



Travel the Christmas Story

Drive-to Scenes of the Nativity at Duluth-Area ELCA Congregations

The Christmas story is a traveling tale. Prophets prepare the road ahead. God travels into this world to be found among us, born to a regular family in occupied territory, journeying as ordered by the emperor. Angels travel to earth to bring God's message of good news, favor, and peace. Shepherds and magi travel to discover this One born for them. Under threat of violence, the Holy Family flees to safety. As you drive from site to site, reflect on the movement within this sacred story. God has travelled for us, God travels with us, and God will meet us on the road ahead. With great joy, we invite you into Advent and Christmas season.

Sites:

Scene 1: Prepare the Way!

United Lutheran Church — 701 3rd Ave, Proctor

Scene 2: Angels visit Mary and Joseph

Elim Lutheran Church — 6101 Cody Street

Scene 3: The Empire Calls for a Census; Mary and Joseph Travel to Bethlehem

Our Savior's Evangelical Lutheran Church — 4831 Grand Avenue

Scene 4: Jesus is born

First Lutheran Church — 1100 E Superior St

Scene 5: Incarnation

Trinity Lutheran Church — 1108 E. 8th Street

Scene 6: Angels visit the Shepherds in the Fields

Kenwood Lutheran Church — 2720 Myers Avenue

Scene 7: Shepherds and Angels with Baby Jesus

Holy Cross Lutheran Church — 410 N Arlington Ave

Scene 8: The Visit of the Magi & The Holy Family Escape to Egypt

Grace Lutheran Church — 5454 Miller Trunk Hwy, Hermantown

Scene 1: Prepare the Way!

United Lutheran Church- 701 3rd Ave, Proctor

The display is located off of 3rd Avenue.

Scripture

Prepare the Way of the Lord! Isaiah 40:3-5

A voice cries out:

‘In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.’

Reflection

The prophet calls creation itself to prepare the way of the Lord. All earth waits in joyful anticipation of the revealing of God’s glory. God will come to us with healing and peace, restoring what has been broken and smoothing over what has become treacherously rough.

To help us wait, we actively anticipate. Throughout this season, we prepare for the arrival of Jesus at Christmas with dazzling lights, candles, and festive decorations. Our display represents the Advent Wreath, which grows in brightness throughout the season as an additional candle is lit each week. As the season becomes more shadowed, we respond with greater brightness. The brightness of Christ dispels the shadows.

We celebrate that Jesus was born long ago in Palestine even as we look for God to arrive in our world today. We actively anticipate by joining God at work. Consider your abilities: where might you share peace, joy, hope, and healing today? Consider our world: where does unevenness need to be leveled, wilderness paths made safe for weary travelers, and people brought together to share joy? God continues to work good in our world, sometimes working good through us!

You’re invited to take a piece of sea glass from the display. Hold it in your hand. Consider the ways you are like this piece of glass which has been shaped and smoothed by the friction of its own journey. God is at work to smooth over the rough places in our lives, the frictions between people, the jagged brokenness of mistakes. Hold the glass up to the light. See how it glows! God shines through us by shining God’s love onto us so that we might shine God’s love onto others. God is preparing you to serve as part of the path through which God will arrive for the sake of the world.

Prayer

Earth-shaping God, you clear the way so that there are no obstacles that prevent you from coming to us with your gifts of love, life, and healing. Smooth over all that is broken and jagged in our lives. Glow in and through us, so that we might share your love with all the world. Thank you for arriving in this world and for always having been here. Amen.

Connect with United:

Sunday Worship: 11am in-person and live-streamed to our Facebook page

Longest Night & Carols by the Campfire: Dec 16

6pm Indoor Worship with a focus on loss and hope 7pm Outdoor Carols around the campfire

Advent Bible Studies: “Close to Home” Wednesdays at 2:15pm in person and

“Advent Pilgrimage in Palestine” 7pm via Zoom

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/proctorlutheran>

<https://www.proctorlutheran.org>

218-624-4255

Scene 2: Angels visit Mary and Joseph

Elim Lutheran Church – 6101 Cody Street

The display is located in the church's upper parking lot, entrance located at the corner of 61st Avenue West and West 8th Street.

Scripture

The Birth of Jesus Foretold Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail."

