



December 25, 2022

ABIDING LOVE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS)

3205 S. Chiquita Blvd., Cape Coral, Florida 33914

Interim Pastor – Rev. Mark S. Voss – 303-808-0611 (cell)

Staff Minister Mr. Ben Mahnke -- church office-239-984-1441

www.abiding-love.com

www.abidinglovepreschool.com

Church email: info@abiding-love.com

Preschool email: preschool@abiding-love.com

December 25, 2022

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

WELCOME!

Thank you for joining us in worship today. In our service we gather before Jesus our Savior to offer him worship and praise. We also gather to strengthen ourselves through the study of God's holy and powerful word.

- Restrooms are located to the left as you exit the sanctuary.
- The Elders request that we observe five minutes of quiet time in the sanctuary prior to the start of each service. Please be seated and use this time to prepare for worship and read the bulletin announcements.
- We love families! Your children are welcome in our service, *including our youngest children!* Thanks for bringing them to hear about Jesus. If you would like, there are children's worship bags with lessons, crayons, and books in the entryway of the church. An usher can assist you. We ask that you return these to the basket after the service.
- **Information:** We ask all our members and visitors to please complete a yellow information card located in the seat backs. These will be collected by the ushers during the offering.
- **Please silence your cell phones.**

**OUR WORSHIP SERVICE
THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD**

Pastor's Welcome

Opening Litany

P: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: To us a child is born!

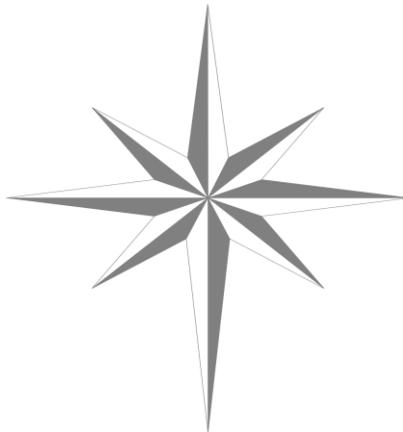
C: To us a Son is given!

P: The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

C: We have seen his glory; the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father full of grace and truth!

P: From the fullness of his grace we have received one blessing after another.

C: Oh, come let us adore him!



O Come, All Ye Faithful

CW 354



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
 2 God from true God, and Light from Light e - ter - nal,
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come_ ye to Beth - le - hem!
 born of a vir - gin, to earth he comes!
 sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav'n a - bove!
 Je - sus, to thee_ be all glo - ry giv'n!



Come and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels:
 On - ly - be - got - ten Son of God the Fa - ther:
 Glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the high - est:
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

*Refrain*

O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

Confession and Absolution

P: Our iniquities have separated us from God; our sins have hidden his face from us, so that he will not hear. We look for light, but all is darkness; for brightness, but we walk in deep shadows. We look for deliverance, but it is far away.

A moment for silent confession . . .

P: God invites us to come into his presence and worship him with humble and penitent hearts. Therefore, let us acknowledge our sinfulness and ask him to forgive us.

C: Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful, and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior, Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me a sinner.

P: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

C: Let the name of the Lord be praised forever and ever. Alleluia!

Carol of the Crib

Away in a Manger

CW 341



1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed,
 2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay



the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head.
 but lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes.
 close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.



The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
 I love you, Lord Je - sus; look down from the sky,
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in your ten - der care,



the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 and stay by my side un - til morn - ing is nigh.
 and take us to heav - en to live with you there.

Text (sts. 1–2): The Myrtle, Boston, 1884; (st. 3): Vineyard Songs, Louisville, 1892, alt.
 Tune: William J. Kirkpatrick, 1838–1921
 Text and tune: Public domain

Prayer of the Day

P: Almighty God, grant that the birth of your only Son in the flesh may set us free from our old bondage under the yoke of sin; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

+ God's Word for Christmas +

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 52:7–10

Sharing Christmas

⁷How beautiful on the mountains
are the feet of those who bring good news,
who proclaim peace,
who bring good tidings,
who proclaim salvation,
who say to Zion,
“Your God reigns!”

⁸Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices;
together they shout for joy.
When the LORD returns to Zion,
they will see it with their own eyes.

⁹Burst into songs of joy together,
you ruins of Jerusalem,
for the LORD has comforted his people,
he has redeemed Jerusalem.

¹⁰The LORD will lay bare his holy arm
in the sight of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth will see
the salvation of our God.

