



Faith Lutheran Church

**We warmly greet members
and visitors in Jesus' name**

Fourth Sunday of Advent

10:15 a.m., December 22, 2024



Cradle and cross are inextricably connected on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Between a lovely tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and Mary's magnificent song of praise, the letter to the Hebrews reminds us in no uncertain terms that Christ's advent is for "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." It is the kind of tension in which the church always lives as when in holy communion—with high delight - "we proclaim the Lord's death."
Welcome to Worship at Faith Lutheran Church

Gathered faithfully to love and serve God and all others

7750 Beneva Road, Sarasota, FL, 34238 | 941-924-4664 | www.faithlutheransrq.com

All the baptized are invited to the celebration of Holy Communion, trusting that Christ is present in this sacrament for the forgiveness of our sin and the strengthening of our faith.

The flowers on the altar today are donated by Bolon and Pueblo Families in honor of Bob & Katy Bolon wedding anniversary.

Presiding Minister

Rev. Eric Olaf Olsen

Assisting Minister

Rev. Marianne Powrie, Rev. Larry Wright

Lector

Ron Walter

Director of Music/Organist

Andi Zdrava

Floutist

Juliane Geysler

Greeters & Ushers

Jerry Cooper, Eloise Dettmer, Ashley Garlitz, Dottie Gustavson, Grace Kaarre, Alf Kirkeeng, Gail Lidinsky, Judy Millard, Mark Nelson, Jan Phillips, Scott Rice, Jane Sanks, Joan Searles, Dave Wardach

Media Team

Kelly Ashlock, Greg Cooper, Kevin Fewell, Andrea & Sergio Gamboa, Mark Greenwood

Altar Guild

Linda Fewell, Dottie Gustavson, Carole Inkrott, Judy Millard, Mark Nelson, Jan Phillips, Steve & Peggy Ragan

Congregation Council

Scott Rice, president; Lauren Wardach, vice president; Mark Nelson, secretary; Anita Wooton, treasurer; Jane Sanks, assistant treasurer; Jerry Cooper; Quyen Dang; Ann Greenwood; Peggy Ragan; Joan Searles

* * * * *

Pastor

Rev. Eric Olaf Olsen

Assistant to the Pastor

Rev. Larry Wright

Retired Pastors in Residence

Rev. John Hilficker

Rev. Marianne Powrie

Rev. John Spittal

**Executive Assistant to the Pastor
for Administration**

Heidi Floyd

- Noted throughout the service - P: Presiding Minister L: Lector C: **Congregation**
- Faith has a T-Coil-enabled hearing loop for those whose hearing aid(s) also are enabled.
- Smile! Faith worship services are live-streamed and recorded.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE STAND

Prelude

WELCOME AND Announcements

Children's welcome

Light One Candle while the Advent Wreath is Being Lit

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Light the One Candle

ELW 240



- 1 Light one can - dle to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the light ban - ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can - dles to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the light ban - ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can - dles to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the light ban - ish dark - ness.
- 4 Light four can - dles to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the light ban - ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep - herd, gent - ly lead them home - ward.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate - way for the King of glo - ry.
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954

Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune

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WE STAND

The Baptism of Owen Robert Claussen

PRESENTATION

P: In baptism our gracious heavenly Father frees us from sin and death by joining us to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are born children of a fallen humanity; by water and the Holy Spirit we are reborn children of God and made members of the church, the body of Christ. Living with Christ and in the communion of saints, we grow in faith, love, and obedience to the will of God.

(The baptismal sponsors share in the presentation) R: I present Owen Robert Claussen for baptism.

The presiding minister addresses parents or others who bring for baptism children who are not able to answer for themselves:

P: Called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, do you desire to have your child baptized into Christ?

R: I do.

P: As you bring your child to receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities: to live with him among God's faithful people, bring him to the word of God and the holy supper, teach him the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, place in his hands the holy scriptures, and nurture him in faith and prayer, so that your child may learn to trust God, proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for others and the world God made, and work for justice and peace.

P: Do you promise to help your child grow in the Christian faith and life?

R: I do.

The presiding minister addresses sponsors:

P: Sponsors, do you promise to nurture Owen in the Christian faith as you are empowered by God's Spirit, and to help him live in the covenant of baptism and in communion with the church?

R: I do.

The presiding minister addresses the assembly:

P: People of God, do you promise to support Owen Robert Claussen and pray for him in his new life in Christ?

C: We do.

