



December 10, 2023

10:00 AM

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

4515 Dobie Road
Okemos, MI 48864
517-349-0620

Second Sunday in Advent

To make disciples for Jesus Christ . . .

- . . . we **Gather** in faith for worship, prayer, study and fellowship
- . . . we **Equip** the people of God with a faith that works in real life
- . . . we **Serve** the world in the name of Jesus Christ

Pastor Bruce Thorsen
Music Director Deb Borton-McDonough
Organist/Pianist Kathy Richardson
Administrative Assistant Connie Denbrock
Youth & Education Director Pam Williams
Sound Technicians Cody Boyan & Raymond Herek
Church email faith@faithlutheranokemos.org
Website www.faithlutheranokemos.org
Facebook Page facebook.com/faithlutheranokemos
WIFI: Faith Lutheran; Password: LutheranFaith

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

John calls people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing gets in the way of the Lord's coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: the assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, "See, your God is coming!" We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in a world in need of justice and peace.

PRELUDE

"People, Look East"

Sara Glick

Deb Borton-McDonough and Addie Thompson, handbells

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation.

Amen.

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.

Everlasting God,

you love justice and you hate wrongdoing.

**We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness
that make us reluctant to work against oppression.**

We are complicit in systems of exploitation.

We choose comfort over courage.

We are careless with creation's bounty.

Look upon us with mercy.

Turn our hearts again to you.

**Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways
for the sake of our waiting world.**

Amen.

Hear these words of assurance: God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. God's covenant is eternal, and God's blessing rests upon us all. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN – Prepare the Royal Highway (ELW 264)



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:



Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN. Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*. admin. Augsburg Fortress

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GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

KYRIE

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,

Refrain



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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE—He Came Down (ELW 253) 1st & 2nd Stanzas



- 1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;
- 2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;
- 3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;
- 4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;



he came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have light; hal - le - lu - jah for - ev - er - more.
he came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have joy;

Text: Cameroon traditional

Music: HE CAME DOWN, Cameroon traditional

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SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Praise to you, O God, who gives us courage to start again. You fasten righteousness around your waist and baptize with the Holy Spirit's fire. Bless us as we mirror your mighty fire in these simple flames, and teach us to mirror your justice in the paths we prepare. We ask that peace abound, until none hurt or destroy over all the earth.

Amen.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-11

A reading from Isaiah.

In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. God will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for the sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of God.

¹Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.

²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

³A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.

⁵Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

⁶A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field.

⁷The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass.

⁸The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.

⁹Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!"

¹⁰See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.

¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

¹You have been gracious to your land, O LORD; you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

²**You have forgiven the iniquity of your people and blotted out all their sins.**

⁸I will listen to what the LORD God is saying; for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.

⁹**Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you, that your glory may dwell in our land.**

¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

¹¹**Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.**

¹²The LORD will indeed grant prosperity, and our land will yield its increase.

¹³**Righteousness shall go before the LORD and shall prepare for God a pathway.**

SECOND READING: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

A reading from 2 Peter.

This short letter deals with pressing concerns regarding the final advent of Jesus, especially concerns that could arise over its apparent delay. The author of the letter calls on Christians to anticipate the promised coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.

