## FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH



Third & Terry, Longmont, Colorado (303) 776-2800 | www.firstluth.org Pastor Garrett Struessel and Deacon Looschen

**CHRISTMAS** 

Christmas Eve December 24, 2025 4:00, 5:30 and 11:00 pm

# **GATHERING**

Thank you for joining us for Christmas Eve Worship at First Lutheran Church. On this night we welcome the light of the Christ child. Whether you are a guest or a familiar face, we are happy you chose to worship with us. Please fill out the blue attendance cards and turn them in with the offering plates. May the light of Christ, bursting anew this night, abide with you and yours this season.

#### **PRELUDE**

4:00 p.m.

Gary Elmquist, Organ

5:30 p.m.

Jeffrey Hartmann

11:00 p.m.

"Advent Hope", "Once in Royal David's City" "Joyous Christmas Song

Chancel Choir; Gary Elmquist, piano

#### INTRODUCTION

In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

#### WELCOME

#### CHRISTMAS PROCLAMATION

Many ages from the time when God created the heavens and the earth and then formed man and woman in his own image;

Long after the great flood, when God made the rainbow shine forth as a sign of the covenant; twenty-one centuries from the time the promise was given to Abraham and Sarah;

Thirteen centuries after Moses led the people of Israel out of Egypt and Miriam danced in freedom; eleven hundred years from the time of Ruth and the judges;

One thousand years from the anointing of David as king, in fulfillment of the times and years and months and days discerned by the prophets;

n the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad; the seven hundred and fifty-second year from the foundation of the city of Rome;

The forty-second year of the reign of Octavian Augustus; while the whole world enjoyed a span of peace, Jesus Christ, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father,

Desiring to sanctify the world by his most merciful coming, being conceived by the Holy Spirit, and nine months of growth in the womb of his mother— now in our own times is the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, God made flesh.

Amen.

#### **PROCESSIONAL HYMN**

"Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful"

**ELW 283** 

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant! O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem; Come and behold him, born the King of angels:

Refrain
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

The highest, most holy, light of light eternal, Born of a virgin, a mortal he comes; Son of the Father now in flesh appearing! (Refrain) Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above! Glory to God in the highest:

(Refrain)

#### **GREETING**

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

Amen.

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.

#### **ANTHEM**

4:00 p.m."What Child is This"Sarah Morrow5:30 p.m."Wexford Carol" arr. by David DownesSusan Bennett11:00 p.m."Joy to the World" by Gordon YoungChancel Choir

## <u>Word</u>

### **READINGS**

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.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

#### Titus 2:11-14

<sup>11</sup>For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, <sup>12</sup>training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, <sup>13</sup>while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup>He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

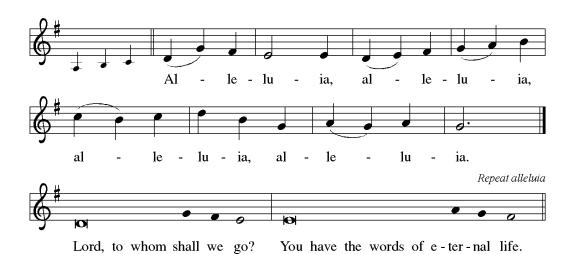
#### **ANTHEM**

| 4:00  | " "Rejoice" from Handel's Messiah                      | Sarah Morrow  |
|-------|--|---------------|
| 5:30  | "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" arr. by Steven Calderone | Susan Bennett |
| 11:00 | "A Star" arr. by Pepper Choplin                        | Chancel Choir |

#### **CHILDREN'S TIME**

Deacon Korra Looschen

#### **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



## **GOSPEL**

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter beginning at the 1<sup>st</sup> verse. **Glory to you, O Lord.** 

#### Luke 2:1-14

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph 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. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child ⁶While 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. ⁶In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁶Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON Pastor Garrett Struessel

#### PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Hear us, O God

Your mercy is great.

# MEAL

## **OFFERTORY HYMN**

| 4:00  | "O Holy Night" | Sarah Morrow     |
|-------|----------------|------------------|
| 5:30  | "O Holy Night" | Jeffrey Hartmann |
| 11:00 | "O Holy Night" | Sally Campbell   |

#### OFFERTORY PRAYER

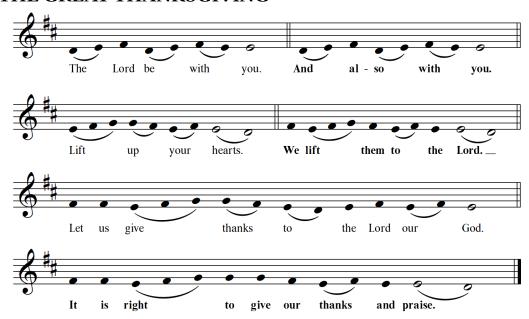
God of glory,

great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior.

Amen.