C: Amen

WE STAND

Profession of Faith

The presiding minister addresses candidates for baptism as well as the parents and sponsors of child. The assembly may join in the responses.

P: I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church.

P: Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

R: I renounce them.

P: Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?

R: I renounce them.

P: Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?

R: I renounce them.

Thanksgiving at the Font

Water may be poured into the font before or during the thanksgiving. At the font, the presiding minister begins the thanksgiving:

P: Blessed are you, O God, maker and ruler of all things. Your voice thundered over the waters at creation. You water the mountains and send springs into the valleys to refresh and satisfy all living things. Through the waters of the flood you carried those in the ark to safety. Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery to freedom. In the wilderness you nourished them with water from the rock, and you brought them across the river Jordan to the promised land. By the baptism of his death and resurrection, your Son Jesus has carried us to safety and freedom. The floods shall not overwhelm us, and the deep shall not swallow us up, for Christ has brought us over to the land of promise. He sends us to make disciples, baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Pour out your Holy Spirit; wash away sin in this cleansing water; clothe the baptized with Christ; and claim your daughters and sons, no longer slave and free, no longer male and female, but one with all the baptized in Christ Jesus, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Baptism

The presiding minister baptizes each candidate. The candidate is immersed into the water, or water is poured on the candidate's head, as the presiding minister says:

P: Owen Robert Claussen, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

**C: You belong to Christ,
in whom you have been baptized. Alleluia.**

P: Let us pray. We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give your daughters and sons new birth, cleanse them from sin, and raise them to eternal life. Sustain Owen with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

C: Amen.

(Owen is anointed with oil in the sign of the cross)

P: Owen, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever.

C: Amen.

Welcome

A lighted candle may be given to each of sponsors of a young child as a representative of the congregation says:

P: Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

The ministers and the baptismal group face the assembly. A representative of the congregation leads the assembly in the welcome.

P: Let us welcome the newly baptized.

C: We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share: join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's creative and redeeming word to all the world.

Gathering Hymn **Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus**
We sing together

ELW 254



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
2 Born thy peo-ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long-ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788
Music: JEFFERSON, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

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.

Kyrie

We sing together

Refrain



Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, on our world and on our way.



Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, ev-'ry day.



- 1 For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the
- 2 That we may live out your im - passioned re - sponse to the
- 3 For peace in our hearts, . . . for peace in our homes, . . for
- 4 For your Spir - it to guide; that you cen - ter our lives in the



u - ni - ty of all; for
hun - gry and the poor; that
friends and fam - i - ly; for
wa - ter and the word; that you



this ho - ly house, for all who wor-ship and praise,
we may live out truth and jus - tice and grace,
life and for love, for our work and our play,
nour-ish our souls . . . with your bod - y and blood,



let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.

Refrain

Canticle

We sing together



This is the feast of vic-t'ry for our God, for the



Lamb who was slain has be-gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.



1 Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be



peo-ple of God. Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and strength, and



hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are his. This is the feast of



vic-t'ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain has be-gun his reign. Al -



le - lu - ia. 2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God, and



join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing, hon - or,



glo - ry, and might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.



This is the feast of vic-t'ry for our God, for the



Lamb who was slain has be-gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us Pray, stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

WE SIT

First Reading: Micah 5:2-5a

A reading from Micah.

L: ² But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. ³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. ⁴ And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; ^{5a} and he shall be the one of peace

L: The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalmody: Luke 1:46b-55



Luke 1:52

Psalm refrain reproduced from *Psalter for Worship Year C* © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

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R

L: You Lord have lifted up the lowly

L: ^{46b} My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, ⁴⁷ my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸ for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed. ⁴⁹ you, the Almighty, have done great things for me and holy is your name. ⁵⁰ You have mercy on those who fear you, from generation to generation.

R

⁵¹ You have shown strength with your arm and scattered the proud in their conceit,⁵² casting down the mighty from their throne and lifting up the lowly. ⁵³ You have filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴ You have come to the aid of your servant Israel, to remember the promise of mercy, ⁵⁵ the promise made to our forebears, to Abraham and his children forever.

