

# Festival Service of Joy Christmas Eve December 24, 2025 8 p.m.

## We hope you feel welcome here.

St. Thomas Lutheran Church is a Christ-centered community that lives, shares, and celebrates God's grace with all people!

As disciples of Christ who value the faith, gifts, and ministry of all God's people, and who seek justice, racial equity, and reconciliation, we welcome all God's children to an inclusive community. This welcome is extended without exception and regardless of sex, race, national origin, educational background, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical and mental ability, age, or economic condition.

## We hope you can participate fully in worship.

Everything needed to participate in today's worship is found in this bulletin. Worshipers are invited to stand as you are able at the places marked \* and to respond when indicated with bold type. We gently remind you to silence all electronic devices.

Our youngest worshipers and their caregivers may appreciate the Prayer Pond in the worship space or listening to the service from our unstaffed nursery. Activity bags and children's bulletins are available on the Worship Aids column in the narthex.

Assisted hearing devises and large-print worship aids are available on the Worship Aids column in the narthex. The blue chairs with arms are reserved for people with mobility limitations. Ushers can remove chairs to place a wheelchair.

## We hope you know Holy Communion is for you.

At communion, everyone is welcome. This includes doubters, young children, and folks who have yearned for this feast. Come forward at the direction of an usher and receive hand-torn bread or gluten-free wafers and pink wine or red grape juice. If you have mobility limitations, please take the closest available place at the altar, or ask an usher for Communion to be brought to you at your seat.

## We hope you know our welcome extends beyond our building.

Today's service is livestreamed. By attending this service, you are giving permission to be in the video we produce.

# We hope you know we pray for you.

We would love to pray for the concerns of your heart during this service. Prayer request slips are located on the table near the main doors; prayer requests made before the service begins will be included in the Prayers of the People.

#### + GATHERING +

#### **PRELUDE**



Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711–1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–1880, sts. 1, 3–4; tr. unknown, st. 2 Music: ADESTE FIDELES, attr. John Francis Wade

#### \*LITANY

P: Come! Look upon the baby Jesus, cradled in the arms of his mother.

C: Seeing this wondrous sight, may our hearts be comforted and our spirits filled with peace.

P: Come! Listen to choirs of angels announcing good news to all people.

C: Hearing this marvelous song, may we too sing: Glory to God in the highest!

P: Come! Receive this ancient story in your heart, not as history but as a gift.

C: Opening our hearts to this great mystery, may Christ be born in us today.

#### \*GREETING

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

C: And also with you.

Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, The Crown of Jesus Music, 1864 Music: GLORIA, French carol; arr. Edward S. Barnes, 1887–1958

#### \*PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray. Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

#### +WORD+

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Pr. Lecia Beck

Titus 2:11-14

FIRST READING Isaiah 9:2-7

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. You have multiplied exultation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, an heir given to us; upon whose shoulders authority rests, and this one is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. This authority will be great, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. Establishing and upholding it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

L: Word of God, word of life.

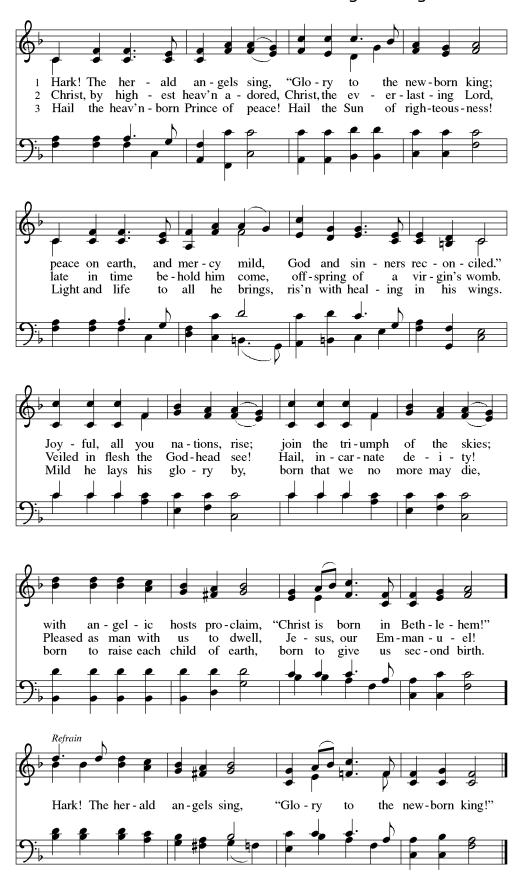
C: Thanks be to God.

#### SECOND READING

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

L: Word of God, word of life.

C: Thanks be to God.



