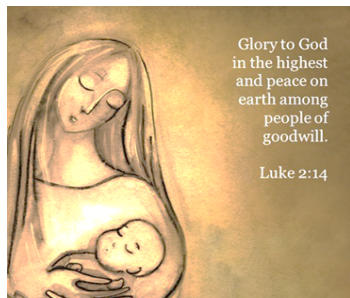


Festival of Lessons and Carol ~ December 29, 2024

Abiding Hope Lutheran Church

Rev. Karen Parsh, Pastor

Sheryl Williams, Music Coordinator



The Festival of Lessons and Carols has been a service of [worship](#) celebrating the New Year that tells the full story of the Messiah... starting with Mankind's need for a savior, the promise of the [Messiah](#), and the birth of Jesus, as told in short [Bible](#) readings from Genesis, the prophetic books and the Gospels, interspersed with the singing of [carols](#), [hymns](#) and choir music.

Prelude

Welcome one and all...

This morning, we say goodbye to the old year and look with hope and anticipation into the new year.

Though the darkness is deep, the Light of the World guides our way.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,

the Word made flesh, our life and our salvation. **Amen.**

Trusting the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior, let us confess our sin.

God of life, **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.

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. **Amen.**

Angels, from the Realms of Glory v.1,4



1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
2 Shep - herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,
3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;
4 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God, the Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son,



once you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - fant light.
seek the great de - sire of na - tions, you have seen his na - tal star.
ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing to the e - ter - nal Three in One.



Refrain



Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born king.



Prayer of the Day

Heavenly Father, **you gave your incarnate Son the holy name of Jesus to be a sign of our salvation. Plant in every heart the love of the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

Please be seated

FIRST LESSON: Genesis 1

In the beginning, O God, there was only you: Creator, Word and Breath.

¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.² Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.³ And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. ⁴ God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning, the first day.

When Long before Time v.1,2

1 When long be - fore time and the worlds were be - gun,
2 The si - lence was bro - ken when God sang the Song,
3 The sounds of the crea - tures were one with their Lord's,
4 Though down through the a - ges the Song dis - ap - peared,

when there was no earth and no sky and no sun,
and light pierced the dark - ness and rhy - thm be - gan,
their har - mo - nies sweet and be - fit - ting the Word;
its har - mo - nies bro - ken and al - most un - heard,

and all was deep si - lence and night reigned su - preme,
and with its first birth - cries cre - a - tion was born,
the Sing - er was pleased as the earth sang the Song,
the Sing - er comes to us to sing it a - gain,

and e - ven our Mak - er had on - ly a dream—
and crea - ture - ly voic - es sang praise to the morn.
the choir of the crea - tures re - ech - oed it long.
our God - is - with - us in the world now as then.

SECOND LESSON: Numbers 6:22-27

God commanded Aaron to say these words, known as the Aaronic benediction, in blessing the people of Israel.

²²The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²³Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the Israelites: You shall say to them, ²⁴The LORD bless you and keep you; ²⁵the LORD make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; ²⁶the LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. ²⁷So they shall put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming v.1,2

1 Lo, how a rose e'er bloom - ing from ten - der stem hath
2 I - sai - ah had fore - told it, the rose I have in
3 This flow'r, whose fra - grance ten - der with sweet-ness fills the
4 O Sav - ior, child of Mar - y, who felt our hu - man

sprung! Of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing as
mind; with Mar - y we be - hold it, the
air, dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor the
woe; O Sav - ior, king of glo - ry, who

seers of old have sung, it came, a flow'r so bright, a -
vir - gin moth - er kind. To show God's love a - right, she
dark-ness ev - 'ry - where. True man, yet ver - y God, from
dost our weak - ness know: bring us at length, we pray, to

mid the cold of win - ter, when half - spent was the night.
bore to us a Sav - ior, when half - spent was the night.
sin and death he saves us and light - ens ev - 'ry load.
the bright courts of heav - en and in - to end - less day.

THIRD LESSON: Isaiah 11:1-10

The king is coming and will usher in a reign of justice for the poor and peace for all of God's creation.

¹ Out of the stump of David's family will grow a shoot— yes, a new Branch bearing fruit from the old root.