R

Second Reading: Hebrews 10:5-10

L: A reading from Hebrews. ⁵ Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, “Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; ⁶ in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. ⁷ Then I said, ‘See, God, I have come to do your will, O God’ (in the scroll of the book it is written of me).” ⁸ When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), ⁹ then he added, “See, I have come to do your will.” He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. ¹⁰ And it is by God’s will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

L: The word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

WE STAND

Gospel Acclamation

We sing together

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Gospel: Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]

P: The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

P: ³⁹ In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰ where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴² and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³ And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴ For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." [⁴⁶ And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. ⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. ⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever. "The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ

WE SIT

Sermon

Rev. Eric Olaf Olsen

WE STAND



We sing together

1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
 2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things
 3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on
 4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
 far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;
 Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law
 tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!
 in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.
 and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

Text: *Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. composite
 Music: VENI, EMMANUEL, French processional, 15th cent.
 Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

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*WE SIT***Prayers of Intercession**

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

L: God our uniter, increase communication and cooperation in our relationships with those of other traditions and religions. Root your church in the radical message of your incarnation, and enable us to pursue your justice in the world. Lord, in your mercy,

C: receive our prayer.

God our creator, we praise you for the beauty that surrounds us. Awaken in us a renewed sense of care for the wildlife in our communities. Form us into faithful stewards of what you have made. Lord, in your mercy,

C: receive our prayer.

God our sovereign, Mary proclaims a new way of life that lifts up the lowly and fills the hungry with good things. Nurture in local governments and municipalities a desire to care for all who are overlooked and ignored. Foster a just peace in Israel,

Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, Ukraine, Russia, and other war torn regions of the World.

Lord, in your mercy,

C: receive our prayer.

God our beacon, as the northern hemisphere begins its slow turn toward more daylight, remind us that even in the deepest nights, you are there. Comfort the lonely and bereaved. Hold closely the frightened, anxious, depressed, and ill, especially bless those on our prayer list and those we name before you in silence or aloud... pause... Lord, in your mercy,

C: receive our prayer.

God our guide, shepherd the leadership of this congregation. Bless the council and staff in discerning future ministry and open their hearts to the voices of the community. Lord, in your mercy,

C: receive our prayer.

God our life, you remember the promises you have made to your people. In gratitude for those who have died especially, those on our prayer list and those we name before you in silence or aloud. We praise you for your faithfulness throughout history. Lord, in your mercy,

C: receive our prayer.

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

C: Amen.

WE STAND

Peace

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Feel free to greet your neighbors with a word of peace.

WE SIT

Offertory



The offering is collected at this time. You also can give online by scanning the QR Code printed here or via the Online Giving page at faithlutheransrq.com. We deeply appreciate your support of Faith Lutheran's ministries.

Offertory Anthem

Come, O Lord, and Overflow Us
Voices of Faith Choir

Hayford, Jack W.
setting by Jack Schrader

WE STAND
We sing together
Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful
Offering Song

Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the
brim our cup of bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the
seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u - nite them with the
prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your pres - ence,
and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980
Music: Marty Haugen, b. 1950
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Offering Prayer

P: Let us pray. Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

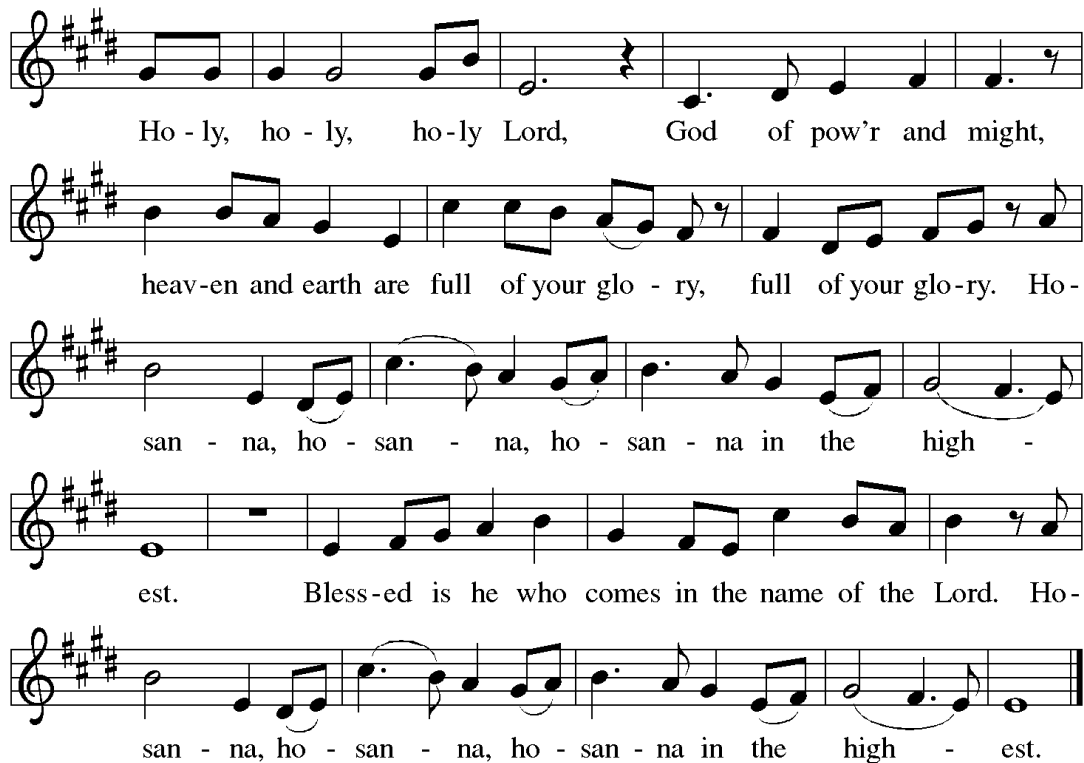
P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Preface

