

## 2023 Christmas Poinsettias

### In Memory of . . .

In memory of our parents, Russell & Madeline Vitale, and Roland & Frances Hoenecke from Russ and Mona Vitale  
In memory of loved ones from Jim and Kathy Vanisacker  
In memory of loved ones from Ken and Gail Heusman  
In memory of David C. Holsen and Arvin Schneck from Bryan and Deanna Schneck  
In memory of Kenneth and Margaret Pitcher from Carol Pitcher  
In memory of loved ones from Bari and Wendy Waltz  
In memory of Hazel (Birdie) Duby from Mark and Paula Kipf  
In memory of Gary Nied from Beth and family  
In memory of Dannie Younglove and all family members gone from Lee A. Younglove  
In memory of Larry Miller and Tim Miller from Annette Miller and family  
In memory of our parents: Frank & Evelyn Tomczak and Roger & Della Premo from Frank and Kris Tomczak  
In memory of Nora & Henry Kiiffner and Anne & Andy Bober from Alan and Dottie Bober  
In memory of Bob McLaughlin from Nancy McLaughlin  
In memory of Lloyd & Audrey Miller and Elijah Gedelian from Jim and Denise Miller  
In memory of Rita Raasch from Howard Raasch and Juergen and Lorrie Koenig  
In memory of loved ones from Carol Eshelman and family  
In memory of parents Leonard and Leona Selvidge and brother Robert Selvidge from Linda C. Selvidge  
In memory of our parents from Ray and Melanie Palmatier  
In memory of Ernest & Margaret Howerton and Urban & MaryJane Trowbridge from Robert and Joyce Trowbridge  
In memory of Peggy Lanagan from Barbra Krueger  
In memory of Lyle Kull, Kevin Kull, Kristie Fultz, and Billie Duvall from Maxine Kull

### For Blessings Received . . .

Beth and Bryce Mueller  
Ray and Brenda Chandonnet  
Marv and Jean Baumann  
Larry and Deb Sachs  
The blessing of our 3 grandchildren & the coming of 2 more in mid 2024 from Mark and Sherry Fuerstenberg



**WELCOME!** *Welcome to all visitors that are with us tonight celebrating the birth of our Savior from sin. We pray that God's Word has given you the comfort and assurance that your sins are paid for and forgiven by Jesus Christ. What a wonderful Christmas present God has given us all!*

### OFFICIANTS:

Accompanist: *Stephanie Sitzman*  
Liturgist & Lector: *Pastor Greg Sitzman*

*From our family here at Zion to yours,  
we wish you a very blessed Christmas and a  
Christ-filled New Year!*



*"TODAY IN THE TOWN OF DAVID, A SAVIOR  
WAS BORN FOR YOU.  
HE IS CHRIST, THE LORD." (EHV)  
LUKE 2:11*

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

Our worship this evening is an adaptation of the *Lessons and Carols* service traditionally held at King's College, Cambridge, England, on December 24<sup>th</sup> every year. *Lessons and Carols* was first held on Christmas Eve, 1918. It was planned by Eric Milner-White, who at the age of thirty-four had just been appointed Dean of King's College after experience as an army chaplain.

Lessons for tonight have been used for almost 100 years to recall God's promise to send a Savior, as well as that promise's fulfillment.

The carols that are historically used in this service are carefully chosen because of their relationship to the lesson they follow.

### PRAYER

P: When all was still and the fullness of time had come, your eternal Word, O Lord, descended from the almighty throne to dwell among us. May we receive him in the peace of forgiven hearts and proclaim your gracious good will to all people on earth; for you are the God with us, Emanuel, through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

### BLESSING

P: May he who by his incarnation gathered into one, things earthly and heavenly, fill us with such joy that comes with the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life. And the blessing of God Almighty: the Father, the Son (✠), and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always.