P: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle

Titus 3:4–7

The birth of Jesus brings the hope of eternal life

⁴But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

P: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Verse of the Day

ALL: Alleluia.

P: When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law.

ALL: Alleluia.

The Gospel

John 1:1–14

The Word becomes flesh and dwells among us

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. ⁴In 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.

⁶There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

⁹The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰He 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.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise be to you, O Christ!

Now Sing We, Now Rejoice

CW 363



1 Now sing we, now re - joice, now raise to heav'n our voice;
 2 Come from on high to me; I can - not rise to thee.
 3 Now through his Son doth shine the Fa - ther's grace di - vine.
 4 Oh, where shall joy be found? Where but on heav'n - ly ground,



he from whom joy stream - eth poor in a man - ger lies;
 Cheer my wea - ried spir - it, O pure and ho - ly Child;
 Death was reign - ing o'er us through sin and van - i - ty
 where the an - gels sing - ing with all his saints u - nite,



not so bright - ly beam - eth the sun in yon - der skies.
 thro' thy grace and mer - it, blest Je - sus, Lord most mild,
 till he o - pened for us a bright e - ter - ni - ty.
 sweet - est prais - es bring - ing in heav'n - ly joy and light.



Thou my Sav - ior art!	Thou my Sav - ior art!
draw me un - to thee!	Draw me un - to thee!
May we praise him there!	May we praise him there!
Oh, that we were there!	Oh, that we were there!

Text: tr. Arthur T. Russell, 1806–1874, alt.; Latin and German, 14th cent.

Tune: German, 14th cent., alt.

Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon

Isaiah 59:16-17

Theme: “God’s Simple but Brilliant Plan”*Pastor Mark S. Voss*

¹⁶He saw that there was no one,
 he was appalled that there was no one to intervene;
 so his own arm achieved salvation for him,
 and his own righteousness sustained him.

¹⁷He put on righteousness as his breastplate,
 and the helmet of salvation on his head;
 he put on the garments of vengeance
 and wrapped himself in zeal as in a cloak.

Confession of Faith*Excerpts from the Athanasian Creed**This section of the creed confesses the truth about Jesus Christ, true God and true Man.*

P: Now this is the true Christian faith.

C: We believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, God’s Son, is both God and man. He is God, eternally begotten from the nature of the Father, and he is man, born in time from the nature of his mother, fully God, fully man, with soul and body.

P: Equal to the Father as to his deity, less than the Father as to his humanity; and though he is both God and man, Christ is not two persons, but one, one, not by changing the deity into flesh, but by taking the humanity into God; one, indeed, not by mixture of the natures, but by unity in one person; for just as the soul and flesh are one human being, so God and man are one Christ.

C: He suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose the third day from the dead.

P: He ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty, and from there will come to judge the living and the dead.

All: This is the true Christian faith.

Where Shepherds Lately Knelt

CW 345



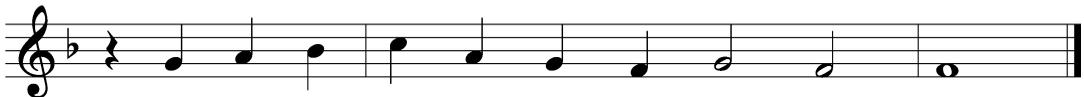
1 Where shep-herds late - ly knelt and kept the an - gel's word,
 2 In that un - like - ly place I find him as they said:
 3 How should I not have known I - sa - iah would be there,
 4 Can I, will I for - get how Love was born, and burned



I come in half - be - lief, a pil - grim strange - ly stirred;
 sweet new - born babe, how frail! And in a man - ger bed:
 his proph - e - cies ful - filled? With pound - ing heart I stare:
 its way in - to my heart— un - asked, un - forced, un - earned,



but there is room and wel - come there for me,
 a still, small voice to cry one day for me,
 a child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me,
 to die, to live, and not a - lone for me,



but there is room and wel - come there for me.
 a still, small voice to cry one day for me.
 a child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me.
 to die, to live, and not a - lone for me?

Text: Jaroslav J. Vajda, 1919–2008

Tune: Carl F. Schalk, 1929–2021

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Tune: © 1986 GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission; OneLicense no. 709601

Offering and Information

Our offering to the Lord our Savior God flows from hearts of joy and love. The offering is used to support the work of proclaiming the gospel message here and around the world. No one is obligated to join in the offering. To give an offering electronically, visit our website: www.abiding-love.com/giving and click on "donate."