\*HOLY GOSPEL Luke 2:1-20

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

## C: Glory to you, O Lord.

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And 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.

Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom God favors!"

When 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." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON Pr. Adrianne Meier



Text: African American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work Jr., 1872–1925, stanzas, alt. Music: GO TELL IT, African American spiritual

#### \*NICENE CREED

A: Together, let us confess our faith.

C: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and Earth, of all that 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; was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. 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. who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who 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 THE CHURCH

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

## Each petition ends:

A: God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

## Concluding petition:

A: 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.

C: Amen.

#### \*SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

## C: And also with you.

Share the peace with a wave, a bow, or maybe an elbow, checking in with your neighbor for whatever feels safe and conveys the spirit of peace and reconciliation this ritual intends.

#### **OFFERING**

Please sign and pass the **Together In Community pads**. Make note of the names of your neighbors so you can introduce yourself after the service.





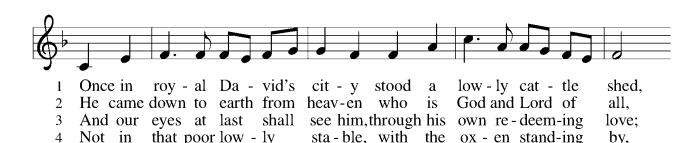
An offering is collected as a grateful response for all of God's gifts. Gifts support St. Thomas's mission of living, sharing, and celebrating God's grace with all people. A portion of our offerings support Lutheran Campus Ministries at IU/Rose House and many local, national, and international ministry partners. You may place gifts in the offering plate as it reaches you or give on our website, stlconline.org (the QR code above on the right will direct you).

Use the QR code above on the left to add your volunteer hours to our 5000-hour challenge.

CHORAL ANTHEM

Your Little Ones, Dear Lord

Johann Schulz





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



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

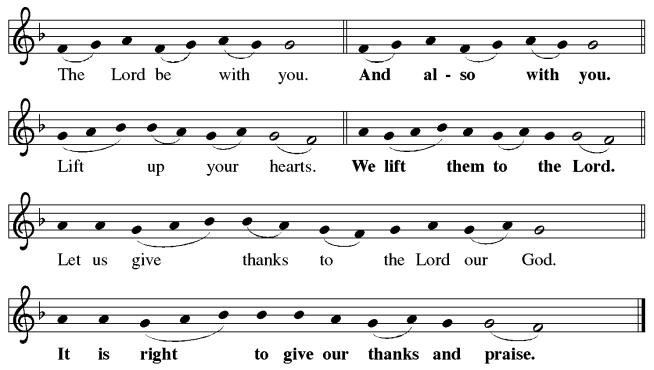
Text: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818–1895 Music: IRBY, Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805–1876

#### \*OFFERTORY PRAYER

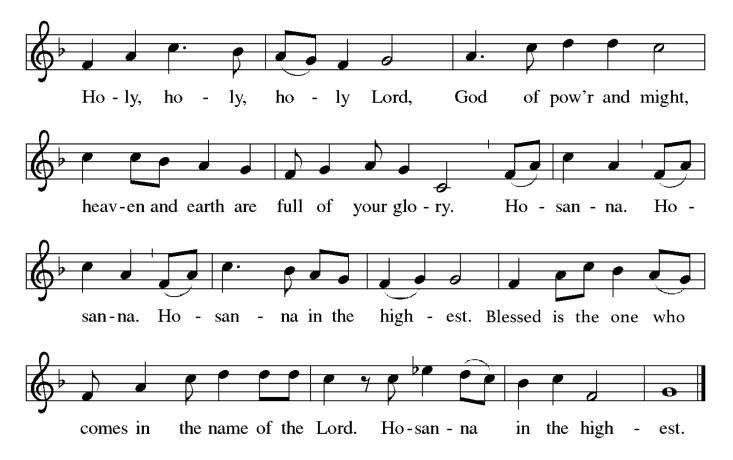
A: Let us pray. Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

#### \*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING



P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy ... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



#### \*EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The thanksgiving includes these responses:

P: ... let us proclaim the mystery of faith.

C: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

P: ... we look with hope for his coming.

C: Come, Lord Jesus.

P: ... bring the gift of peace on Earth.

C: Come, Holy Spirit.

P: ... one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

#### \*LORD'S PRAYER

Speak this prayer in your preferred language. The pastor will continue when all versions are complete. Norwegian is provided on the right.

C: Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on Earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

Vår Far i himmelen!
La navnet ditt helliges.
La riket ditt komme.
La viljen din skje på jorden slik som i himmelen.
Gi oss i dag vårt daglige brød, og tilgi oss vår skyld, slik også vi tilgir våre skyldnere.
Og la oss ikke komme i fristelse, men frels oss fra det onde.
For riket er ditt og makten og æren i evighet. Amen.