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

Joseph Accepts Jesus as His Son Matthew 1:18-24

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

But after he had considered 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 home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife.

Artists' Statement

"Do not be afraid." While reading the Annunciation, those words seemed to leap off the page. First, they were shared during the angel's message to Mary. And then, again, there they were when the angel visited Joseph. During their time of uncertainty, questions, and fear, the angel, this messenger of God, brought words of comfort and reassurance. We chose to focus on this as it is a message we

need to be reminded of and to take comfort in today during our own uncertainties, questions, and fears.

Reflection

“Do Not Be Afraid”

But . . . there are so many things TO fear, O God! The world is such a scary place right now. Yet your messengers come to us, and remind us that “Everything will be alright.” But “everything will be alright” doesn’t excuse us from action. What it does is put all the scary crises in the world into perspective, and helps us see the bigger picture. Even in the face of grave and mortal danger, we can say these words and mean them – everything will be alright. We can face the big, scary issues in life with good courage. . .

“Will this pandemic ever end?”

“In life and in death, I will never abandon you,” says the Great Physician.

“Will there still be life on the planet in another thousand years?

Or even another hundred?

“I don’t know. That’s up to you. But I will walk with you through it all” says the Maker of the universe.

“How do we live with violent racism that continues to deal in death, and destruction?”

“You can find a way to come together,” says the Ruler of the World.

“So many people are out of work. How can we get through these tough economic times?”

“There is enough for all,” says the Creator of abundance.

“Someone I love is having surgery tomorrow and I’m scared.”

“I’m right here with you,” says the Healer of our every ill.

“My mother’s cancer tests came back positive.”

“We can get through this together,” says the Lover of our soul.

“My son is being deployed overseas.”

“His life is always safe in my keeping,” says the Prince of Peace.

“My grandpa just died.”

“And I will hold him in my arms forever,” says the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the resurrection and the life.

The angel’s words remain true. In life, in death, in life beyond death, God holds us safe. Breathe out fear and worry and stress. Breathe in the peace of the Holy Spirit.

“Do not be afraid.”

Pastor Judy Anderson-Bauer

Reflection

You are invited to take a paper angel from the mailbox. On the back of the angel, write where you are experiencing fear, worry and/or stress in your life. Take the angel with you and place it somewhere (like on your fridge, on a mirror, or on your car’s visor) where you will be reminded of the angel’s message of “Do not be afraid.” May God hold you and bring you peace in the midst of the situation.

Song

“Mother of God” by The Brilliance

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RLao9yHOfFU>

Mary, full of grace
The Lord your God is with thee
Blessed are you to bless all the world
Mary, peace is yours
The Spirit is upon you
You will be with child, do not fear
Mother of God
Your baby boy will grant us peace
Your baby boy will grant us peace
Word made flesh
Born of virgin Mary
Hope is in the world, Emmanuel
The Lamb of God
Born to die, He came
He would show the world a better way
Emmanuel
God with us, God with us
Emmanuel
God with us, God with us
Son of God
Hear Your people calling
All cry out for peace, can you hear?
In our despair
We doubt in Your return
Messiah, will You come once again?
Emmanuel
God with us, God with us
Emmanuel
God with us, God with us
Emmanuel
God with us, God with us
God with us

Connect with Elim

Worship on Sundays at 10:15am (in person and on Zoom)

Wednesday Evening Advent Services (Holden Evening Prayer) at 6pm

Christmas Eve Services at 6pm (in person and on Zoom. Reservations required for Christmas Eve)

Facebook: ElimDuluth www.elimlc.com

For questions, for Zoom login, or information on making a Christmas Eve reservation, email:

info@elimlc.com

Scene 3: The Empire Calls for a Census; Mary and Joseph Travel to Bethlehem Our Savior's Lutheran Church — 4831 Grand Avenue

Enter in from Grand Ave and stay to the left near Faith Haven Apartments. Then turn to enter the church's lot and travel from the office door entrance moving through the display towards Grand Ave.

Scripture

Luke 2:1-5

In those days a decree went out from Emperor 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.

Reflection

Our display highlights the travel this family was forced to make because their homeland was occupied by the Roman Empire. This would have meant a very pregnant Mary had to walk (or ride) around 70-90 miles. That would be like walking from here to Tofte!