² And the Spirit of the LORD will rest on him— the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

³ He will delight in obeying the LORD. He will not judge by appearance nor make a decision based on hearsay.

⁴ He will give justice to the poor and make fair decisions for the exploited. The earth will shake at the force of his word, and one breath from his mouth will destroy the wicked.

⁵ He will wear righteousness like a belt and truth like an undergarment.

⁶ In that day the wolf and the lamb will live together; the leopard will lie down with the baby goat. The calf and the yearling will be safe with the lion, and a little child will lead them all.

⁷ The cow will graze near the bear. The cub and the calf will lie down together. The lion will eat hay like a cow.

⁸ The baby will play safely near the hole of a cobra. Yes, a little child will put its hand in a nest of deadly snakes without harm.

⁹ Nothing will hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, for as the waters fill the sea, so the earth will be filled with people who know the LORD.

¹⁰ On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.



In the Bleak Midwinter v.1,2



1 In the bleak mid - win - ter, frost - y wind made moan,
2 Heav - en can - not hold him, nor . . . earth sus - tain;
3 What . . . can I give him, poor . . . as I am?



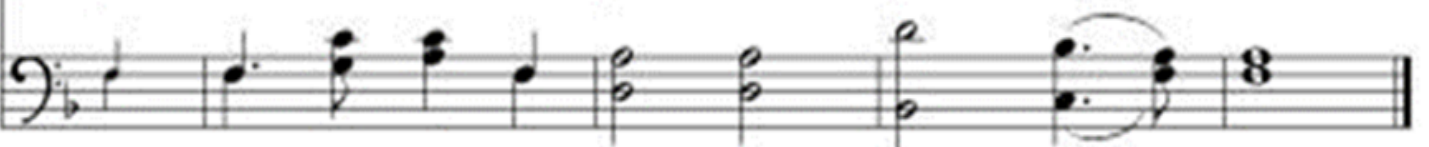
earth stood hard as i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;
heav'n and earth shall flee a - way when he comes to reign;
If I were a shep - herd I would bring a lamb;



snow had fall - en, snow on snow, snow on snow,
in the bleak mid - win - ter a sta - ble place suf - ficed
if I were a wise . . . man I would do my part;



in the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go,
the Lord . . . God al - might - y, Je - sus Christ.
yet what I can I give him— give my heart.



FOURTH LESSON: Luke 1:46-55

Mary declares her joy at bearing God's son

Mary's Song of Praise

⁴⁶ And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,
⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant. Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,
⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name;
⁵⁰ indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.
⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty.
⁵⁴ He has come to the aid of his child Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,
⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."



Mary's Song ~The Magnificat



1., 3. My soul pro-claims your great-ness, O God, and my
2. You have cast the might - y down from their thrones, and up -



spir - it re - joic - es in you. You have looked with love on your
lift - ed the hum - ble of heart. You have filled the hun - gry with



ser - vant here, and blessed me all my life through.
won - drous things, and left the wealth - y no part.



Great and might - y are you, O Ho - ly One,
Great and might - y are you, O Faith - ful One,



strong is your kind - ness ev - er - more. How you fa - vor the
strong is your jus - tice, strong your love, as you prom - ised to



weak and low - ly one, hum - bling the proud of heart!
Sar - ah and A - bra - ham, kind - ness for - ev - er - more.

FIFTH LESSON: Galatians 4:4-7

Paul proclaims the ultimate significance of the nativity: Jesus was born the Son of God so that, because of him, we all may be God's children.

⁴When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. ⁶And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Once in Royal David's City v.1,2



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,
2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and Lord of all,
3 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re - deem - ing love;
4 Not in that poor low - ly sta - ble, with the ox - en stand - ing by,



where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a man - ger for his bed:
and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall;
for that child so dear and gen - tle is our Lord in heav' n a - bove;
we shall see him; but in heav - en, set at God's right hand on high;



Mar - y was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.
with the poor and meek and low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
and he leads his chil - dren on to the place where he is gone.
there his chil - dren gath - er round, bright like stars, with glo - ry crowned.