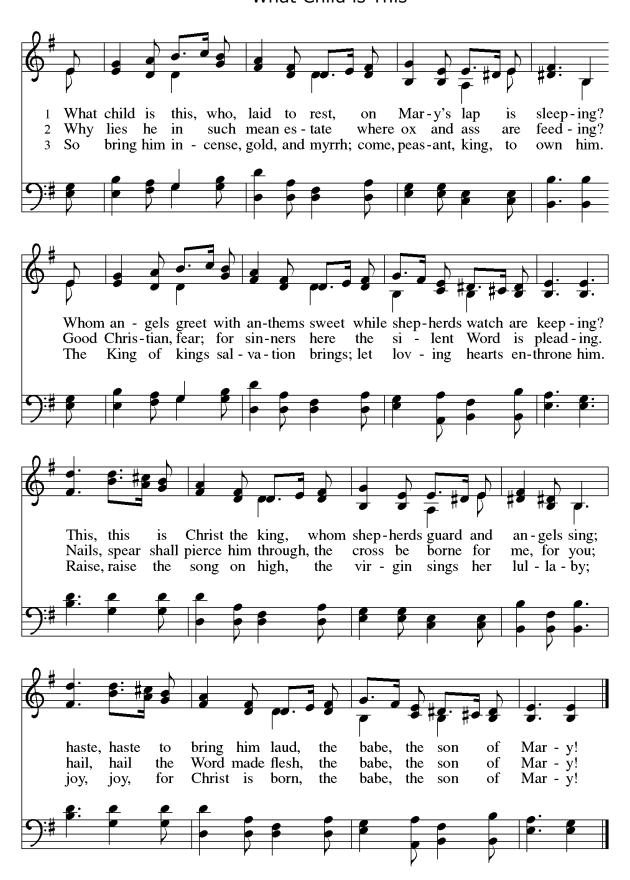
#### \*INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Here is life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised.

We believe that God is our host and that all people are welcome to this feast of grace, community, and forgiveness. Come forward at the direction of an usher, and receive bread or gluten-free wafer and wine in a common chalice or pink wine and red grape juice in individual cups. If you wish to receive a blessing, cross your arms over your chest.

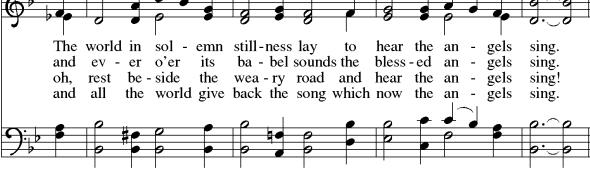
COMMUNION HYMNS	What Child is This	ELW#296
	It Came Upon a Midnight Clear	ELW#282
	O Little Town of Bethlehem	ELW#279

#### What Child is This



Text: William C. Dix, 1837–1898 Music: GREENSLEEVES, English ballad, 16th cent.





Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810–1876 Music: CAROL, Richard S. Willis, 1819–1900

#### O Little Town of Bethlehem



Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835–1893 Music: ST. LOUIS, Lewis H. Redner, 1831–1908

#### \*EUCHARISTIC BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace.

C: Amen.

#### \*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A: Let us pray. Radiant God, with our eyes we have seen your salvation, and in this meal we have feasted on your grace. May your Word take flesh in us, that we may be your holy people, revealing your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

#### + SENDING +

\*GOSPEL OF LIGHT

John 1:1-5, 9-14

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

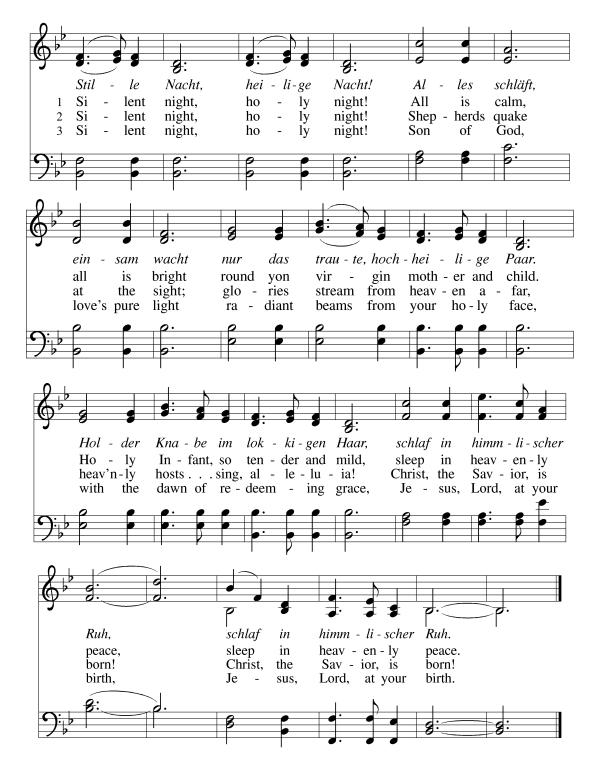
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through the Word, without whom not one thing came into being. What has come into being in the Word was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. The light was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of a man, but of God. And 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.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Share the light as it comes to you. Please do not tip a lit candle. Join in singing:

Sing German verse, then all verses in English



#### \*BENEDICTION

P: On this holy night, may the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, keep your hearts and your minds in + Christ Jesus our Lord.

### C: Amen.

You may extinguish your candles. (Hold upright until the wax is set.)



#### \*DISMISSAL

A: Christ the Savior is born! Go in Peace. Proclaim this good news.

C: Thanks be to God.

#### **POSTLUDE**

We depart in peace to continue our worship in lives of witness to Christ's love in work, play, service, and care for creation.

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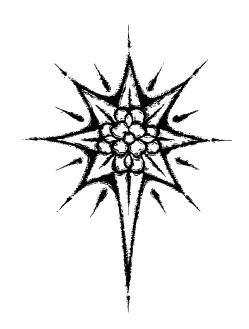
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The readings are selected from the Revised Common Lectionary. The texts for the scripture readings are from the *New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition*, emendations are provided by the pastoral staff of St. Thomas.

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# From Pastor Adrianne, Pastor Lecia, and the church staff:

We are deeply grateful for your seasonal expressions of caring and appreciation for our work among you. We pray that each of you will be richly blessed throughout Christmastide and in the New Year!



# **First Sunday of Christmas**

Let our gladness have no end! Continue the celebration of Christ's coming with worship and brunch! Enjoy our strum-along worship on Sunday, December 28 at 9:30 a.m. and bring a dish to share at the brunch which follows.

# **Welcome Table for the Hungry Folks**

We will gather **Saturday, December 27 at 10 a.m.** to pack 140 sack lunches for the hungry folks who gather at First Christian Church, served on Sundays for a meal at their Welcome Table. The number of guests at this event has greatly increased, so we are making more lunches than in the past. Our packing events happen once a quarter and are a really fun way to offer God's love to those who need a bit of care. People of all ages are welcome. The funds for this project come from Thrivent Grants. In our sack lunches we like to offer homemade desserts. If you would like to bake a treat, please sign up on the Welcome Desk. Packing volunteers should also sign up for the event at the Welcome Desk. If you are a Thrivent member and would like to offer to do a grant, please do! For more information, please contact Allison Ward.

# **Epiphany Retreat on Saturday, January 3**

As we look to the new year, make plans to attend a half-day retreat on **Saturday, January 3, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m**. Begin the new year with the presence of God and purpose. This retreat is for adult, teen, and middle school-aged members and friends of St. Thomas.

## **Worship Leaders**

Altar Care: Shirley Mingee, Nancy Nye, Gail Seegert

Bread & Wine: Allison Ward

Prayer Writer: Mary Thomason-Smith

A/V Tech: Johnthan Frank

Presiding Minister: Pastor Adrianne Meier Assisting Minister: Pastor Lecia Beck

Lectors: Carolyn Sowinski, Ashley Ahlbrand

Acolyte: Elaina Iversen

Ushers: Susan Kinzer, Spencer Anspach Communion Steward: Ian Bensberg

Greeters: Tim & Jennifer Garl

Council Coordinator: Ashley Ahlbrand



# The Poinsettias are given by

Dean & Sandy Arnold, Dawn & Robert Brunner, Lynn & Ute Coyne, Johnathan Frank, Gary & Helen Ingersoll, Paul & Yvonne Leber, LeAnne Lipe, Matt & Adrianne Meier, Randy & Nancy Nye, John & Amy Poehlmann, Carol Seaman, the Smedley family, and Kris Stewart.

# ST. THOMAS EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Rev. Lecia Beck Pastor of Youth and Christian Nurture <a href="mailto:christiannurture@stlconline.org">christiannurture@stlconline.org</a>

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Ben Wegner Adult Choir Director choir@stlconline.org

Melissa de Graaf Children's Choir Director

St. Thomas Lutheran Church and LCM-IU are Reconciling in Christ Ministries

We are a Christ-centered community that lives, shares and celebrates God's grace with all people!