Their journey calls to mind all those who are forced to travel today. Some flee abuse in their homes and aren't sure if they will find a safer place. Some flee violence in their nation and hope to find refuge. Some travel in hopes of opportunities that will provide for themselves and their loved ones. Remembering that it was our Lord's family who was also on the move grows our compassion and turns our hearts and actions towards those who are forced to move today.

The image of a pregnant mother and her betrothed alone on the road highlights their vulnerability and powerlessness under the empire. We do not live under foreign rule, as Mary and Joseph did. We have the power to shape the policies of our nation towards care for those who are most vulnerable.

This season, we not only honor Jesus through our decorations and celebrations, but with our active work for the well-being of all God's creation.

Prayer

God, with these decorative lights, we remember that you brighten our paths. Give us courage in whatever difficult journeys we may be on right now. Travel alongside us. We remember that you illuminate all that is hidden in shadow. Help us to see those who are most vulnerable, to recognize their humanity, and honor them as your beloved ones. Shine through our works of compassion, generosity, advocacy, and love. Amen.

Connect with Our Savior's

Sunday Worship: 9am in-person and live-streamed to our Facebook page.

Christmas Eve Worship: 4pm

Advent Bible Studies: "Close to Home" Wednesdays at 2:15pm in person and

"Advent Pilgrimage in Palestine" 7pm via Zoom

Website: oursaviorsduluth.org

<https://www.facebook.com/Our-Saviors-Evangelical-Lutheran-Church-185589404824777>

Scene 4: Jesus is born

First Lutheran Church — 1100 E Superior St

If heading east on Superior toward 12th Ave E, take the first right after the church building into the parking lot. The nativity scene will be located just underneath the awning of the church's entryway. You won't be able to miss it!

Scripture

Luke 2:6-7

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 for them in the inn.

Take a moment to sing the carol, God Rest Ye Merry Gentle Ones

using these words

(Use the QR Code in the manger to access music to sing along and accompany your reflection—don't know how to do this? See below).

God rest ye merry gentle ones
Let nothing you dismay
Remember Christ our Savior
was born to show the way
to save us all from Satan's power
when we had gone astray
O tidings of comfort and joy
Comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy

This season we remember the different responses to the news of Jesus' birth-
Zechariah's fear
Joseph's confusion
Mary's doubt and
the Shepherds' curiosity

***Depending upon the week you arrive here at the manger,
pick up an image***

Week 1 – Fear monster

Take a moment to reflect on your fears. What paralyzes you? Makes you anxious? What or perhaps, whom are you afraid of? Write these on the fear monster and place them in the manger trusting that the Christ child held by the manger holds our fears freeing us to let them go.

Week 2 – Confusion symbol

Take a moment to reflect on where in your life or in the world you are seeking clarity of vision. Of purpose? Of understanding?

Write these on the confusion symbol and place them in the manger trusting that the Christ child held by the manger will bring clarity and a path forward.

Week 3- Question mark

Take a moment to reflect on what aspects of your faith are hard for you to believe. Where or when does doubt creep in? Do you feel free to ask questions? You are free to do so here.

Write them on the question mark and place them in the manger trusting that the Christ child held by the manger will hold your questions and move you into a deeper relationship with God.

Week 4- Star

Take a moment to reflect on what fills you with awe and wonder. What moves you to ask questions of another – to go and see like the shepherds?

What are you curious about? Write your responses on the star and place them in the manger remembering that the shepherds' curiosity led them to the manger that held the One who shows us the way through our fears and confusion and doubt filling us with wonder and sending us forth into the world God came down to love.

Connect with First Lutheran:

Join us for Worship in person, on YouTube or on KDAL 610AM/103.9FM

Follow us on Facebook @flcduluth & on YouTube FirstLutheranDuluth

Sundays 8:30 for traditional service or 10:30 for contemporary service

Blue Christmas, Wednesday Dec 15th at 6pm in-person & via livestream

Christmas Eve Worship 3pm Family service in-person & livestream

5pm Service in-person, livestream

10pm Service in-person & livestream & on the radio

First Sunday of Christmas Dec 26th 10am in person, livestream & radio

Second Sunday of Christmas Jan 2nd 10am in person, livestream & radio

[QR Code Instructions:

iPhone

1. Open your camera app.
2. Center the QR code to scan.
3. Tap the pop-up banner or QR icon in the bottom right corner.
4. Video link will begin playing.

