

# WELCOMING OF GUESTS AND VISITORS

## GATHERING

Prelude

*(PLEASE STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE)*

P We gather today in the name of God; Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit.

C Amen!

HYMN

*Awake! Awake*

*ELW 242*



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for  
2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -  
3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when  
4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing, Sing out your joy, for  
man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is  
all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so  
dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing,  
qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;  
qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.  
crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -  
mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -  
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in  
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and  
kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to  
won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and  
sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.  
shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.  
weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.  
bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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P Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation.

C **Amen.**

P God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

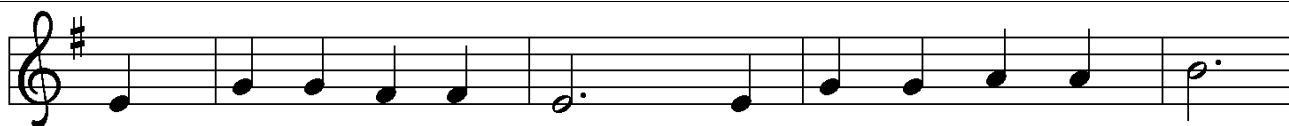
P Together we pray,

C **God of new beginnings, we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign. We have strayed from your paths. We prepare for war instead of peace. We dishonor one another and your creation. Purify us with your refining fire and set us again on your way of love, that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance, and welcome your coming among us. Amen.**

P A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through † Christ Jesus, whose day draws near. C **Amen.**

## KYRIE

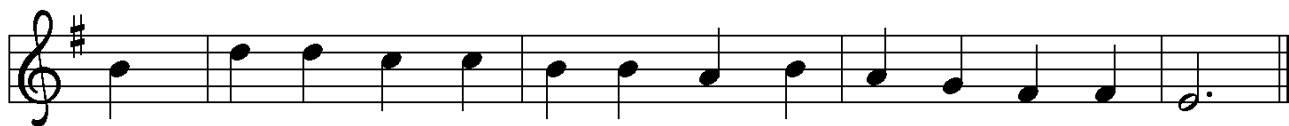
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1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.

2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.

3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.

Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.

Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

## THE GREETING

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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.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

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**P** Together we pray,

**C** Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## WORD

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### FIRST READING

*Zephaniah 3:14-20*

<sup>14</sup> Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem!

<sup>15</sup> The LORD has taken away the judgments against you,  
he has turned away your enemies.

The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more.

<sup>16</sup> On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion;  
do not let your hands grow weak.

<sup>17</sup> The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory;  
he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love;  
he will exult over you with loud singing <sup>18</sup> as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it.

<sup>19</sup> I will deal with all your oppressors at that time.

And I will save the lame and gather the outcast,  
and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth.

<sup>20</sup> At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you;  
for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth,  
when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

**L** The word of God.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

### SECOND READING

*Philippians 4:4-7*

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. <sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup> Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**L** The word of God.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

## LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE

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P Praise to you, O God, who holds our joy and sorrow.  
You bring water to parched ground and life out of death.  
Bless us as this light grows, and send sorrow and sighing to flee away.  
Give us strength and patience, trusting that you are true to your promises.  
Transform the lives of all who suffer with your wonders near at hand.  
**Amen.**

*the candle is lit*

P O come O come, Emmanuel  
C **let us walk in the light of the Lord. Amen.**

**PLEASE STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE**

## ACCLAMATION

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O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

## GOSPEL

*Luke 3:7-18*

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C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>7</sup> John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup> Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>9</sup> Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

<sup>10</sup> And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” <sup>11</sup> In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” <sup>12</sup> Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” <sup>13</sup> He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” <sup>14</sup> Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

<sup>15</sup> As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, <sup>16</sup> John answered all of

them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

<sup>18</sup> So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

L The Gospel of our Lord.      C Praise to you, O Christ.

**Music Ministry**

*Mary, Did You Know?*

*Lowry*

*Sandy Despreaux, soloist*

**SERMON**

Pastor Armen

**PLEASE STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE**

**HYMN**

*Hark, the Glad Sound*

*ELW 239*



1 Hark, the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior  
 2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's  
 3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing  
 4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of peace, your wel - come



prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -  
 bond - age held. The gates of brass be -  
 soul to cure, and with the trea - sures  
 shall pro - claim, and heav'n's e - ter - nal



pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.  
 fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.  
 of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.  
 arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

**THE APOSTLES' CREED**

A Together we confess our faith,

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

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**A** As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

*each petition concludes...*

Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

**P** Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ. **C Amen.**

## **OFFERING**

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*In thanksgiving for God's blessing, we respond with our offering*



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right



spir-it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres-ence, and



take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store un-to me the



joy of your sal - va-tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

## OFFERING PRAYER

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A Together we pray,

**C God of our waiting and watching, we offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives to the service of all your people. Strengthen us with this meal that we may live in hope and expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord Amen.**

## THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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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.

