

# Crow River Lutheran Church Big Grove Crow River Grace Parish

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**December 31, 2023**  
**First Sunday of Christmas**

*Welcome in Jesus' name.*

*We extend a special welcome to guests and visitors.*



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Secretary, Sue Wiener

# WELCOME TO WORSHIP

Prelude "Once in Royal David's City"

ELW #269 (vs. 1,2,4)

1 Once in royal David's city  
stood a lowly cattle shed,  
where a mother laid her baby  
in a manger for his bed:  
Mary was that mother mild,  
Jesus Christ, her little child.

2 He came down to earth from heaven  
who is God and Lord of all,  
and his shelter was a stable,  
and his cradle was a stall;  
with the poor and meek and lowly,  
lived on earth our Savior holy.

4 Not in that poor lowly stable,  
with the oxen standing by,  
we shall see him; but in heaven,  
set at God's right hand on high;  
there his children gather round,  
bright like stars, with glory crowned.

Text: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818-1895  
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Procession/Bells

Welcome and Announcements

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, the Word made flesh, our life and our salvation.

**C: Amen.**

L: Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

L: God of life,

**C: you promise good news of great joy for all people, and call us to be messengers of your peace. We confess that too often we hoard our joy, our resources, and our security. We nurture conflict and build barriers. We neglect the needs of our neighbors and ignore the groaning of creation. Have mercy on us. Where we are self-centered, open our hearts. Where we are reluctant, give us courage. Where we are cynical, restore our trust. Renew us with your grace and give us again the hope of eternal life in you. Amen.**

L: Hear the good news: We are children of God and heirs of God's promises through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In † Jesus we are forgiven and redeemed. Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth shall know the salvation of God.

**C: Amen.**

**\*Gathering Hymn:** "O Little Town of Bethlehem" ELW #279 (vs.1,4)

1 O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;  
yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.  
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

4 O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;  
cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;  
oh, come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

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**\*Apostolic Greeting:**

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.**

**\*The Prayer of the Day:**

Almighty God, **you wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and yet more wonderfully restored it. In your mercy, let us share the divine life of the one who came to share our humanity, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**Hymn:** "I Wonder as I Wander" WOV #642 (vs. 1,3)

1 I wonder as I wander out under the sky  
How Jesus the Savior did come for to die  
For poor ord'nery people like you and like I  
I wonder as I wander, out under the sky

3 If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing  
A star in the sky or a bird on a wing  
Or all of God's angels in heaven for to sing  
He surely could have had it  
Cause He was the King

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**Scripture Reading:**

Isaiah 61: 10-62:3

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. <sup>11</sup>For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations. <sup>62:1</sup>For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. <sup>2</sup>The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. <sup>3</sup>You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

L: Word of God, Word of Life.      **C: Thanks be to God.**

**Hymn:**      "Light Dawn on a Weary World      ELW #726

1 Light dawns on a weary world  
when eyes begin to see  
all people's dignity.  
Light dawns on a weary world:  
the promised day of justice comes.

**Refrain:**

The trees shall clap their hands;  
the dry lands, gush with springs;  
the hills and mountains shall break forth with singing!  
We shall go out in joy,  
and be led forth in peace,  
as all the world in wonder echoes shalom.

2 Love grows in a weary world  
when hungry hearts find bread  
and children's dreams are fed.  
Love grows in a weary world:  
the promised feast of plenty comes. **Refrain:**

3 Hope blooms in a weary world  
when creatures, once forlorn,  
find wilderness reborn.  
Hope blooms in a weary world:  
the promised green of Eden comes. **Refrain:**

Text: Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953 One Licence #A-736797

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## Responsive Psalm Reading:

Psalm 148

L: Hallelujah! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise God in the heights.

**C: Praise the LORD, all you angels; sing praise, all you hosts of heaven.**

L: Praise the LORD, sun and moon; sing praise, all you shining stars.

**C: Praise the LORD, heaven of heavens, and you waters above the heavens.**

L: Let them praise the name of the LORD, who commanded, and they were created,

**C: who made them stand fast forever and ever, giving them a law that shall not pass away.**

L: Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps;

**C: fire and hail, snow and fog, tempestuous wind, doing God's will;**

L: mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars;

**C: wild beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds;**

L: sovereigns of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the world;

**C: young men and maidens, old and young together.**

L: Let them praise the name of the LORD, whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.

**C: 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!**

**Hymn:** "Angels We Have Heard on High"

ELW #289 (vs. 1,3)

1 Angels we have heard on high  
Sweetly singing o'er the plains  
And the mountains in reply  
Echoing their joyous strains

### **Chorus:**

Gloria In excelsis Deo;  
Gloria In excelsis Deo.