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

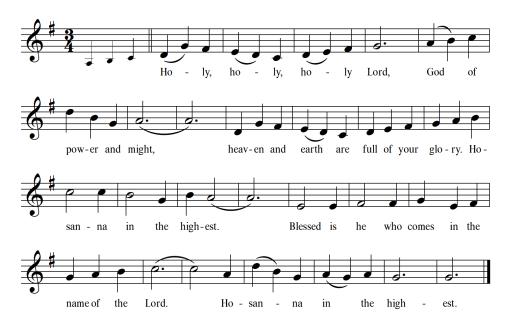
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It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

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## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

### **SHARING OF COMMUNION**

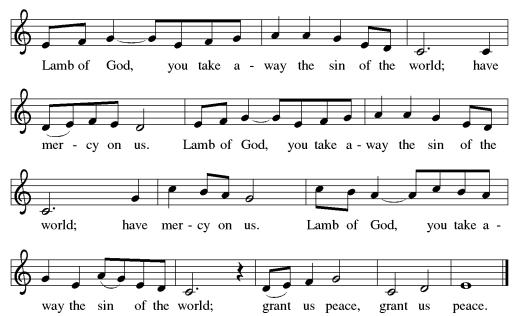
All are welcome who come trusting in the gift of God's presence in the Bread of Life and the Cup of Salvation shared in this meal. "The body of Christ, broken for you", and "the blood of Christ shed for you", includes the promise of forgiveness, life and salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*Hear these words and partake of the bread/cracker and wine/juice, giving it to each other, if possible:* 

#### "The body of Christ given for you. The blood of Christ shed for you."

All are welcome who come trusting in the gift of God's presence in the Bread of Life and the Cup of Salvation, shared in this meal. "The body of Christ, broken for you", and "the blood of Christ shed for you", include the promise of the forgiveness of sin, life and salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord. The ushers will invite you to come forward for communion. We invite everyone to receive communion if you so desire. The invitation to receive Holy Communion is from Christ Jesus; therefore "all are welcome". In our serving communion trays, wine is darker red on the outside, and grape juice is the lighter color in the center. We serve only gluten-free bread prepared in a kitchen excluding wheat flour, to include everyone regardless of wheat-gluten sensitivities. Come, taste and see, that the Lord is good.

LAMB OF GOD
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- 1. The first Noel the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay; in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep. Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.
- 2. They looked up and saw a star shining in the east beyond them far; and to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night.

Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.

3. And by the light of that same star three wisemen came from country far; to seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went.

Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.

- 4. This star drew near to the northwest, o'er Bethlehem it took its rest; and there it did both stop and stay right over the place where Jesus lay Noel, Noel, Noel!
  - Born is the King of Israel.
- 5. Then entered in those wisemen three full rev'rently upon their knee, and offered there in his presence their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense. Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.

- 1. It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old, from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold: "Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all-gracious king." The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.
- 3. And you, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low, who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow: look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing; oh, rest beside the weary road and hear the angels sing!
- 2. Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled, and still their heav'nly music floats o'er all the weary world. Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hov'ring wing, and ever o'er its babel sounds the blessed angels sing.
- 4. 4) For lo! The days are hast'ning on, by prophets seen of old, when with the evercircling years shall come the time foretold, when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling, and all the world give back the song which now the angels sing.

"On Christmas Night"

**ELW 274** 

- 1. On Christmas night all Christians sing 2. Then why should we on earth be sad, to hear the new the angels bring. On Christmas night all Christians sing to hear the new the angels bring: news of great joy, news of great mirth, news of our merciful king's birth.
- 3. When sin departs before his face, then life and health come in its place. When sin departs before his face, then life and health come in its place. Angels rejoice with us and sing, all for to see the newborn king.
- since our redeemer made us glad? Then why should we on earth be sad, since our redeemer made us glad, when from our sin he set us free, all for to gain our liberty?
- 4. All out of darkness we have light, which made the angels sing this night. All out of darkness we have light, which made the angels sing this night: "Glory to God in highest heav'n: Peace on earth, goodwill. Amen."

#### POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Incarnate God, you are among us at this table. May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence. Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us.

Amen.

# **SENDING**

### **BLESSING**

The God of love, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, lavish you with grace, illumine your path, and increase your joy, today and always.

#### Amen.

**4:00, 5:30 and 11:00 Services**...Candle Lighting Safety Instructions: Please do not tilt lighted candles. When lighting new candles, only tip the wick of the UNLIT candle into the flame of the lit candle. Parents are encouraged to hold candles for children and remember the wax dripping is hot enough to burn skin. Always be aware of where your candle flame is burning. When extinguishing the candles, please hold a hand behind the candle, and BLOW GENTLY to avoid blowing candle wax off the candle. Please place candles and holders in the boxes in the Narthex, for use in the following service. Thank you and Merry Christmas!

**HYMN** 

"O' Little Town of Bethlehem"

ELW 279 vs. 1,3

- 1.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
- 3.How silently, how silently, the wondrous Gift is giv'n; So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His Heav'n. No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin, Where meek souls will receive Him still, the dear Christ enters in.

- 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.

## **SENDING**

Glory to God in the highest!

And peace to God's people on earth!

Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.

Thanks be to God.

## **POSTLUDE**

PREACHER/PRESIDER Pastor Garrett Struessel
WORSHIP ASSISTANT Deacon Korra Looschen

GREETER: 4:00 — Tim and Margaret King

5:30 — Eva Teague

11:00 —

**READER:** 4:00 — Fran von Hagel

5:30 — Char Lemkee

11:00 — Rick Samson

**COUNCIL HOSTS:** 4:00 — John Gaddis, Sr.

5:30 — Eric Pederson 11:00 — Rick Samson

**ORGANIST/PIANIST:** 4:00 — Gary Elmquist

5:30 — Jeffrey Hartmann

11:00 — Gary Elmquist

**CHOIR DIRECTOR:** Sally Campbell

**COMMUNION** 4:00 — Jeff and Shannon Satur, Stephanie and Lewis

Assistants: Geyer II

5:30 — Andrew Howell and Dale Wingeleth

11:00 — Rick Samson and Dwight Tilford

**USHERS:** 4:00 — Todd Gould, Holly Keenan, Carson Looschen,

Cliff Looschen

5:30 — Tim King and John Osberg

11:00 — Rick Samson

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