

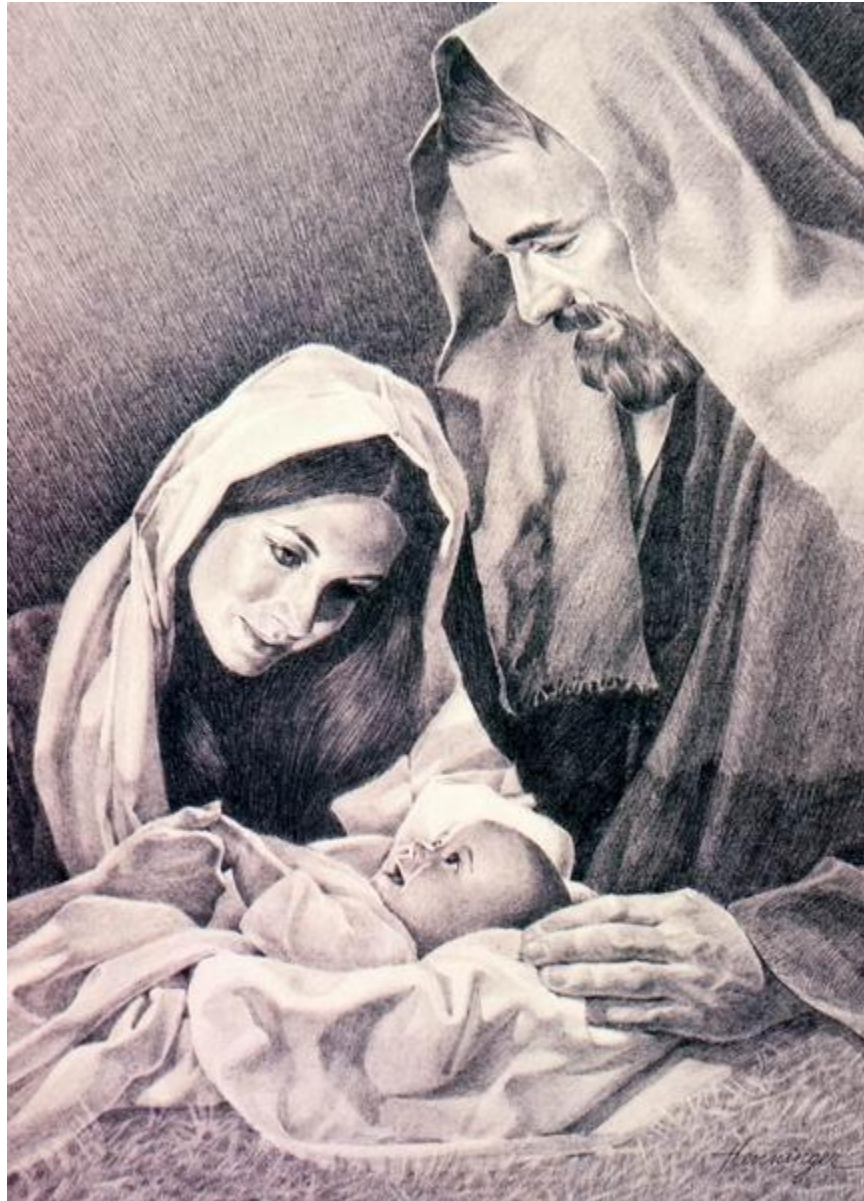
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Sunday, December 24, 2023

5:00 and 7:00 PM Christmas Eve

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# *Faith Lutheran Church*



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<http://www.alivingfaith.org>

e-mail: [office@alivingfaith.org](mailto:office@alivingfaith.org)

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551 Rotonda Boulevard West – Rotonda West, FL 33947

(941) 697-3313

*Welcome to Faith Lutheran Church. We pray this celebration of the Christ Child's birth will uplift and encourage you.*

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**THE WELCOMING OF GUEST AND VISITORS**

*Prelude*

*Duet for Piano and Organ*

*God Rest You Merry Gentlemen*

*Candace Montesi, Organ      Elizabeth D'amico, Piano*

*PLEASE STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the Word made flesh, our life and our salvation.

**C Amen.**

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

*SILENCE FOR REFLECTION AND MEDITATION*

Together we pray,

**C 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.**

**A HYMN:                      *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*                      (ELW 257)**

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

***Refrain***

6 O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer,  
O Sun of justice, now draw near.  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
and death's dark shadow put to flight.

***Refrain***

***Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel      shall come to you, O Israel.***

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.

**A HYMN:**

*It Came Upon the Midnight*

**(ELW 282)**



1 It came up - on the mid - night clear, that glo - rious song of old,  
2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come with peace - ful wings un - furled,  
3 And you, be - neath life's crush - ing load, whose forms are bend - ing low,  
4 For lo! The days are has - t'ning on, by proph - ets seen of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold:  
and still their heav'n - ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world.  
who toil a - long the climb - ing way with pain - ful steps and slow:  
when with the ev - er - cir - cling years shall come the time fore - told,



“Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all - gra - cious king.”  
A - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov - 'ring wing,  
look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing;  
when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen - dors fling,



The world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.  
and ev - er o'er its ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.  
oh, rest be - side the wea - ry road and hear the an - gels sing!  
and all the world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.