Android Devices

1. Open your camera app.
2. Center the QR Code to scan.
3. Tap the pop-up banner at the bottom of the screen.
4. Video link will begin playing.]

Scene 5: Incarnation

Trinity Lutheran Church - 1108 E. 8th Street

Scripture:

John 1: 1-14 **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.**

Matthew 1: 23 ²³"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him **Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us."**

Philippians 2:5-8 ⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, ⁷but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, ⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross."

Artists' Statement:

We invite you to hold your own little "carol sing" as part of this display. **Take a song sheet from the little library** or Google the suggested verses. Sing in your car, get out and sing on the sidewalk, google search out the songs on your phone or belt out your own acapella version. After each song snippet, reflect and take part in a brief activity.

Sing the first verse of "O Little Town of Bethlehem":

Reflection and Activity:

See the silhouette of Bethlehem - a real place on earth, a community of flesh and blood people who worked and played, struggled and rejoiced, experienced the rhythms of night and day. God chose to reveal Godself in flesh and blood, on earthly ground, coming this night to this place called Bethlehem for the sake of the whole world God loves.

You're invited, if you are able, to get out of your car and walk the sidewalk outside of the display. Maybe even take a stroll around the block. Feel the ground beneath your feet here in Duluth, this real place on earth, this community of flesh and blood people who work and play, struggle and rejoice, experience the rhythms of night and day. God continues to choose to reveal Godself in Christ, come to us, this night in this place, for the sake of the whole world God loves.

Sing the first verse of "O Come, O Come Emmanuel":

Reflection and Activity:

See the letters spelling the name "Emmanuel." Jesus would be called "Emmanuel" which means "God with Us." God does not dwell far off in cloud and heaven, but rather comes in Christ to be "God with Us." Romans 8:38 reads "Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." God's presence is promised. Emmanuel has come to you right where you are – you are not alone. **Take a card from the little library.** Who in your life needs to be reminded that they are not alone – that Jesus, Emmanuel is with them? Write a note and send it to share the good news.

Sing the second verse of “Away in a Manger”:

Reflection and Activity:

God in Jesus did not just “look down from the sky” but rather dwelt right among us as one of us. Jesus came simultaneously as fully God AND FULLY HUMAN, experiencing all the realities of human flesh. While many of our Christmas songs celebrate Christ’s divinity, Jesus was human like us. Look at the manger. Jesus DID cry. He DID shiver with cold. Look at the cross. He DID suffer and experience pain. We have a God who experienced the hardships of life in the flesh, even to the point of death. Therefore there is no human experience that is beyond God’s presence and love. We can be authentic in all our humanity and know that God stays “by our side” always. **Take a glow-in-the-dark cross necklace from the little library.** Wear it as a reminder of Jesus’ full humanity and promised presence in all aspects of our human experience.

Sing the fourth verse of “O Come All Ye Faithful”:

Reflection and Prayer:

Our God came in the flesh - born as a baby in a manger to a human mother, growing as a child amidst family and community, called and strengthened by the Spirit for the work of the kingdom of God, suffering and dying as a man of flesh and blood – fully human, yet always FULLY GOD, that we might truly know God’s abundant love for us and all of creation. Oh Come Let us Adore Him.

Prayer:

Holy One, We give great thanks for Jesus - Emmanuel, God with Us, God in human flesh. We thank you for the promises we have come to know through the birth of Christ – For taking on human flesh, for dwelling among us here on earth, for your promised presence with us in the fullness of our human experience and beyond it. Open our eyes once again to your presence among us today. Amen.

Connect with Trinity:

Worship on Sundays:

8:00am “Worship at Home” Facebook Live

10:00am In Person and on Zoom

Christmas Eve Service at 4pm (Registration requested)

Facebook: [trinityduluth](https://www.facebook.com/trinityduluth)

Website: <https://tlcduluth.org>

Email: trinity@tlcduluth.org

Scene 6: Angels visit the Shepherds in the Fields

Kenwood Lutheran Church — 2720 Myers Avenue

Scripture

Luke 2: 8-14

In that 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!”