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn: Hymn: CW 60

“Silent Night”

**1 Silent night! Holy night!  
All is calm, all is bright,  
Round yon virgin mother and child.  
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace,  
Sleep in heavenly peace.**

**2 Silent night! Holy night!  
Shepherds quake at the sight.  
Glories stream from heaven afar;  
Heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia;  
Christ, the Savior, is born!  
Christ, the Savior, is born!**

**3 Silent night! Holy night!  
Son of God, love's pure light  
Radiant beams from thy holy face  
With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.**

**3 Come to Bethlehem and see  
Him whose birth the angels sing;  
Come, adore on bended knee  
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.**  
*Refrain*

Narration

Eighth Lesson: Luke 2:13-20 - The Shepherds Visit the Manger

Hymn: CWS 707

**“Peace Came to Earth”**

**1 Peace came to earth at last that chosen night  
When angels clove the sky with song and light  
And God embodied love and sheathed his might—  
Who could but gasp: Immanuel! Who could but sing: Immanuel!**

**2 And who could be the same for having held  
The infant in their arms and later felt  
The wounded hands and side, all doubts dispelled—  
Who could but sigh: Immanuel! Who could but shout: Immanuel!**

**3 You show the Father none has ever seen,  
In flesh and blood you bore our griefs and pain,  
In bread and wine you visit us again—  
Who could but see: Immanuel! Who could but thrill: Immanuel!**

**4 How else could I have known you, O my God!  
How else could I have loved you, O my God!  
How else could I embrace you, O my God!  
Who could but pray: Immanuel! Who could but praise: Immanuel!**

Narration

Ninth Lesson: John 1:1-14 - The Mystery of the Incarnation

**2023 CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE OF  
LESSONS AND CAROLS  
ZION EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH, MONROE, MI**



Greeting & Opening Announcements

Opening Hymn: CW 52

**“On Christmas Night All Christians Sing”**

**1. On Christmas night all Christians sing  
To hear the news the angels bring;  
On Christmas night all Christians sing  
To hear the news the angels bring,  
News of great joy, news of great mirth,  
News of our merciful King’s birth.**

**2. When sin departs before your grace,  
Then life and health come in its place.  
When sin departs before your grace,  
Then life and health come in its place.  
Angels and saints with joy may sing  
All for to see the newborn King.**

**3. From out of darkness we have light  
Which made the angels sing this night.  
From out of darkness we have light  
Which made the angels sing this night:  
“Glory to God and peace to men  
Now and forevermore. Amen.”**

Lighting of Candles

**EXHORTATION AND PRAYER**

**M:** Beloved in Christ: In this Christmas season it is our duty and delight to hear again the message of the angels and, in heart and mind, to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us, the Christ-child, lying in a manger.

Let us read and learn in Holy Scripture the story of the loving purposes of God from the first days after our fall into sin to the glorious redemption brought to us by this Holy Child.

But first, let us pray for people all over the world, who would delight with us to know the good news of Jesus Christ and who would join with us in singing his praises. Let us pray for the people of our community and for all those in our own congregation.

And because this would please our Lord, let us remember, in his name, the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry, and the oppressed; the sick and those who are sad, the lonely and the unloved, the elderly and the little children. We especially remember all those who do not know the Lord Jesus, or who do not love him, or who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

Finally, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us in heaven, who live in greater light than we, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, who died in faith, and who live before the throne of God and praise him each day in his temple. We confess that we are united with them as we are united with one another.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven in the words Christ himself taught us:

**C: 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.**

Hymn: CW 68

**“Away in a Manger”**

**1 Away in a manger, no crib for a 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.**

**2 The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,  
But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.  
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,  
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.**

**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 take us to heaven to live with you there.**

Narration

Seventh Lesson: Luke 2:8-12 - The Angels Announce Jesus' Birth to the Shepherds

Hymn: CW 63

**“Angels We Have Heard on High”**

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

*Refrain:*

**Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

**2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
Which inspire your heav'nly song?**

*Refrain*

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 Immanuel!