**THE GREETING**

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

**C The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness, on them light has shined.

**C We have beheld Christ's glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.**

For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

**C In him was life, and the life was the light of all people.**

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.

*PLEASE BE SEATED*

**THE GOSPEL OF THE INCARNATION: John 1:1ff**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God... <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. <sup>14</sup>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.

**THE LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS CANDLE**

Jesus Christ is the Light of the world!

**C He is the Light no darkness can overcome.**

At darkest night we gather to celebrate the great light of our salvation.

**C With the heavenly host we sing, "Glory to God in the highest heaven."**

In Christ, God's Word is made flesh and lives among us.

**C With the shepherds, we will tell of the wonders we have seen and heard.**

*The Christ Candle is Lit*

Together we pray,

**C 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. Amen.**

## **THE FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 9:2–7**

<sup>2</sup>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.

<sup>3</sup>You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.

<sup>4</sup>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.

<sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup>For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup>His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

The Word of God.

**C Thanks be to God.**

## **THE GOSPEL READING: Luke 2:1–20**

**C Glory to you O Lord**

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>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.

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>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: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

<sup>15</sup>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." <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The Gospel of our Lord.

## **C Praise to you, O Christ**

### **A HYMN:**

### *Away in a Manger*

**(ELW 277)**

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1 Away in a manger, no crib for  
his 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.

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 fit us for heaven, to live  
with you there.

**MUSIC MINISTRY**    *Duet For Piano And Organ*    *Cantique de Noel*  
*Candace Montesi, Organ*    *Elizabeth D'amico, Piano*

**THE SERMON**

**PASTOR ARMEN**

*PLEASE STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE*

**A HYMN:**

***Hark! The Herald Angels Sing***

**(ELW 270)**



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 - born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righ - teous - 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 you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;  
Veiled in flesh the God - head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!  
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with an - gel - ic hosts pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"  
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!  
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.



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

**THE OFFERING**

*in thanksgiving for God's gift of the Christ Child*

**A HYMN:**

***The Doxology***

**(ELW 884)**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
praise him, all creatures here below;  
praise him above, ye heav'nly host;  
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

## **THE OFFERTORY PRAYER AND PREFACE**

Together we pray,

**C God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Amen.**

The Lord be with you.

**C And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**C We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see.

Gathering at the table we celebrate Emmanuel, the love of God with us:  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace

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 for the 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 for the remembrance of me.

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Together we pray



**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**

## **THE INVITATION**

Glory to God in the highest! You are invited to the table of love, grace, hope and peace.

## **THE DISTRIBUTION**

*As we celebrate the meal of our Lord, ALL are welcome. If you are a guest and regularly commune at your church, you are welcome to commune here. If you have a question about communion please speak with the Pastor or an usher. For those not communing, please keep your hands folded to receive a blessing.*

<p>If you would like a gluten-free wafer, please notify the server. Both wine (red, around the outside of the tray) and grape juice (white, at the center) are available for communion. If you are unable to come to the altar rail and would like to receive communion in your seat, please notify an usher.</p>
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*After all have communed: Please stand as you are able*

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**C Amen**

Together we pray.

**C 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.**

## THE CANDLE LIGHT SERVICE

*The lights are turned off*

As we light our candles, we celebrate the life of Christ, who comes into our lives and, through us, lights the darkness of our world.

*Turn on the candles*

### HYMN:

### *Silent Night*

**(ELW 281)**

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 your holy face,  
with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at your birth,  
Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

## A PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

*Silence before and after the prayer.*

## THE BENEDICTION

May the Lord God who has called you out of darkness to share the ✠ gift of Jesus' light, grant you the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, and the peace of the Christ Child to bless you and keep you, grant you grace and truth, and bring peace upon your hearts, now and forever.

**C Amen.**

*The lights are turned on as we turn off the candles  
Please leave the candles in the baskets by the doors as you  
exit the building*

**HYMN:***Joy to the World***(ELW 267)**

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their  
 3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him  
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings  
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture  
 plains re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing  
 flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
 ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.  
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

**THE DISMISSAL**

Christ is born! Emmanuel, God is with us.

Carry the light of the Christ Child in your life.

**C Thanks be to God.**

**THE POSTLUDE**

We invite you to join us **next Sunday, December 31, at 9:30 am** for lessons and carols, continuing the Christmas celebration.

The following week, **Sunday, January 7**, we begin our **seasonal worship services 8:30 at the memorial garden** (*please bring a chair*), and **10:30 in the sanctuary.**

**Merry Christmas  
and Happy New Year**



**from the Church Staff**