⁸Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

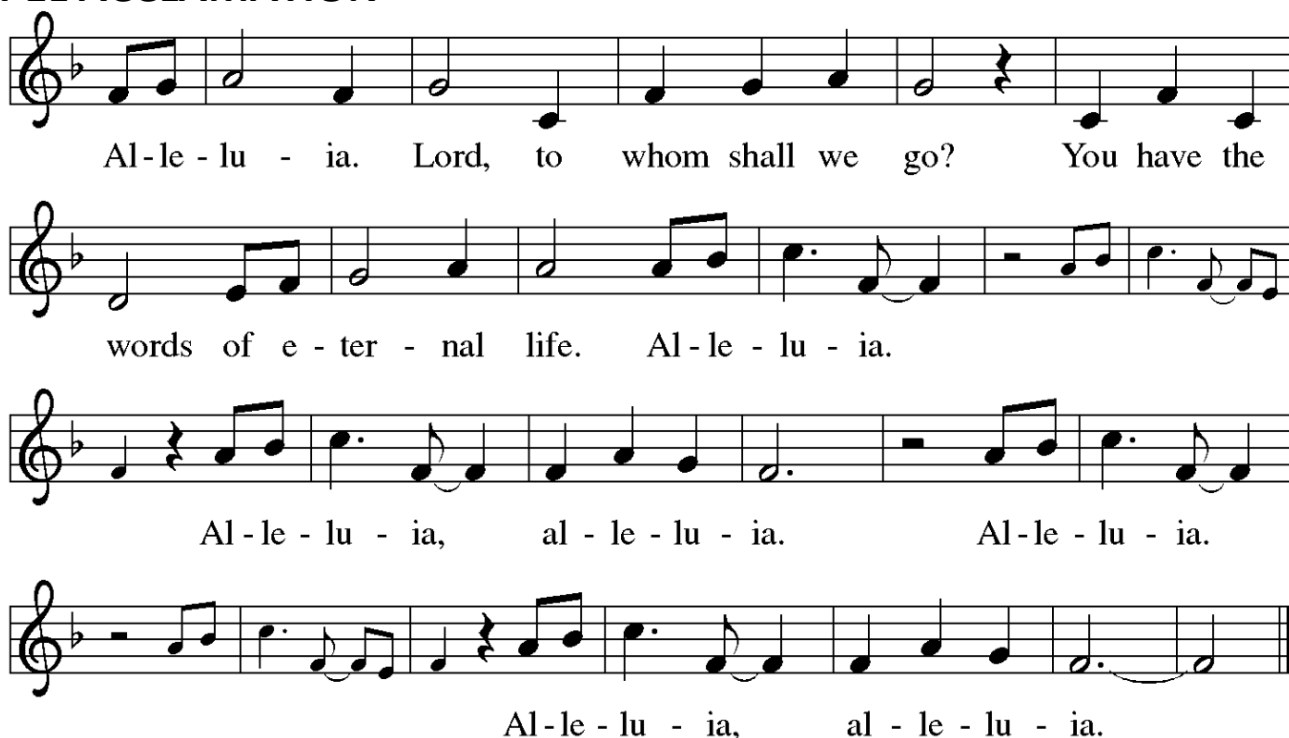
¹¹Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? ¹³But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; ^{15a}and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

CHILDREN'S SERMON

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



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: Mark 1:1-8

The holy gospel according to Mark. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.

¹The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; ³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'"

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY – All Earth is Hopeful (ELW 266)



To - da la tie - rra es - pe - ra_al Sal - va - dor
1 All earth is hope - ful, the Sav - ior comes at last!
2 Peo - ple of Is - rael, you heard the proph - et tell:
3 Moun - tains and val - leys will have to be pre - pared;
4 We first saw Je - sus a ba - by in a crib.



y_el sur - co_a - bier - to, la ob - ra del Se - ñor; es el
Fur - rows lie o - pen for God's cre - a - tive task: this, the
"A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em - man - u - el"; she con -
new high - ways o - pened, new pro - to - cols de - clared. Al - most
This same Lord Je - sus to - day has come to live in our



mun - do que lu - cha por la li - ber - tad, re -
la - bor of peo - ple who strug - gle to see how
ceived him, "God with us," our broth - er, whose birth re -
here! God is near - ing, in beau - ty and grace! All
world; he is pres - ent, in neigh - bors we see our



cla - ma jus - ti - cia y bus - ca la ver - dad. dar - nos li - ber - tad.
God's truth and jus - tice set ev - 'ry - bod - y free.
stores hope and cour - age to chil - dren of this earth.
clear ev - 'ry gate - way, in haste, come out in haste!
Je - sus is with us, and ev - er sets us free.

Text: Alberto Taulé, b. 1932; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946
Music: TODA LA TIERRA, Alberto Taulé
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CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come 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

With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all.

...

God, in your mercy, **Receive our prayer.**

Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING

“Climb to the Top of the Highest Mountain”

Carolyn Jennings

Chancel Choir; Singing Sinners

Please stand if you are able.

