

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

December 24, 2023
Christmas Eve, 8:00 P.M.

Welcome to Faith Lutheran

The ushers have large print copies of tonight's bulletin available, if needed.

If it is difficult for you to stand along with the congregation during any part of the worship service, please feel free to remain seated.

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

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.

PRELUDE

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

arr. Burkhardt

The assembly stands.

GATHERING HYMN – O Come, All Ye Faithful (ELW 283)



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,
3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;
sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!



come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:
Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:
Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

Refrain



Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,
O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.
O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711–1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–1880, sts. 1, 3–4; tr. unknown, st. 2
Music: ADESTE FIDELES, attr. John Francis Wade

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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.**

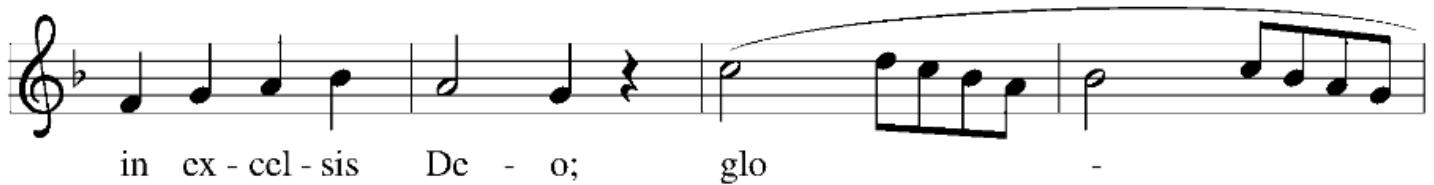
HYMN OF PRAISE - Angels We Have Heard on High (ELW 289)



- 1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
- 2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
- 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;



and the moun-tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.



Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864

Music: GLORIA, French carol

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PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The assembly is seated.

LIGHTING OF CHRISTMAS CANDLE

Break forth, O beautiful heavenly light and usher in the morning;
O shepherds, don't be afraid, but hear the angel's warning.
This child, now weak in infancy, our confidence and joy shall be,
the power of satan breaking, our peace forever making.

Break forth, O beautiful heavenly light, to announce our salvation;
our mighty God comes to earth, our hope and expectation.
God comes to earth in human flesh to live, our God with us, Immanuel;
the night of darkness ending, our sinful race repenting.

Text: Johann Rist, 1607-1667;

Let us pray.

*God of all light, we come before you in many ways bruised, broken and cracked apart. Thank you for shining your light into these cracks, bringing your healing presence to our deepest need. We know that in our lives and in this world, there is still great darkness. Help us to see the darkness for what it is, that we might not fall under its seductive sway. Send us into places of great need with the godly virtues of your kingdom, that we might live as lanterns for your light. And may we be reminded that the light of the world is first revealed in the humble simplicity of a little child, who we are now compelled to receive in childlike faith. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen***

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7

This poem promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth of a royal child with a name full of promise. While Judah's king will practice justice and righteousness, the real basis for faith lies in God's passion for the people: The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this!

A reading from Isaiah.

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined. ³You 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. ⁴For 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. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For 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. ⁷His 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.

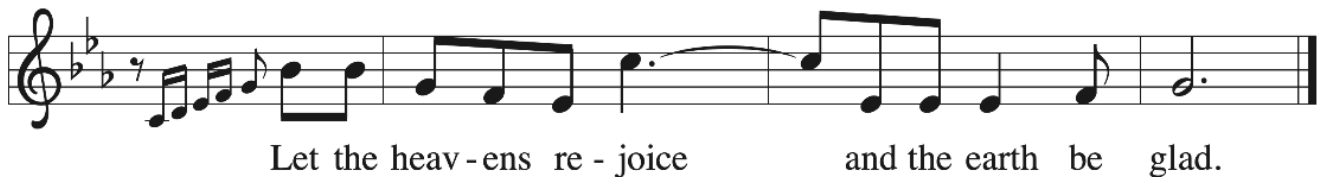
Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 96

Read Responsively

R = Refrain – Choir will sing once to introduce it.



¹Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

²**Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD; proclaim God's salvation from day to day.**

³Declare God's glory among the nations and God's wonders among all peoples.

⁴**For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised, more to be feared than all gods. R**

⁵As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; but you, O LORD, have made the heavens.