P: 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; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, Holy, Holy *We sing together*



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -
est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Thanksgiving at the Table

P: You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God. You are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory. You so loved the world that you gave your only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life.

We give you thanks for his coming into the world to fulfill for us your holy will and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

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

P: Remembering, therefore, his salutary command, his life-giving passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension, and the promise of his coming again, we give thanks to you, O Lord God Almighty, not as we ought but as we are able; we ask you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving and with your Word and Holy Spirit to bless us, your servants, and these your own gifts of bread and wine, so that we and all who share in the body and blood of Christ may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace, and, receiving the forgiveness of sin, may be formed to live as your holy people and be given our inheritance with all your saints.

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Lord's Prayer

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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.

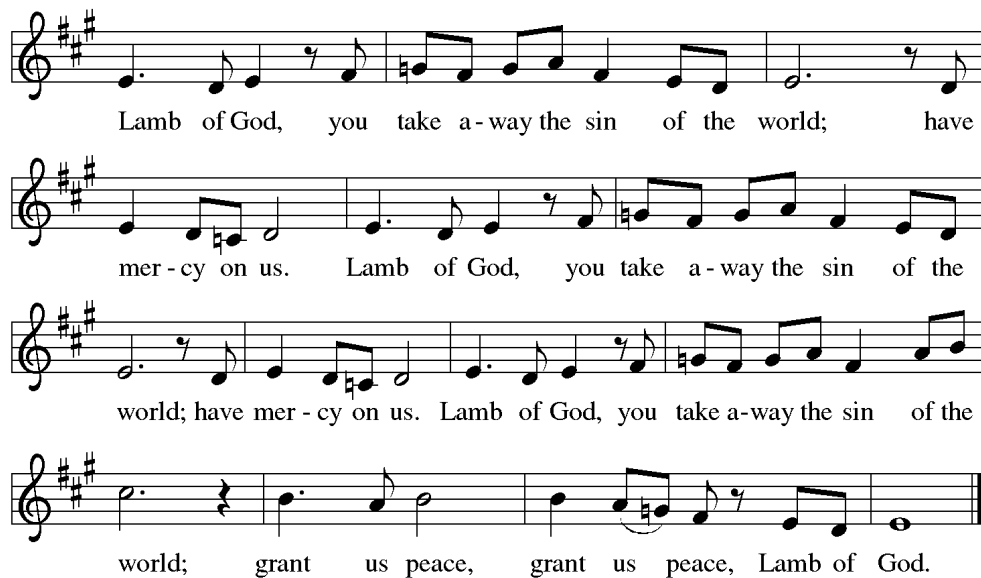
Invitation to Communion

P: Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Communion Song

We sing together

(Next page)



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

WE SIT

Everyone is welcome at the Lord's table.

Communion Anthem

Hark a Thrilling Voice
Voices of Faith Choir

Higginson, Ian

WE STAND

Table 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

P: Let us pray. Faithful God, you have spread before us a feast of rich food and drink in the body and blood of your Son. Now send us out to labor with you, in service to the world you have made, and among the people you have made your home, in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

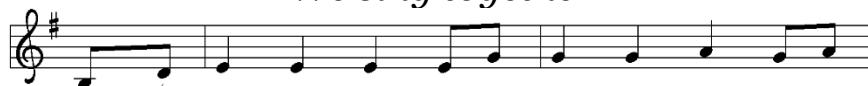
C: Amen.