OFFERING PRAYER

God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

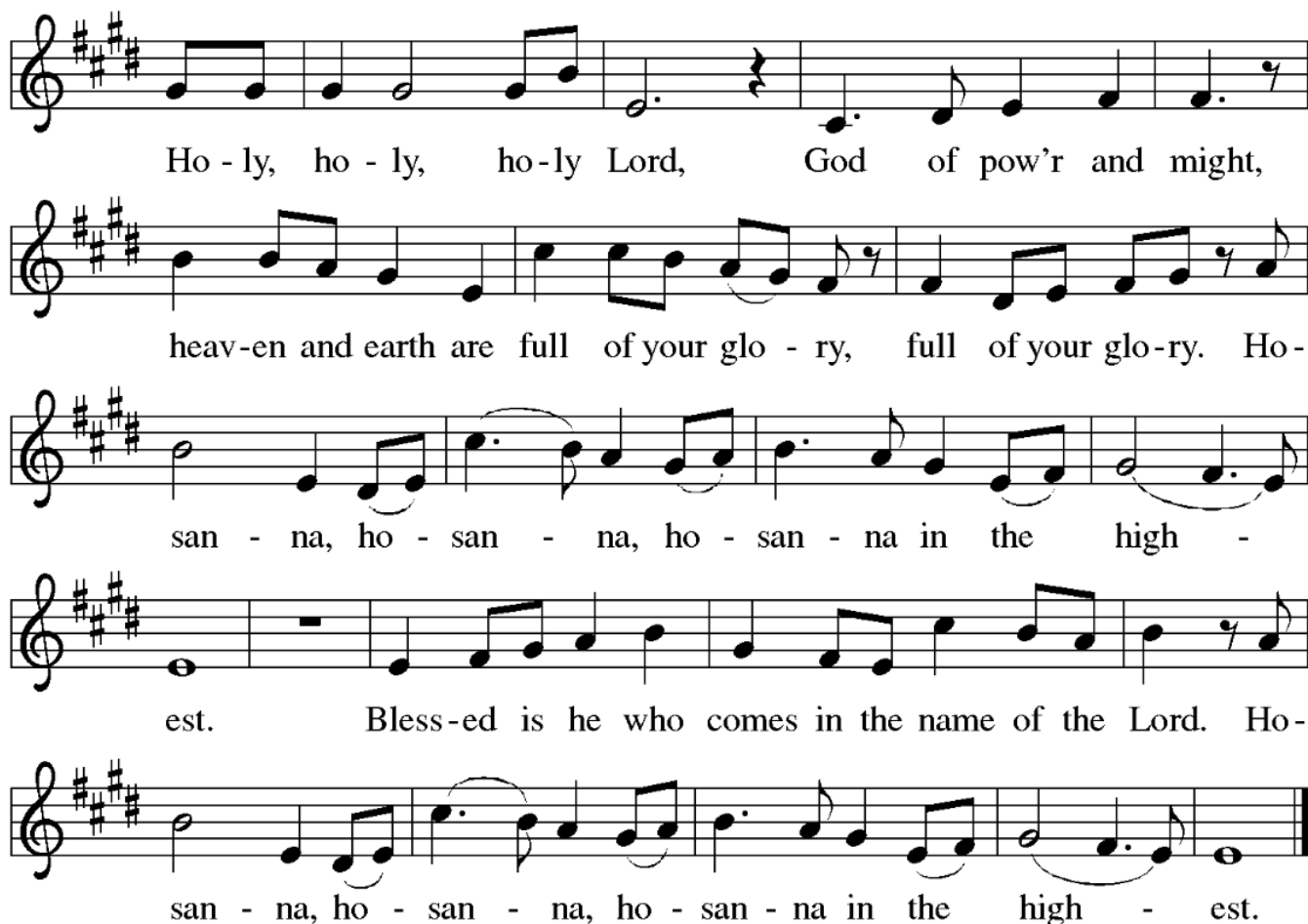
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

PREFACE

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. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. 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



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

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.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kin[g]dom 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 kin[g]dom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

