Moravian Lovefeast

December 29th, 2024

10:00 am

A service of Lessons & Carols,

coffee, and buns!

INCARNATION LUTHERAN CHURCH

✢ Moravian Lovefeast • December 29th, 2024 ✢

Worship Notes: *• Our Lectors for today are Susan McArver, Janet Hoffman, and Ben Willhide • Our Crucifer for today is Bill Williamson • Our worship assistant for today is Janet Hoffman •*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

INTRODUCTION TO THE LOVEFEAST: Dr. Susan McArver

The Moravian Church has ancient roots that predate the Protestant Reformation.

A century before Martin Luther initiated the Reformation in 1517, Jan Hus, a Catholic priest in the present-day Czech Republic, was burned at the stake for making many of the same calls for reform that Luther would eventually make. Luther came to consider himself a "Hussite" who followed in the trail blazed before him by Hus. The followers of Jan Hus were persecuted but endured to eventually form the Moravian Church. The Moravian Church is a full communion partner with the ELCA.

John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church, was profoundly influenced by the Moravians, and attributed much of his sense of "awakening" to their witness and example. He first experienced a Lovefeast among Moravians in Savannah, Georgia and recorded the experience in his diary as a service "worthy of Christ".

Moravians first celebrated the Lovefeast in 1727. It is intentionally designed as a simple service of song, during which participants are served a simple "meal". It is not a sacrament. It is an act of fellowship. The music and hymns communicate the message of the day, rather than a sermon. Participants are invited to simply engage, mediate, and reflect on the meaning of the season of Christmas.

CALL TO WORSHIP: *Please stand as able.*

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,

For he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.

By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high has broken upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,

To guide our feet into the way of peace.

For unto us a Child is born,

Unto us a Son is given.

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Thanks be to God for this gift beyond words.

My eyes have seen your salvation.

Which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples.

CAROL: ELW 288 Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

IN DULCI JUBILO

PRAYER OF THE DAY
Shine into our hearts the light of your wisdom, O God, **and open our minds to the knowledge of your word, that in all things we may think and act according to your good will and may live continually in the light of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

LESSON: Genesis 1: 1-5, 26-27
1In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, 2the earth was a formless void and
darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the
waters. 3Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4And God saw that the light was
good; and God separated the light from the darkness. 5God called the light Day, and the darkness
God called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.26Then God said, "Let
us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the
fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the
earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." 27So God created humankind in
God's image, in the image of God God created them; male and female God created them.

CAROL: ELW 861 (v.1-2) When Long before Time
THE SINGER AND THE SONG

LESSON: Genesis 18: 1-5, 9-15
1The LORD appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the
heat of the day. 2He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran
from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. 3He said, "My lord, if I find
favor with you, do not pass by your servant. 4Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and
rest yourselves under the tree. 5Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after
that you may pass on — since you have come to your servant." So they said, "Do as you have
said." 9They said to him, "Where is your wife Sarah?" And he said, "There, in the tent." 10Then one
said, "I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son." And Sarah was
listening at the tent entrance behind him. 11Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it
had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. 12So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After
I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?" 13The LORD said to Abraham, "Why
did Sarah laugh, and say, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?' 14Is anything too wonderful
for the LORD? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son." 15But
Sarah denied, saying, "I did not laugh"; for she was afraid. He said, "Oh yes, you did laugh."

CAROL: ELW 257 (v. 1, 3, 7-8) O Come, O Come Emmanuel
VENI, EMMANUEL

LESSON: Isaiah 9: 2, 6-7
2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep
darkness — on them light has shined. 6For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless
peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD
of hosts will do this.

CAROL: ELW 272 (v. 1-2) Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming
ES IST EIN ROS

LESSON: Micah 5: 2-4
2 But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come
forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.
3Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. 4And he shall stand and feed his
flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall
live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth;

CAROL: ELW 279 (v. 1, 4) O Little Town of Bethlehem
ST. LOUIS

LESSON: Luke 1: 26-35, 38
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. 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.