Blessing

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C: Amen

We sing together



1 My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the
 2 Though I am small, my . . . God, my all, you . . .
 3 From the halls of pow'r to the for - tress tow'r, not a
 4 Though the na - tions rage from . . age to age, we re -



God of my heart is great, and my spir - it sings of the
 work great . . things in me, and your mer - cy will last from the
 stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your
 mem - ber who holds us fast: God's mer - cy must de -



won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
 depths of the past to the end of the age to be.
 jus - tice tears ev - 'ry ty - rant . . from his throne.
 liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp.



You fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my
 Your ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to
 The hun - gry poor shall . . weep no more, for the
 This sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the



weak - ness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my
 those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the
 food they can nev - er earn; there are ta - bles spread, ev - 'ry
 prom - ise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be



name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?
 strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.



Refrain
 My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your jus - tice burn.



Wipe a - way all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn.

Text: Rory Cooney, b. 1952, based on the Magnificat
 Music: STAR OF COUNTY DOWN, Irish traditional
 Text © 1990 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.
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Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Share the good news.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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Welcome, Visitors!

We are so glad you have joined us for worship. Please let us know that you visited by signing our guestbook and/or filling out a Visitor Card located on the table near the entrance. Kindly give the card to an usher or place it in the offering plate.

Join in Prayer and Bible Study

- **Adult Forum** will take a Christmas and New Year break and will resume again in January. Stuned to learn about the exciting lesson!
- **Men of Faith** meet for breakfast and prayer at **8:30 a.m. each Tuesday. During month of December, please meet at Skillets, 8635 S Tamiami Trail.** ****There won't be a breakfast meeting on Christmas Eve.*
- **G.I.F.T.S. (Growing in Faith Through Scripture) Women's Bible study meets at 9:30 a.m. Tuesdays in the library** to focus on "Leaning on Jesus: A Study of God's Strength."
- **The Prayer Group meets at 10:30 a.m. Wednesdays in the chapel** to pray for all in need, our community, nation and world, and to share Holy Communion. Can't attend in person? Join via Zoom: Meeting ID 871 4720 3661. Passcode 041291.

Women of Faith

- Please join the Women of Faith group for breakfast and Prayer, Conversation, & Fellowship. This will be monthly beginning on **Mon., January 6th @ 8:30 a.m.** – Skillets, 8635 S Tamiami Trail. Future dates will be communicated soon. You may call Pastor Marianne for more information.

Bereavement Group Meets Wednesdays

Bereavement Group will meet at 3:15 p.m. on Wednesdays in the chapel. If you or a friend can use help bearing the burden of grief, this group is for you.

You Can Help Needy through Pastor's Discretionary Fund

Pastor Eric often speaks with people about aid they require. The Pastor's Discretionary Fund allows him to assist financially, when appropriate. **The need currently is great so, if you can, please consider a donation to the fund so those in need can receive assistance.** You can give through the Online Giving page at faithlutheransrq.com, or by designating a check or cash contribution. Thank you!

ADULT BIBLE STUDY TO RESUME ITS WINTER SESSIONS

Our Bible Study will explore the Scriptures surrounding the death of Jesus on the cross. We will use a study by

Prof. Amy-Jill Levine:

*Witness at the Cross: A Beginner's
Guide to Holy Friday*

In *Witness at the Cross*, Dr. Levine (no stranger to our previous Bible Studies) shows how the people at the cross each have distinct roles to play. Each Evangelist presents a distinct picture of the death of Jesus. Each portrays different individuals and groups of people at the cross, Each offers different images and dialogues, and so from each, we learn how those meanings and messages cross the centuries to any who would come to the cross today. Hopefully, our study will offer us new insights, and we would come away transformed. Come, Lord Jesus! Pastor Larry will convene our six-week study beginning Wednesday, January 15th and concluding on the 19th of February. Each session is from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and, as usual, will be held in the 2nd floor classroom of the Community Center (across from the elevator).

IMPORTANT: The Participant Book-order will be placed after the **REGISTRATION DEADLINE** of *Sunday, January 5th*. Please register on the sign-up sheet in the narthex or call the church office and leave your name with Heidi (941-924-4664). Your Study Book will be made available for pick-up on Sunday, January 12th.

***WELCOME ALL! REFRESHMENTS! JOIN IN THE
DISCUSSION OR SIT QUIETLY AND TAKE IT ALL IN!***

Coffee Hour Is Important! Please Volunteer!