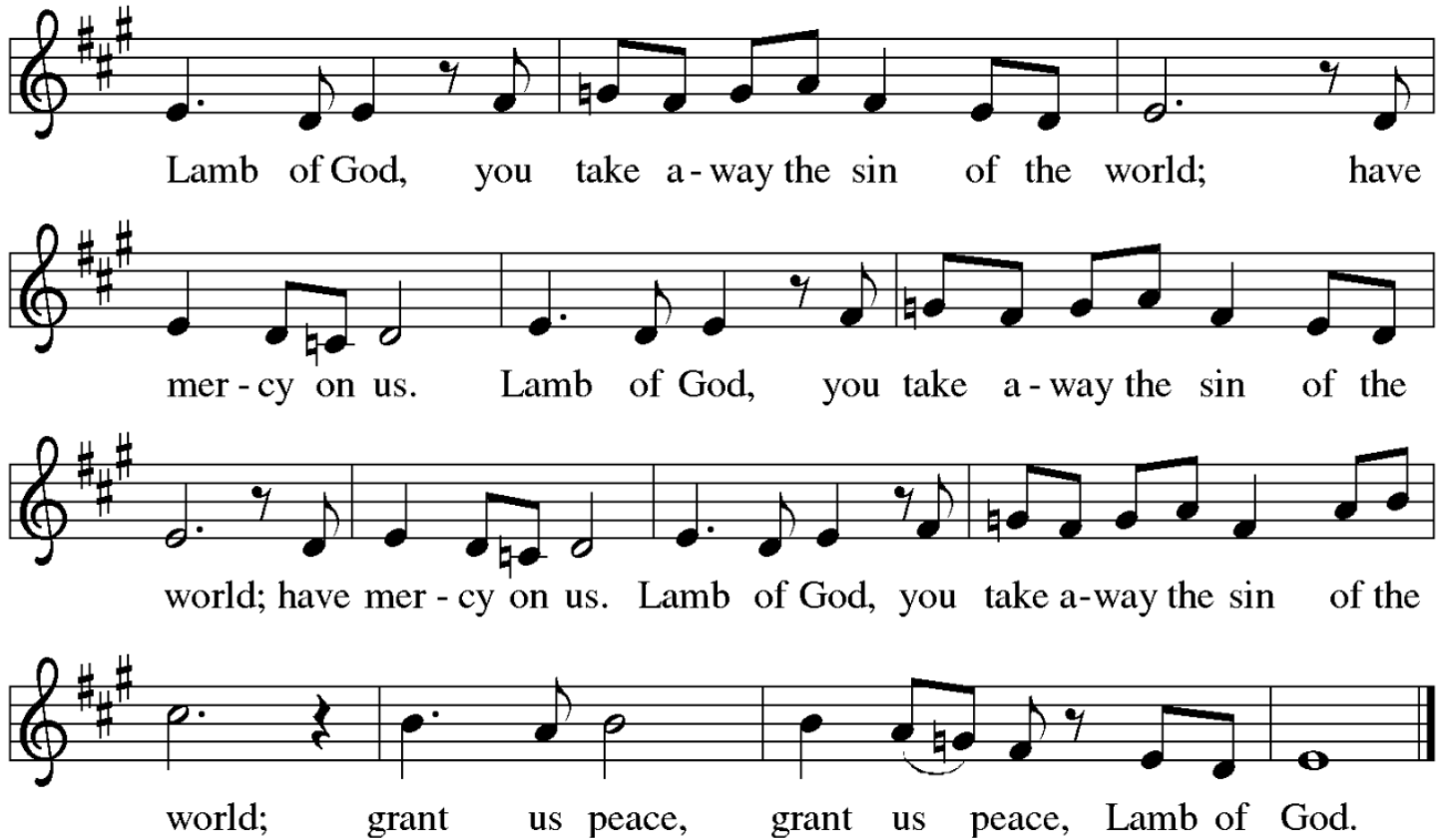
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together. Come, take your place at the table.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you.
Amen.

COMMUNION SONG



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.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

“Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus”
“Puer Nobis Nascitur”

Wilbur Held
Nicolas Lebeque

Please stand if you are able.

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

Amen

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

BLESSING

The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope, and the anointing of the Spirit ✠ remain upon you now and forever.
Amen.

SENDING SONG – 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.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702–1751
Music: CHESTERFIELD, Thomas Haweis, 1734–1820

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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

“Hark, The Glad Sound”

Paul Manz

FAITH VOLUNTEERS

Reader: Jon Harrison
Lay Assistant: Harold Sollenberger
Ushers: Jon & Elaine Harrison
Acolyte: Isaak Nyquist

Greeter(s): Rich Weingartner
Altar Care: Tammy Heilman
Nursery: Open, but not staffed
Coffee Hour: Ray & Angie Herek

January - October 2023
Income \$ 254,784
Expenses \$ 277,303
Net Income (Loss) \$ (22,519)

WEEKLY OFFERING REPORTS

<u>November 26</u>	
Loose Cash	\$ 5.00
General Fund	\$ 3,315.00
Flowers	\$ 220.00
Quilter's Fund	\$ 100.00
Kinawa Christmas Gifts	\$ 670.00
Pantry Fund	\$ 937.00
Parish House	\$ <u>500.00</u>
Subtotal	\$ 5,747.00
<u>Vanco</u>	
General Operating	\$ <u>495.00</u>
Subtotal	\$ 495.00
TOTAL	<u>\$6,242.00</u>

<u>December 3</u>	
Loose Cash	\$ 92.00
General Fund	\$ 7,015.00
Flowers	\$ 154.00
Quilter's Fund	\$ 55.00
Kinawa Christmas Gifts	\$ 225.00
Pantry Fund	\$ 775.00
Parish House	\$ <u>150.00</u>
Subtotal	\$ 9,416.00
<u>Vanco</u>	
General Operating	\$ 4,255.00
Building	\$ 125.00
Caring	\$ 50.00
Pantry Fund	\$ 100.00
Parish House	\$ <u>50.00</u>
Subtotal	\$ 4,580.00
TOTAL	<u>\$ 13,996.00</u>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Time & Talent form has been emailed to the congregation. You can also find paper copies in the Narthex. Please fill out and place in the basket on the table in the Narthex.