CAROL: ELW 265 (v. 1, 4) The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came
GABRIEL'S MESSAGE

LESSON: Matthew 1: 18-21
18Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been
engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy
Spirit. 19Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace,
planned to dismiss her quietly. 20But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord
appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your
wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21She will bear a son, and you are to name
him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

CAROL: ELW 300 (v. 1-2) The First Noel
THE FIRST NOWELL

INVITATION TO THE LOVEFEAST
In a Lovefeast in the Moravian church, servers, called "dieners" (German for "serve") distribute the lovefeast buns and the coffee throughout the pews. The coffee is decaf and has sugar and dairy-free milk cooked into it at the time of brewing. Hot tea and gluten-free buns are also available. Please do not begin eating or drinking until all have been served and shared the Blessing of the meal.

BLESSING
Come, Lord Jesus, our Guest to be,
and bless these gifts bestowed by thee.
Amen.

MUSIC DURING THE PARTAKING OF THE LOVEFEAST MEAL

When finished, please place your napkin in your cup. The dieners will come forward during the singing of Oh Come All Ye Faithful to receive the cups, which you may pass down to the center aisle.

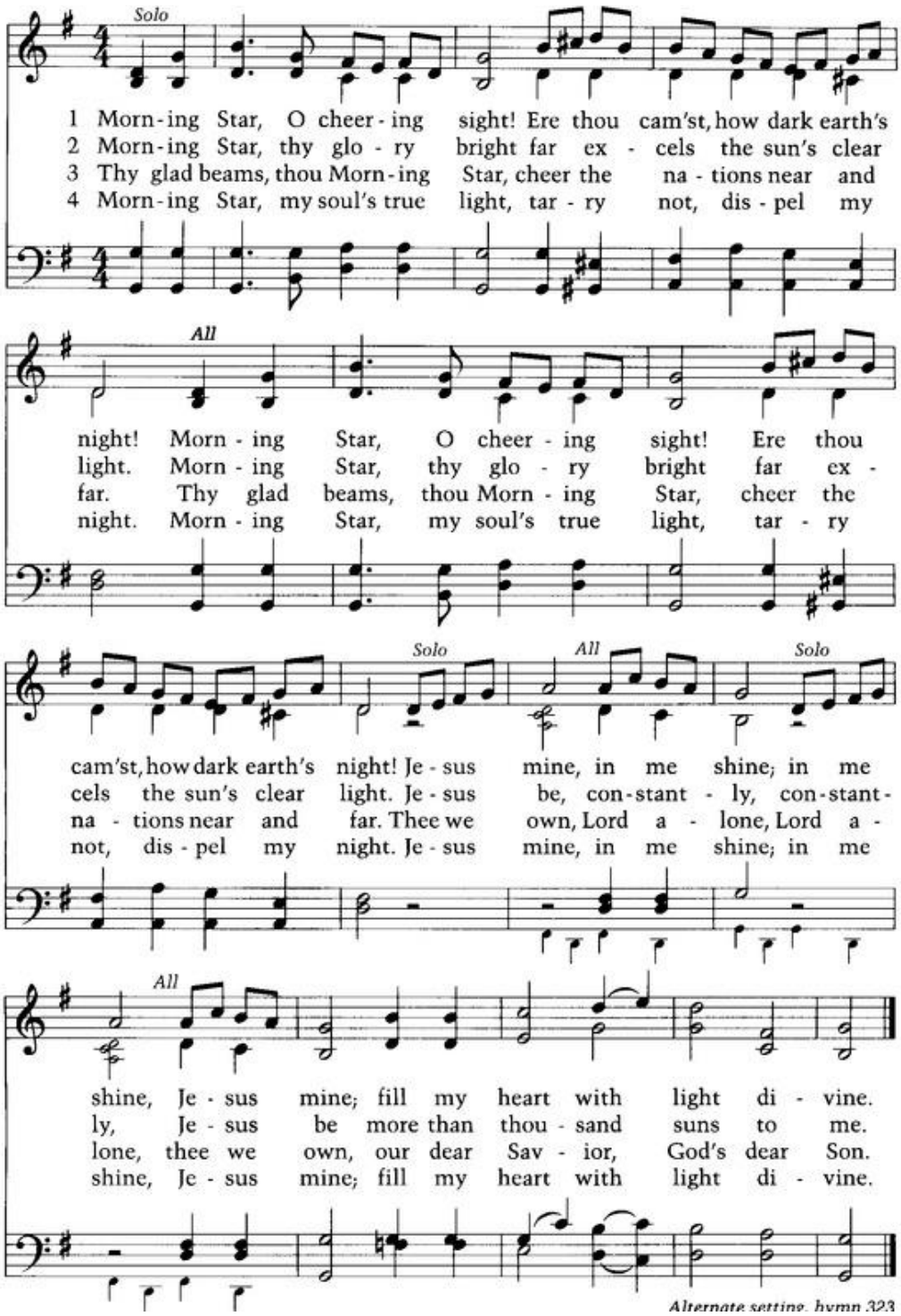
CAROL: ELW 283 O Come, All Ye Faithful
ADESTE FIDELES