Coffee hour needs additional volunteers. All you have to do is provide and put out snacks, and clean up afterward. Faith can cover the cost of the snacks if you would like to volunteer but don't have resources to purchase them. **Sign up on the sheet beside the coffee pot in fellowship hall.**

Members of Evangelism Ministry Team Experience 30 Day Prayer Devotional

Guided by the book "Pray and Go", by Thom Rainer, members of Faith Evangelism Ministry Team will spend the month of November reaching our church family and the greater community in prayer. The book – copies of which are paid for by a grant from the

Faith Mission Endowment Fund – is an easy-to-use tool that empowers church members to focus outward and learn how to pray regularly.

During their 30-day experience, evangelism team members will meet together to share thoughts and experiences. Through Faith Friday Update emails, they also will share information about what they are learning about the power of prayer and how it prepares them to “make disciples”

A “Pray and Go” experience likely will be offered to All Faith Lutheran worshippers beginning in early 2025. Call Lauren at 941-529-6879 if you have any questions.

Experiencing the Joy of Generosity! The Joy of Receiving God’s Blessings

A spiritual gift is a God-given ability for service that God wants us to use the minister to others.

Investing for Time and Eternity

“... store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Matt. 6:20-21

Worship to Go Needs Your Help!!

Worship to Go needs additional helpers! You can participate at:

- **1:30 p.m., Monday, Jan. 13th**, at Sarabella, Senior Living, 5650 Gantt Road. Volunteers will meet at 12:45 in the Faith Chapel and will car pool to the facility.
 - **10:45 a.m., Tuesday, Jan. 14th**, at Elance Senior Living (Barclay), 3260 Lake Pointe Blvd. Volunteers will meet at 10:00 a.m. in the Faith chapel and will carpool to the facility.
 - **1:30 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 21st**, at Angels Senior Living, 5750 Honore. Volunteers will meet at 12:45 p.m. in the chapel and will carpool to the facility.
- To join in, contact Pastor Eric directly, 716-352-0055. No experience necessary!

Need a Ride to Church?

Faith will pay for Uber or Lyft to bring you or others to worship or other events. Contact Pastor Eric to make arrangements, 716-352-0055.

Donate Altar Flowers in Honor or in Memory

- Please consider donating altar flowers in honor of a special occasion, in memory of a loved one or to glorify God. The cost is \$30 for one vase or \$60 for two. Make checks payable to Faith Lutheran Church with “altar flowers” in the memo line. Check the altar flowers donation board in fellowship hall to see if your desired date is available. If not, choose an alternate date. **The next open dates are 12/29, 1/05, 1/19.** When you

purchase altar flowers, your name and dedication appear in the bulletin on your selected Sunday. To make a dedication:

- At church, complete an Altar Flowers envelope with payment, and place it in the offering plate. Indicate your wish to keep or donate the flowers on the donation board in fellowship hall.
- By mail, send payment with a note indicating your desired date and dedication, and if you want to keep the flowers or donate them.
- By email or phone, contact the church office with your desired date and dedication, and whether you want to keep or donate the flowers. Pay through the Altar Flowers option on the Online Giving page of the Faith website, faithlutheransrq.com.

If you have questions or specific requests about who or what organization should receive flowers that you purchased and choose to donate, contact Joan Hirsch, 941-726-7885.

Zumba Class

Zumba Class Mondays at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Center (gym). All fitness levels are welcome! It is free for congregation members and a voluntary donation from non-members is appreciated. Join in the FUN!!!

Christmas Services

Christmas Eve – 4 p.m & 7 p.m.

Christmas Day – 10 a.m.

Special Music for all Services

Book Club

The Book Club next meets on Mon. , January 27th with the book *The Fall of Marigolds* by Susan Meissner. If you would like to join us please contact Janet Petersen at luvstitches55@gmail.com

Misson Endowment Committee wishes to share a message with you during the Thanksgiving season of gratitude.

We are passionate about opportunities to grow new ministries and further develop our faith into actionable steps of support and expansion. We remain ready and willing, eager to see our church family and broader community feel the love of Christ in our work. We are updating our brochure, which will be available for you in the next couple of weeks. There will also be some placed on the narthex table when they are finished as well. Today, we celebrate you, as we cannot grow without our loving congregation. Your gifts, of any amount, give us a means to have a perpetual fund that extends beyond us and our lifetime in support of ministry at Faith Lutheran Church. Our Committee members, including Patty McKee, Denise Kirkeeng, Marlene Radesk, Terry Copper, Pastor John Spittal, Karen Kolschowsky, Pastor Eric, and myself are all available to talk with you about any potential grant ideas or ways for you to contribute your valuable treasures with this

fund. Again, thank you deeply for your generosity, support and ideas of ways to deepen our faith and spreading of God's love.