Please stand

Gospel: Luke 2:1–21

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.^[a]

The Shepherds and the Angels



1 There's a star in the east on Christ-mas morn, rise up, shep-herd, and fol-low.
2 If you take good heed to the an-gel's words, rise up, shep-herd, and fol-low.



It will lead to the place where the Christ was born, rise up, shep-herd, and fol-low.
You'll for-get your flocks, you'll for-get your herds, rise up, shep-herd, and fol-low.



Refrain
Fol - low, fol - low, rise up, shep-herd, and fol - low.



Fol-low the star of Beth-le - hem, rise up, shep-herd, and fol-low.

⁸Now in that same 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,^[b] 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,^[c] praising God and saying, 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. ²¹After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

MARY'S LITTLE BOY CHILD

Long time ago in Bethlehem
So the holy Bible say, Mary's boy child – Jesus Christ,
Was born on Christmas day.

Hark now hear the angels sing the new king's born today,
And man will live forever more,
Because of Christmas day.

While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
They saw a bright new shining star, And hear a choir
from heaven sing; The music from afar.

Hark now hear the angels sing the new king's born today,
And man will live forevermore,
Because of Christmas day.

Now Joseph and his wife Mary Came to Bethlehem that night;
They found no place to bear her child;
Not a single room was in sight.

By and by they found a nook In a stable all forlorn,
And in a manger cold and dark,
Mary's little boy child was born.

Trumpets sound and angels sing; Listen to what they say,
That man will live forevermore,
Because of Christmas day.

Prayers of Intercession

Filled with good news of great joy, let us offer our prayers for the church, the earth, and all people. *A brief silence.*

For those who teach and those who learn, we pray. Bless the education ministries of your church. Guide school teachers, college, seminary professors, and Bible study leaders in ongoing faith formation and curiosity. God of grace,

receive our prayer.

For the thriving of creation, we pray. Protect the habitats of pangolins and porcupines, penguins and parrots, and all wild animals and creeping things. Increase our knowledge of the natural world and the care of its inhabitants. God of grace,

receive our prayer.

For the nations of the world, we pray. Raise up rulers who lead with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Let your peace rule in their hearts and in all lands. God of grace,

receive our prayer.

For the well-being of your people, we pray. Keep watch over all who travel this holiday season. Accompany those who are alone or ill. We pray especially for: Jonathan & Analee, Pat K., Linda, Marjorie, Jackie, Ed, Judi, Ron F., Sam & Dorothy Elder, Judy, Carolyn M., Larry & Barb, Tom, Esther, Kathi (Cindy Filson's sister), Dave P., Don & Donna, Evelyn and the prayer requests from our Little Library friends. Console parents and children whose relationships are strained or severed. God of grace,

receive our prayer.

For the ministry of Abiding Hope, we pray. Let the word of Christ dwell among us. In times of conflict, clothe us in love and move us to forgiveness. God of grace,

receive our prayer.

For your holy, beloved, and chosen ones of every time and place, we give thanks. Draw us all into everlasting praise and joy. God of grace,

receive our prayer.

PASTOR'S PRAYER

We commend these prayers to you, O God, trusting your grace made known to all, through the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE

Peace be with you. And also with you.

Please be seated

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING and PRESENTATION of GIFTS

Choir Anthem ~ *Christmas Canon*

Please stand

OFFERTORY HYMN ~ **ELW 276** *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Lord of Christmas and New Beginnings,

We are mindful of the supreme gift that you gave us in a manger at Bethlehem. Humbly we offer our gifts of service and possessions in joyful thanksgiving for the love you have shown us. Accept these gifts for the sake of your Son who was born to us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Know that the Lord is your God.

And great is our God. Amen.

Praise the name of the Lord!

Give thanks to the God who saves us! Amen!

Psalm 96

Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord and bless his name; proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations and his wonders among all peoples.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise Christ the Lord!

For 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 in 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 in remembrance of me.

Remembering Christ, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

This is the celebration of God's love among us. Let us 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.

Please be seated

COMMUNION

May the body and blood of the risen and saving Lord Jesus the Christ, bless and keep you forever in God's grace. **Amen.**

COMMUNION HYMN ~ ELW 292 Love Has Come

Instrumental Meditation

SEVENTH LESSON John 1:1 –14

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. In 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...⁹The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He 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.