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

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A 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.**

## DISTRIBUTION

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As we celebrate the meal of our Lord, all are invited. If you are a guest and regularly commune at your church, you are welcome to commune here. For children who are not communing, please keep your hands folded and you will receive a blessing. Both wine (red) and grape juice (white) are available at communion. Grape juice is in the inner section of communion tray, wine in the two outer rings. If you would like a gluten-free wafer, please notify the server.

If you are unable to come to the altar rail and would like to receive communion in your seat, please notify an usher.

*after all have communed*



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

A Together we pray,

C Faithful God, in this meal you have remembered your mercy, bringing heaven to earth in the body and blood of Christ. As we wait for the day when all your promises will be fulfilled, sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery. Guide us toward your promised future, coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.

P God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the journey, † bless and keep you now and forever. C Amen.

**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.

## **DISMISSAL**

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**P** Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

## **Postlude**

### ***Faith's Weekly Announcements***

*Welcome to all of you attending this morning!*

### **Work Crew Update**

Many thanks to the guys who come out every Tuesday to keep the church looking good and working well. We're giving them a break on December 24 and 31. You are encouraged to join them when they start again in January.

### **Christmas Flowers**

If you would like to purchase a poinsettia to help with our Christmas decorating, they are \$11 each. There is a sign-up sheet and a code list on the bulletin board in the narthex. Please write legibly as your name and any dedication will be listed in the bulletin, with information taken from that sheet. You can place your checks, marked "poinsettia," in the offering plate. If you like, you may take the flower home after the second service on Christmas Eve.

### **It's Cold Out There**

The temperatures have been pretty low lately, and our homeless population (we call them campers) are feeling the impact. If you have any blankets, warm clothing or other items for the cold weather that you can spare, please bring them to church and leave them in the blue box in the narthex.

**Attendance last Sunday: 67**

## **Constitutional Changes**

The ELCA has mandated some constitutional changes, which Faith members will vote on at the annual meeting. A copy of the constitution, with the changes highlighted, is available on the website.

## **Food Pantry**

This week the food bank especially needs canned meals (beef stew, spaghetti, etc.) All donations should be placed in the bin in the narthex.

## **Nametags**

If you would like a nametag, there is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. Your nametag will be hanging with the others the next Sunday.

## **Looking Ahead...**

- ~ Christmas Eve we will have a 5:00 and a 7:00 worship service.
- ~ Two services resume January 5, 2025

## **Friendship Gatherings Return for 2025!**

Sign up in the narthex. Dates: Thursday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, held at church. Bring a hearty appetizer (BYOB if you wish). Thursday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, dinner held at host homes. Mix and mingle with the Faith family. Guests welcome.

## **WE PRAY FOR...**

Sandy Cox

Deb Bush

Jim Porter

Toni Newton

Marcia and Gary Wilkins

John and Linda Schleede

Bob Ash

Jack Myers

Carolyn Furman

Zack Stearns

Sylvia and Al Armen

Larry Bennet

Chris Hoops

Ginny Linsberg

Lynette Cormier

## Serving Today

**Altar Guild:** RoseAnne Woodliff

**Lector/ Worship Assistant:** Debby Porter

**Ushers:** Mary Lou Fitzgerald, Bobbie Neilson

## THIS WEEK AT FAITH

<b>Every week day morning</b>	6:30 am	AA meets at church
<b>Monday</b>	8:00 pm	AA meets at church
<b>Tuesday</b>	7:30 am	Work Crew
	9:00 am	Lutheran Chicks
	10:00 am	Council
<b>Wednesday</b>	3:00 pm	Bible Study
<b>Friday</b>	Office Closed	

## Your Church Council

Jeff Kamm (President), Larry Bennett (Vice President), Sandy Cox (Secretary), Art Hanson (Treasurer), Jim Taylor, Jeff Petersen, Gene Newlon, Jay Fisher and Sue Baran

## Faith Lutheran Church of Rotonda

551 Rotonda Boulevard West – Rotonda West, FL 33947

(941) 697-3313

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We are a Stephen Ministry Congregation

Pastor Brian Armen, Cell (814) 248-0133

Secretary: Barbra Davis

Organist: Candace Montesi      Custodian: Cyndy Hoops

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