Digital Pictorial Church Directory News

Last week you were notified you would be receiving an email from IconCMO on behalf of Faith Lutheran Church with instructions about logging in within 48 hours. Due to Christmas holiday and busy schedules we have decided to hold on this until after the Christmas season has finished. You will get an announcement and in new instructions in the next few weeks.

“Faith’s Financial Corner”

’Tis the Season of...Advent...the contemplation and waiting for the coming of our Lord and Savior’s Birth and the New Year and what promises it will bring. Of course, that means year-end concerns also call for attention. Here’s useful information to help you plan:

- Year-end giving statements from Faith will be sent by Jan 8, either by email or USPS per your opted in/out preferences.
- To check the status of your 2024 pledge or to request an earlier copy of your statement, contact Patty McKee, financialsecretary@faithlutheransrq.com, 941-921-3709.

’Tis the Season of...Giving...we all are well aware as our mailboxes and messages tell us! Just as we contemplate the meaningful expressions of love and appreciation for family and those significant causes in our lives, please include your family of Faith!

Ways to Give to Faith Lutheran

Besides giving cash or checks in the offering plate at services, other smart ways to meet your desired giving to support the mission and work of Faith may be beneficial either from a taxable financial benefit to you, or simply for convenience.

Consider electronic giving via the Online Giving page on the Faith website, faithlutheransrq.com/onlinegiving. And don’t forget, we have a QR code that will take you there and is regularly published in our bulletins. Here, for you to copy and save. For either regularly scheduled giving to meet your pledge, or a one time donation to a specific fund, our Vanco support partner assures secure and convenient platform for doing so.



- Donate appreciated securities that you have owned for more than one year, thus eliminating capital gains tax on the appreciation. You may also receive a tax deduction for the full fair market value on the date of the gift. Consult with your tax advisor, and keep in mind that the gift date is the date on which the securities enter Faith’s account. Contact our treasurer - Anita Wooton, assistant-treasurer - Jane Sanks, or Pastor Eric Olsen for additional information.
- Open a Donor Advised Fund (DAF) or contribute through your existing DAF. You can request a grant from your DAF to support Faith or any of Faith’s mission funds.

- Make a gift from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA). If you are 70½ or older, you can transfer funds directly to Faith to eliminate taxes on any gift up to \$105,000 each calendar year. If you must make RMDs (Required Minimum Distributions), this is a great way to meet all or part of that obligation, being sure that your gift arrives before December 31, to count toward the current tax year.
- If you own a Life Insurance Policy that is no longer needed, it could be the easy gift vehicle for a charitable gift. You can contribute a life insurance policy either by declaring Faith Lutheran Church, Inc. as the owner of the policy or simply the beneficiary. Check with your life insurance agent for details on forms needed and potential tax savings.
- Endow your giving to the church by making an investment to it and its future mission in perpetuity. Just as the significant individuals in your life and your favorite charitable organizations deserve your planned and thoughtful remembrance, consider the importance of your faith and church in your life. Through Legacy or planned giving, you can help ensure Faith Lutheran's growth for years to come. Legacy planning can be made through many vehicles. Gifts are usually made through a bequest in a will, charitable gift annuity, retirement account, life insurance, life estate, or appreciated property or securities.

Additional considerations on giving:

- TOD designation (transfer on death) allows an account holder to pass assets from brokerage accounts, stocks, and bonds at their death, to pass directly to a beneficiary, bypassing probate, after they die. The account owner specifies the percentage of assets each beneficiary receives, allowing their executor to distribute without first passing through probate. TOD cannot be used for retirement accounts like IRAs or 401(k)'s because retirement account beneficiaries must follow withdrawal and taxation rules.

POD designation (payable on death) account is similar to a TOD account except that it handles a person's bank assets (cash), instead of securities.

Giving Envelopes

The 2025 Giving Envelopes will be available for pick up starting this Sunday. This includes the special order and regular. If you have questions please see Patty McKee.

Worship Services

Sundays at 8 a.m., 10:15 a.m. & 5 p.m. in person.
Live streamed and recorded at
www.faithlutheransrq.com/live-service.