Artist’s Statement

The story of the shepherds is quite unique since the very nature of the shepherd’s life is so very solitary. In the nativity it is these unlikely heralds that God uses to share the good news that God is in our midst. Immanuel: God with us. The shepherd’s terror at the appearance of the angel’s announcement become the triumphant acclamation of God’s savior born to take away our sin. The display hopefully captures a bit of both the terror and the sense of hopefulness that is at the heart of their story, as well as ours.

A Shepherds Prayer

Oh gracious God, the nights can be dark, silent and cold, but your love for us breaks in and shines its light to awaken and warm our hearts. May shepherds of every age both fear and proclaim your son’s birth and guide us into your son’s presence. May they give voice to the good news, that all people are loved and saved by your grace. Assure in us the hope that all may live under the gentle rule that brought the baby Jesus into our world. We ask this in Jesus name! Amen.

Connect with Kenwood

Kenwood is worshipping in person these days, masks are required and available if you forget to bring one. Distance between groups is observed but there are many opportunities to participate in their ministry activities. Please come and join us by checking our online schedule @ Kenwoodlutheran.org

Have a blessed week and a wonderful Advent/Christmas season!

Scene 7: Shepherds and Angels with Baby Jesus

Holy Cross Lutheran Church — 410 N Arlington Ave

Located right off of Central Entrance, stop on by and enjoy a peppermint mocha at our area Starbucks and then cruise over to church to experience our part of the Nativity Tour of Lights.

Scripture

Luke 2: 15-20

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. But 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, as it had been told them.

Our Artistic Expression

There was a moment, when all the stars held their breath, when the galaxies paused in their dance for a fraction of second, and the Word, who had called it all into being, struck the Shepherds with amazement, as they realized the universe would never be the same. The ancient angel harmonies resumed their song, and the angels clapped their hands for joy.

Prayer

WITH LOVE FROM THE DULUTH HEIGHTS

We hope and pray, dear church, that in this season of Advent and Christmas you will find time for stillness, find time to sense the expectation, longing, and amazement of the shepherds, all while celebrating with the angels, the miracle of God's love.

Peace, Holy Cross

Connect with Holy Cross

www.holycrossduluth.org

9:00 am Sunday Worship, 10:00 am Sunday School

Christmas Eve: 2:00 pm and 4:00 pm

Livestreamed at <https://www.facebook.com/holycrossduluth>

Scene 8: The Visit of the Magi & The Holy Family Escape to Egypt **Grace Lutheran Church — 5454 Miller Trunk Hwy, Hermantown**

Scripture

Matthew 2: 1-15: The Visit of the Magi

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “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.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

‘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.’”

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then 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.” When 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. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On 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. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The Escape to Egypt

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.”

Artists’ Statement

Our display is essentially 3 sections of the story woven together... they will all be near one another in front of the church

- 1) First, you will see the 3 Magi bearing gifts guided by the star—we remember that God guides us on the way as we use our gifts for God’s mission in the world. Tonight we can think about how we might especially be called to follow Christ to love and care for our neighbor in need.
- 2) Next, the Manger scene with star overhead. Mary and Joseph kneel next to the manger of the Christ child (which is made into a box to hold donations for children in our community). Tonight, you are invited to leave a gift for the Bethany Children’s Shelter at the manger of Jesus if you are able. The Bethany Crisis Shelter is short-term, emergency housing in a safe, residential setting. They provide support for the physical and emotional needs of youth in crisis. These services are available 24/7.

The Bethany Children's Shelter needs:

- Winter Hats, Gloves and Mittens
- Socks
- Art/Craft Supplies
- Learning/Developmental Toys for 0-8 year olds

3) Finally, the display includes an angel along with the holy family fleeing to Egypt—we remember that God is with all who face danger and uncertainty in our world. As the holy family fled to another country, we keep in prayer all refugees and those facing the trauma of not being able to go home. We pray for God's peace and safety for all those who live in fear.

Prayer

Lord God,

Be with us on the way as we seek to know and worship you. Guide us with the light of Christ into your presence and help us to respond to your love with glad and generous hearts for the sake of our neighbors. Be with us when we are fearful, when the dangers and uncertainty in this world surround us. Keep watch over us and bless us with your peace and a safe place to rest. Amen.

Connect with Grace:

All are welcome to join us for worship on Sundays at 9:30am and Wednesdays at 6:30pm. Connect with us online: www.facebook.com/gracehermantown and www.gracehermantown.com