Please complete the form by December 31st. Thank you!

- The Church Office will be closed on 12/25/2023 and 1/1/2024.
- There will be NO Sunday School on 12/24/2023 and 12/31/2023.

Sunday, Dec. 10:

- 10:00 am - Worship Service – SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
- 11:30 am – Transition Team Meeting

You can view the Worship Service on our Facebook page (click the link below) <https://www.facebook.com/faithlutheranokemos/videos/>

Monday, Dec. 11:

- Boy Scouts Meeting @ 7:00 pm – Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, Dec. 12:

- Bible Study @ 12:00 pm – Zoom Call

Wednesday, Dec. 13:

- Quilters Meet @ 9:30 am
- FLC Staff Meeting @ 10:15 am
- Private Event @ 11:00 am-2:00pm – Fellowship Hall / Kitchen
- Faith Bells Rehearsal @ 6:30 pm
- Chancel Choir Rehearsal @ 7:30 pm

Saturday, Dec. 16:

- Private Event @ 2:30 pm - 5:00 pm – Sanctuary

Sunday, Dec. 17:

- 10:00 am - Worship Service [Noisy Offering] – THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
- 10:00 am - Christmas Pageant (during Service)
+ Coffee Hour w/cake (after Service)
- 11:30 am – Worship Committee Meeting – Library
- 1:00pm - 4:00 pm – Private Event – Sanctuary
- 4:00pm – 7:00 pm – Private Event – Sanctuary

* * * * *

Financial Update

Income	\$ 254,784
Expenses	<u>\$ 277,303</u>
Net Income (Loss)	\$ (22,519)

As we enter December, our income continues to fall short of our expenses by **over 20,000**. Please prayerfully consider if you are able to make a donation this month to help us end the year on a positive note and start 2024 with a clean slate. Thank You!



FAITH FAMILY NEWSLETTER

In case you missed it in the E-NEWS, here is the link to the
December 2023 / January 2024 NEWSLETTER

<https://faithlutheranokemos.org/wp2/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Dec.2023-Jan.2024-1.pdf>

National ELCA Youth Gathering

July 16 - 20, 2024 – New Orleans, LA – “Created To Be”

For those who have completed 8th – 12th grades

- The registration fee is \$425.00: the \$150.00 deposit and registration information are DUE 01/10/2024 to the church office. The balance owed is DUE 04/23/2024.
- We would fly down on July 15th and schedule some sightseeing time together. Korine Wawrzynski is researching flights. It was felt that this would be less expensive than driving. Also, this would allow more time in New Orleans. Flights may cost between \$300.00 - \$375.00. As soon as we have commitments, we will make the reservations.
- Hotel rooms are budgeted for \$175.00 per night and can have up to 3 in a room.
- Meals – recommended budgeting for \$70.00 per day.

In summary:

Registration - \$425.00

Flight - \$375.00

Hotel - \$290.00 (5 nights at \$58.00 – 3 in a room)

Meals - \$350.00 – (5 days at \$70.00)

\$1,440.00 – estimated total cost

There is some money in the budget, and we will meet in January to discuss fundraising events to offset this cost.

Please inform Pastor Bruce if you want to register or have questions. If this price seems too much, please talk to Pastor Bruce, and we will work together on this, as we don't want anyone to be left out.

Thanks,
Pastor Bruce

Christmas Pageant

December 17th, during Worship Service. Following the Service, there will be coffee hour and cake!

LUNCH BUNCH

Everyone is Invited!!

FLC Wednesday, December 20, 11:45 am - 1:00 pm

December Hosts are Karen Fraser & Deb Borton-McDonough

This is an opportunity for fellowship and food. If you would like to host a month, please let Bob Nelson or Tammy Heilman know. Hosting would involve providing sandwiches, drinks, set up, and clean up. For anyone attending, please feel free to bring a salad or dessert. You can also bring your own lunch if you wish. We hope you can join us. Come and go as you need to during lunch.

FLC Calendar of Events: All scheduled Sunday Services, church events, meetings, and facility use events are now posted on the FLC Website under About Us / Calendar. OR, you can click “Calendar” from the top right corner of the Home Page.

Here is the direct link: [Faith Lutheran Church Calendar of Events](#).

Links to the Sunday Services (Recorded and Live), Tuesday Bible Studies (via Zoom), etc., are available within the individual calendar events.

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