3 Come to Bethlehem and see  
Christ whose birth the angels sing  
Come adore on bended knee  
Christ the Lord the newborn King

Text: French carol; tr. H. F Hemy, The Crown of Jesus Music, 1864 CCLI #2275507 Public Domain  
Music: French carol; arr. Edward KS Barnes, 1887-1958

## Scripture Reading:

Galatians 4:4-7

When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup>in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. <sup>6</sup>And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" <sup>7</sup>So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

L: Word of God, Word of Life. **C: Thanks be to God.**

**Hymn:** "Away in a Manger"

ELW #278 (vs. 1,3)

1 Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;  
the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

3 Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay  
close by me forever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in your tender care  
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

Text: North American, 19th cent. Public Domain CCLI #2275507

**Children's Sermon:** "Jesus Loves Me"

ELW #595 (vs. 1)

1 Jesus loves me this I know  
For the Bible tells me so  
Little ones to Him belong  
They are weak but He is strong

**Chorus:**

Yes, Jesus loves me, yes, Jesus loves me  
Yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so

Text: Anna B. Warner, 1820-1815. Alt. Music: William B. Bradbury, 1816-1868  
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**\*Gospel Acclamation:** "Hark the Herald Angels Sing "

ELW # 270 (vs. 1)

1 Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn king;  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled."  
Joyful, all you nations, rise;  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with angelic hosts proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

**Refrain:**

Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn king!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt. Public Domain CCLI #2275507

**\*Holy Gospel:**

Luke 2:22-40

L: The Holy Gospel according to the Book of Luke.

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, Joseph and Mary brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord <sup>23</sup>(as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), <sup>24</sup>and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." <sup>25</sup>Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. <sup>26</sup>It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. <sup>27</sup>Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, <sup>28</sup>Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, <sup>29</sup>"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; <sup>30</sup>for my eyes have seen your salvation, <sup>31</sup>which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, <sup>32</sup>a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." <sup>33</sup>And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. <sup>34</sup>Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed <sup>35</sup>so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too." <sup>36</sup>There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, <sup>37</sup>then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. <sup>38</sup>At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. <sup>39</sup>When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup>The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

L: The Gospel of our Lord.     **C: Praise to you, O Christ.****Hymn:**                    "Hark the Herald Angels Sing "

ELW # 270 (vs. 3)

3 Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace!

Hail the Sun of righteousness!

Light and life to all he brings,

ris'n with healing in his wings.

Mild he lays his glory by,

born that we no more may die,

born to raise each child of earth,

born to give us second birth.

**Refrain:**

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.  
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## Sermon

**\*Hymn:** "What Child is This"

ELW #296

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest,  
on Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet  
while shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the king,  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
haste, haste to bring him laud,  
the babe, the son of Mary!

2 Why lies he in such mean estate  
where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here  
the silent Word is pleading.  
Nails, spear shall pierce him through,  
the cross be borne for me, for you;  
hail, hail the Word made flesh,  
the babe, the son of Mary!

3 So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;  
come, peasant, king, to own him.  
The King of kings salvation brings;  
let loving hearts enthrone him.  
Raise, raise the song on high,  
the virgin sings her lullaby;  
joy, joy, for Christ is born,  
the babe, the son of Mary!

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**\*Apostles' Creed:**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.  
Amen.**



**Hymn:** "Love Has Come"

ELW #292 (vs. 1)

1 Love has come—a light in the darkness!  
Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.  
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it;  
hear how their song of joy arises:  
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!  
Love! Love! Glory to God on high

Text: Ken Bible, b. 1950 One License #A-736797

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**\*Prayers of the People:**

L: Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

**Hymn:** "Love Has Come"

ELW #292 (vs. 3)

3 Love has come and never will leave us!  
Love is life everlasting and free.  
Love is Jesus within and among us.  
Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.  
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas;  
Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Text: Ken Bible, b. 1950 One License #A-736797

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**\*Peace:**

L: The peace of Christ be with you always. **C: And also with you.**

**Offering:** "The Beautiful Child of Bethlehem"  
The Crow River Gospel Choir

**Offertory Hymn:** "We Three Kings of Orient Are" WOVS 646 vs. 1,3,4

1 We three kings of Orient are bearing gifts we traverse afar  
Field and fountain moor and mountain following yonder star

**Chorus:**

Oh, star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright;  
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to Thy perfect light! **Chorus:**

3 Frankincense to offer have I; Incense owns a Deity nigh;  
prayer and praising, gladly raising, worshiping God most High.

4 Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom;  
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone cold tomb. **Chorus:**

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**\*Offertory Prayer:**

God of good gifts, receive these and all our offerings as we present them in faithful service for the sake of your gospel. **Amen.**

**\*The Lord's Prayer:**

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.

**\*Benediction:**

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **Amen.**

**\*Sending Hymn:** "Go Tell It on the Mountain" ELW #290

***Refrain:***

Go tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills and ev'rywhere;  
go tell it on the mountain  
that Jesus Christ is born!

1 While shepherds kept their watching  
o'er silent flocks by night,  
behold, throughout the heavens  
there shone a holy light. ***Refrain:***

2 The shepherds feared and trembled  
when, lo, above the earth  
rang out the angel chorus  
that hailed our Savior's birth. ***Refrain:***

3 Down in a lonely manger  
the humble Christ was born;  
and God sent us salvation  
that blessed Christmas morn. ***Refrain:***

Text: African American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work Jr., 1872-1925, stanzas, alt.  
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**\*Dismissal:**

L: Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.

**C: Thanks be to God.**