Sunday, Dec. 15

Online views	133
8 a.m. in person	31
10:15 a.m. in person	120

Next Sunday, Dec. 29

First Reading

Samuel 2:18-20, 26

*The boy Samuel grew in favor with
the Lord and the people*

Psalm 148

*The splendor of the Lord is over earth and
heaven. (Ps. 148:13)*

Second Reading

Colossians 3:12-17

*Clothe yourselves in love; let the peace of
Christ rule your hearts*

This Week at Faith

Luke 2:41-52

*The boy Jesus increased in wisdom, and in
divine and human favor*

Monday, Dec. 23

6 p.m. Zumba Class, community center

Tuesday, Dec. 24

10 a.m. Worship to Go @ Goldton at Venice,
108 Bella Verde Blvd, Nokomis

3 p.m. Voices of Faith Rehearsal

4 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship

7 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship

*Both Services with Holy Communion & Full
Choir

Wednesday, Dec. 25

10 a.m. Christmas Day Worship

Thursday, Dec. 26

9 a.m. Food Pantry Prep, fellowship hall

4:30 p.m. Food Pantry Prep, fellowship hall

5 p.m. Food Pantry

Friday, Dec. 27

8 a.m. Jazzersize, community center

Saturday, Dec. 28

8 a.m. Jazzersize, community center

9 a.m. Diakonia, conference room

Contact officeadmin@faithlutheransrq.com:

- If you or someone you know would appreciate a communion, hospital or home visit; to be contacted; or to receive a card in the mail.
- To add or remove a name from the Prayer List.

Prayer List

Alan
Dick Allender, cousin of Gerri Copper
Pastor Steve Anderson, friend of Jan Phillips
Tani Banta
Barbara Brannan, mother of Kim McDonald
Arthur Brucato, friend of Karla Lewis &
Michael Leonhardt
Dee Burlingame
Judy Carlsen
Evelyn Conlon
Merle Cusmano
Doug Dahlquist, dad of Hannah Boyd
Jeanine Davis (nee Molella), granddaughter of
Karen & John White
Eloise Dettmer
Beth & Mary Farmer
Andrea Gamboa
Vicki Goffinet
Jeff Hansen, nephew of Joan Searles
Patricia Head, mother of Wayne Head
Sonja Hickling, mother of Kelly Ashlock
Becky Hilton Heeps, friend of Lisa Olsen
Bob Hurdle, friend of Gerry & Karen Kolschowski &
friend of Gerri & Terry Copper
Pete Inkrott
Jan and Michele
Jesus & Rita Jimenez
Alf Kirkeeng
Leonard Kotwitz, brother of Janet Falk
Lillian Lapenckas
Kevin Lasko
Ruth Levy, sister of Joan Hirsch
Diane Lewis, sister-in-law of Karla Lewis &
Michael Leonhardt
Pat Longo & Ronnie Mojo, friends of Susan Wakefield
Kimberly MacDonald & Barbara, self and mother
Julie & Eli Maresch, niece & grandnephew
of Patty McKee
Paul & Debbie Maresch, brother & sister-in-law
of Patty McKee
Dennis McCaughey, friend of Lois Weaverling
Judi Melander
Alison Nommay, friend of Karla Lewis
& Michael Leonhardt
Terry O'Connell, friend of Marlene Radesk
Alicia & Walt Orlow, friend of Heidi Floyd
Meghan Ortega, niece of Lisa & Pastor Eric Olsen
Judy Osborn, sister of Peggy Ragan
Sue Ostrom
Pastor Terry Parker, friend of Max &
Pastor Marianne Powrie
Fran Perkins
Carl Petersen
Richard Keith Radcliffe, brother of
Gail Radcliffe Brown
Annabel Ryan
Robin Ryder, daughter of Floyd Ryder &
sister of Gail Murphy
Lorna Sawyers-Sucra, friend of
Jeremy & Yvonne Mullins
Kathy Schilio
Becky Sciranko, niece of Alice Rush
Joan Searles
Stephanie Sebastyn, friend of Carolyn Winemiller
Shirley Schimke
Pastor John Spittal
Pamela Spry, mother of Hannah Boyd
Dr. Heather Stark, friend of Cliff Hornsby
Mark Stengel
Ed & Gail Straight, friends of Nancy Dandino
Tess Stransky, daughter, granddaughter, & cousin of
Lynn Clancy
Leigh Tarantino, friend of Marlene Radesk
Melissa Thompson, cousin of Lisa Olsen
David Turnbull, husband of Patricia White
Brittany Wanko & her premature newborn
infants, Olivia Mae & Emmet Walter
Friends & Family of Paul Wick
Dr. Patty White
Dorothy Wolfe, cousin of Adelle Smith
Jon Wooton
Celeste & John Yee, daughter and father of Marlene
Radesk