Please stand

SENDING PRAYER

God our redeemer, **you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

BLESSING

Go into the Light of God's eternal, inspiring Love. Go to be those who bring peace, love, hope and joy. And God will always be with you. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN ~ ELW 299 *Cold December Flies Away*

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

PARISH NOTES ~ December 29, 2024

Pastor Karen Parsh ~ 814-881-3266

Office: 814-868-8685 ~ ahadministrator@hotmail.com

FB: [abidinghopelutheranchurch](https://www.facebook.com/abidinghopelutheranchurch) www.abidinghopeerie.org

Please keep these members and friends in your prayers:

Jonathan & Analee Cree, Pat Kerr, Linda Allen, Marjorie Wonner, Jackie Seib, Ed Whitbred, Judi Pacileo, Ron Froess, Sam & Dorothy Elder, Judy Nordin, Carolyn Mariotti, Larry & Barb Ruhlman, Tom Cirillo, Esther Klakamp, Kathi (Cindy Filson's sister), Dave Parsh, Don & Donna Holder, Evelyn Senger, and prayer requests from our Little Library friends.

Receiving Communion: If it is a challenge for you to come forward to receive communion, please alert the usher and you will be served communion at your seat.

Sunday, December 29: Choir ~ 9:00a & 10:45a Brief Rehearsal

Today, December 29: World Hunger 5th Sunday. A time for members to contribute financial support to help meet the needs of a hungry world. **Envelopes are available in the pews for cash or check donations.** If using a check, make it payable to Abiding Hope, indicating ELCA World Hunger in the memo line, and place your gift in the offering plate. **Thank you for your generosity.**

Sunday, January 5: Choir ~ 9:00a Worship ~ 9:30a

Choir will be on hiatus for the remainder of January. Rehearsal will resume February 2, 2025. No anthem that Sunday.

Thank you to the congregation for my very generous Christmas gift. I am so blessed to have such loving and supportive friends who appreciate the many musicians who share their offerings with our church! Merry Christmas! ~ Sheryl Williams

Sunday, January 5: KAFP 24 Days of Advent Food Drive. Final Donations.

Monday, January 6: Epiphany of Our Lord, Service of Holy Communion followed by Burning of the Greens at Faith Lutheran Church, 7:00p

KAFP Project Dignity: Items for Jan.-deodorant. There is a basket on the shelf in the Heritage Room.

Altar Flowers: Anyone who wishes to **donate flowers** for Sunday worship, weekly sign-up sheet and request forms are on the table in narthex. Arrangements-\$**20.00 each**. Place the **completed form and payment** in the offering plate, or to the office at least two weeks, no less than one, prior to your chosen Sunday.

Office Hours ~ New Year's Week: Monday, 930a-330p. Tuesday, 930a-3:30p. Friday, 9:30a-12:30p. For **immediate pastoral assistance**, call **Pastor Karen**, 814-881-3266.

Worship Leaders ~ December 29, 2024

Videographer	Analee Cree
Greeter/Coffee	Mary Randall
Assisting Minister-Acolyte	Donna Holder
Lector/Prayers	Analee Cree
Communion Cups	Mary Randall
Communion Tray	Michele Rion
Presenter	Diana Stoker
Presenter	Lois Kuhns
Usher	Volunteer
Usher	Andy Saska
Counters	Andy & Kayla

Have you ever wondered what makes Abiding Hope different from other churches? What do Lutherans believe and why? Are you interested in brushing up on your LUTHERAN KNOWLEDGE? Would you enjoy studying the great stories of how we became a church and what we believe? Well, sign up for the 6-week class on Lutheranism and find out!

Lutheranism For All Believers

Lutheranism 101



WHEN: First Class is Thursday, January 16th at 1PM and continues every Thursday for 6 weeks

WHERE: 3649 Gerry Ave. (Pastor Karen's new house)

WHO: Anyone with an interest in learning, especially new members

TEACHER: Pastor Karen

INTERESTED? Sign-up sheet is in the narthex or call the church office at 814-868-8685 to RSVP.

