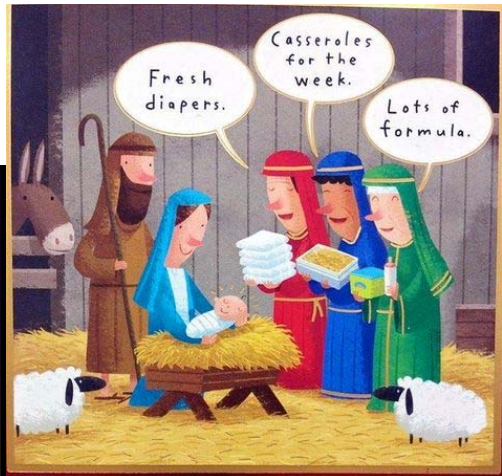
Please note that the Church Office will be closed, Monday, December 25-Wednesday, December 27 in celebration of our Lord's Nativity.



The Christmas Season continues Sunday, December 31, 2023 with the celebration of Holy Communion at 8 and 10:30 am. All are welcome!



PASTOR VASEY ON VACATION, DECEMBER 25-JANUARY
1. Should you need a pastor during this time please contact Pastor Carol Johnson (570-772-6674) carolandshuman@verizon.net).



After the Three Wise Men left, the Three Wisest Women arrived.

O Little Town of Bethlehem



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, and, gath - ered all a - bove
3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is giv'n!
4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by;
while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - d'ring love.
So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heav'n.
cast out our sin, and en - ter in, be born in us to - day.



yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light.
O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
No ear may hear his com - ing; but, in this world of sin,
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
and prais - es sing to God the king, and peace to all the earth!
where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.
oh, come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Im - man - u - el!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835–1893
Music: FOREST GREEN, English folk tune