LESSON: Luke 2:8-20
8In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by
night. 9Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them,
and they were terrified. 10But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you
good news of great joy for all the people: 11to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is
the Messiah, the Lord. 12This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth
and lying in a manger." 13And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host,
praising God and saying, 14"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those
whom he favors!" 15When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one
another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has
made known to us." 16So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the
manger. 17When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; 18and all
who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. 19But Mary treasured all these words
and pondered them in her heart. 20The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they
had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

CAROL: ELW 270 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing
MENDELSSOHN

LESSON: Matthew 2: 1-11
1In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came
to Jerusalem, 2asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his
star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." 3When King Herod heard this, he was
frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; 4and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the
people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. 5They told him, "In Bethlehem of
Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 6'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by
no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"7Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned
from them the exact time when the star had appeared. 8Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying,
"Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may
also go and pay him homage." 9When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of
them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child
was. 10When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. 11On entering the
house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then,
opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

CAROL: Morning Star, O Cheering Sight

The hymn, "Morning Star," is traditionally sung in Moravian Advent and Christmas services antiphonally. The soloist will sing the first line, with the congregation repeating it. The hymn continues in this manner throughout, as indicated in the music.

LESSON: John 1: 1-14

[1]In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [2]He was in the beginning with God. [3]All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being [4]in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. [5]The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. [6]There was a man sent from God,

whose name was John. 7He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. 8He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. 9The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. 10He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. 11He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. 12But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, 13who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. 14And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

CAROL: ELW 295 Of the Father's Love Begotten
DIVINIUM MYSTERIUM

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION
Each petition concludes "*God of grace."* We respond: "**receive our prayer.**"

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.

BLESSING:
The God of love, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, lavish you with grace, illumine your path, and increase your joy, today and always. **Amen.**

CAROL: ELW 290 Go Tell It on the Mountain
GO TELL IT

DISMISSAL
Go in peace. Proclaim the good news of Christ's birth. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Our Ministry Staff contacts are:

Rev. Emily Willhide.....pastoremily@incarnationlutheran.com
Dr. Patrick Hawkins; Dir. of Music & Organist.....music@incarnationlutheran.com
Kimi Dail; Faith Formation Coordinator.....youth@incarnationlutheran.com
Teresa Boykin; CDC Director.....cdc@incarnationlutheran.com
Bonnie McDaniel; Parish Administrator.....office@incarnationlutheran.com

Worship: Sundays at 10 a.m.

(10 a.m. Worship is also live streamed on Facebook.)
Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
3005 Devine Street, Columbia, SC 29205
Office: 803-256-2381
CDC: 803-661-6378
www.incarnationlutheran.com
www.facebook.com/IncarnationLutheranChurch