Information: We ask our members, friends, and those visiting with us today to complete an information card located in the seat backs and place it in the offering plate. If your contact information has recently changed, please indicate this so we may update our records.

Solo

"Still, Still, Still"

Pete Larson

Christmas Prayer

Lord's Prayer

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.
 Lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.
 For the kingdom, the power,
 and the glory are yours
 now and forever. Amen.

Blessing

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

CW 350



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King;
 2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
 3 Hail, the heav'n - ly Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Right - eous - ness!



peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
 late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
 Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions rise, join the tri - umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God - head see, hail th' in - car - nate De - i - ty!
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that man no more may die,



with th' an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 Pleased as man with man to dwell, Je - sus, our Im - man - u - el!
 born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them sec - ond birth.

Refrain



Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King!"

Silent Prayer

Merry Christmas to all.

May God fill your lives with the peace only Jesus brings; and may you leave with joy in your hearts and purpose in your lives.

General Dismissal

Feel free to mingle and enjoy each other's fellowship.

Welcome Rev. Mark S. Voss

Please join us in welcoming Pastor Mark S. Voss as our Interim Pastor. Pastor Voss will serve our congregation until we are able to call our new pastor.

Pastor Voss and his wife, Marie come our way from Tega Cay, SC, a small town 30 miles from Charlotte, NC. The Vosses have 4 children scattered here and there across our nation, and 7 grandchildren, 6 of whom are girls.

In July of 2020, Pastor Voss retired after serving congregations in Lincoln, NE, and Denver, CO. Marie also retired as an RN. Since then, they have been on the road serving vacancies. Abiding Love is now their 5th stop. They tell us they are having a blast doing the Lord's work in this way and are looking forward to serving Abiding Love and getting to know all of us.

Pastor Voss may be contacted at 303-808-0611 or markvoss35@gmail.com.

2023 Giving Envelopes

Giving envelopes for 2023 are available this morning. Please take yours home with you today. If you have not been assigned envelopes and would like them, please contact Wendy in the church office (info@abiding-love.com) or let one of our ushers know.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY GROUP –Wednesday Mornings

The Women's Morning Bible Study Group will meet next on January 11th at the church at 10:00am. Currently we are studying the book, "Wherever Love May Lead" by Catherine Duerr. All women are invited to attend. Please contact Sheryl Pierson if you have any questions—239-464-1740 or jspierson1945@gmail.com. **Please note:** There will be no Bible Study on December 28th or January 4th.

THE CIRCLE – Wednesday, January 11th at 11:00am

The Circle will meet next on Wednesday, January 11th at 11:00am. All women of the church are invited. If you would like more information about The Circle, please contact Nicky Shelton – nshelton@abiding-love.com

EVENING WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY GROUP—Tues. at 6:30pm

Paula Bruns hosts an evening Bible Study at her home every Tuesday evening at 6:30pm. The group is currently studying the book of James. Please join us at 5695 Bolla Court in Fort Myers if you are interested. If you would like to know more about the group, please contact Paula at 239-634-1008. **Please note:** There will be no Bible study on December 27th.

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST—Tuesdays at 8:00am

The Men's Fellowship Breakfast Group meets every Tuesday morning at 8:00am at the House of Omelets, located at 900 SW Pine Island Road #122 in Cape Coral. We hope you can join us.

MERRY Christmas



CALL MEETING – January 8th at 11:45am

We are currently in an interim pastor situation. We are following the WELS Call Process as we search for our new pastor. Our next Call Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 8th immediately following the 10:30 worship service. All members are invited, and all voices will be heard.



Poinsettia Donations

Poinsettias for our altar were donated by the following members and friends.

*Shannon Kolakowski
Kevin & Wendy Beichler
Erv Stiemke
Sheila Miller
Steve & Jackie Adang
Rebecca Simon-Brooks
Michele Leatherbury
Bob & Sue Stumpner*

*Jay & Stacey Devlin
Terry & Judy Ray
Lois Crusan
Steve & Paula Bruns
Ron & Mary Juricek
Darren & Anne Marie Davis
An anonymous donor*



ABOUT ABIDING LOVE: *Abiding Love Lutheran Church is a congregation in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), with almost 400,000 members in 49 states and missionaries in 23 nations. The WELS is committed to the Scriptures as the inspired, inerrant Word of God, and therefore the only guide for faith and life. If you would like to know more about us, or if you're seeking Biblical counseling, give Pastor Voss a call at 303-808-0611 or email him at: markvoss35@gmail.com.*