Narration

Fifth Lesson: Luke 1:26-35, 38 - The Angel Gabriel Visits Mary

Hymn: CW 24

**“The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came”**

- 1 The angel Gabriel from heaven came,  
His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;  
“All hail,” said he to meek and lowly Mary,  
“Most highly favored maiden.” Gloria!
- 2 “I come from heav’n to tell the Lord’s decree:  
A blessed virgin mother you shall be.  
Your Son shall be Immanuel, by seers foretold,  
Most highly favored maiden.” Gloria!
- 3 Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head;  
“To me be as it pleases God,” she said.  
“My soul shall praise and magnify his holy name.”  
Most highly favored maiden, Gloria!
- 4 Of her Immanuel, the Christ, was born  
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,  
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say,  
“Most highly favored maiden.” Gloria!

**PART II  
THE FULFILLMENT**

Narration

Sixth Lesson: Luke 2:1-7 - The Birth of Jesus

**PART I  
THE PROPHECY**

Narration

First Lesson: Genesis 3:8-15 - The Seed of the Woman Will Crush the Serpent’s Head

Hymn: CW 28 (vs. 1, 4 - 6)

**“Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord”**

1. Let the earth now praise the Lord,  
Who has truly kept his word  
and at last to us did send  
Christ, the sinner’s help and friend
4. Welcome, O my Savior, now!  
Joyful, Lord, to you I bow.  
Come into my heart, I pray;  
Oh, prepare yourself away.
5. Crush for me the serpents’ head  
That, set free from doubt and dread,  
I may cling to you in faith,  
Safely kept through life and death.
6. And, when you shall come again  
As a glorious king to reign,  
I with joy may see your face,  
Freely ransomed by your grace.

Narration

Second Lesson: Genesis 22:15-18 - God’s Promises to Abraham

Hymn: CW 35 (vs. 1-3)

**“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”**

**1. Of the Father’s Love begotten  
Ere the worlds began to be,  
He is Alpha and Omega,  
He the source, the ending He,  
Of the things that are, that have been,  
And that future years shall see  
Evermore and evermore.**

**2. Oh, that birth forever blessed  
When the virgin full of grace,  
By the Holy Ghost conceiving,  
Bore the Savior of our race,  
And the babe, the world’s Redeemer,  
First revealed his sacred face  
Evermore and evermore.**

**3. This is He whom heav’n taught singers  
Sang of old with one accord;  
Whom the Scriptures of the prophets  
Promised in their faithful word.  
Now He shines, the long expected;  
Let creation praise its Lord  
Evermore and evermore.**

Narration

Third Lesson: Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 - The People Who Walked in Darkness Have  
Seen a Great Light

Hymn: CW 90 (vs.1-4)

**“The People That In Darkness Sat”**

**All: 1. The people that in darkness sat  
A glorious light have seen;  
The light has shone on them who long  
In shades of death have been,  
In shades of death have been.**

**Women:**

**2. To us a child of hope is born,  
To us a son is giv’n,  
And on his shoulders ever rests  
All pow’r in earth and heav’n,  
All pow’r in earth and heav’n.**

**Men:**

**3. His name shall be the Prince of Peace,  
The Everlasting Lord,  
The Wonderful, the Counselor,  
The God by all adored,  
The God by all adored.**

**All:**

**4. His righteous government and pow’r  
Shall over all extend;  
On judgment and on justice based,  
His reign shall have no end,  
His reign shall have no end.**

Narration

Fourth Lesson: Micah 5:2-4 - From Bethlehem Will Come the Ruler of Israel

Hymn: CW 65 (vs. 1-4)

**“O Little Town of Bethlehem”**

**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.**

**2 For Christ is born of Mary, And, gathered all above,  
While mortals sleep, The angels keep Their watch of wond’ring love.  
O morning stars, together Proclaim the holy birth,  
And praises sing To God the King And peace to all the earth.**

**3 How silently, how silently The wondrous gift is giv’n!  
So God imparts To human hearts The blessings of his heav’n.  
No ear may hear his coming, But in this world of sin  
Where meek souls will Receive him still, The dear Christ enters in.**