⁶**Majesty and magnificence are in your presence; power and splendor are in your sanctuary.**

⁷Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD honor and power.

⁸**Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name; bring offerings and enter the courts of the LORD. R**

⁹Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; tremble before the LORD, all the earth

¹⁰**Tell it out among the nations: "The LORD is king! The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge the peoples with equity."**

¹¹Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

¹²**Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O LORD, for you come to judge the earth.**

¹³You will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with your truth. **R**

SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14

The appearance of God's grace in Jesus Christ brings salvation for all humanity. Consequently, in the present we live wisely and justly while also anticipating the hope of our Savior's final appearance.

A reading from Titus.

¹¹The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He 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.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

"Mary, Did You Know?"

arr. Jack Schrader

Chancel Choir

The assembly stands to welcome the gospel.

GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.

The holy gospel according to Luke.

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. ⁷And 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.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then 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!"

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.]

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

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

The assembly stands to proclaim the word of God in song.

HYMN OF THE DAY – Hark! the Herald Angels Sing - ELW 270



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king;
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3 Hail the heav'n - born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righ - teous - ness!



peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled."
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.



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



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



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

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.

Music: MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–1847; arr. William H. Cummings, 1831–1915

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PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world God loves.

Prayers of intercession are prayed.

To each petition, the assembly responds:

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

Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

The assembly is seated.

OFFERING

"Born In Bethlehem"

arr. Mary McDonald

Chancel Choir

OFFERING PRAYER

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

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

To the tune of "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

The Lord be with you,
And with you, his servant.

O, Come let us lift our hearts unto the Lord.
With hearts uplifted thanks to Him we render:

**With joy we come before Him, in gratefulness implore Him, With
thankful hearts adore Him Evermore!**

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. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. 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

To the tune of "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

**Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord! God of hosts, by all adored!
Heav'n and earth cannot contain All the glory of your name!
Hail, hosanna, God most high! Blest is He who now draws nigh in the
name of God the King!
Hallelujahs glad we sing: Hail, hosanna! Praises due be forever, Lord, to
you!**

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God, the Beginning and the End, our Salvation and our Hope, we praise you for creating a world of order and beauty. When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair, you sent the prophets to proclaim your justice and mercy. At this end of the ages your Son Jesus came to bring us your love and to heal all the suffering world.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his life, death, and resurrection, we await his coming again in righteousness and peace. Send your Spirit on us and on this bread and wine we share: strengthen our faith, increase our hope, and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

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

Glory to God in the highest! Come to the table of peace.

The assembly is seated

COMMUNION

When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say

The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you.
and each person may respond Amen.

ALL ARE WELCOME TO COME TO THE LORD'S TABLE.

As you receive communion, in the center of each tray, there are a few glasses filled with white grape juice for those who prefer juice rather than wine.

CONGREGATIONAL SONG – IT CAME UPON A MIDNIGHT CLEAR (ELW 282)



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



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



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



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

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810–1876

Music: CAROL., Richard S. Willis, 1819–1900

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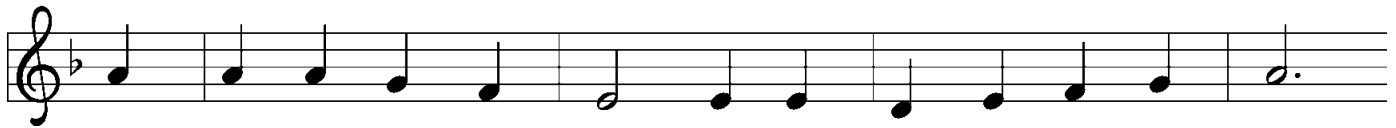
CONGREGATIONAL SONG – OH LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM (ELW 279)



O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
For Christ is born of Mar - y, and, gath - ered all a - bove
How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is giv'n!
O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by;
while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won-d'ring love.
So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heav'n.
cast out our sin, and en - ter in, be born in us to - day.



yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light.
O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
No ear may hear his com - ing; but, in this world of sin,
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
and prais - es sing to God the king, and peace to all the earth!
where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.
oh, come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Im - man - u - el!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835–1893

Music: ST. LOUIS, Lewis H. Redner, 1831–1908

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

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

The assembly is seated.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS CANDLES

The Fire Marshall has asked that children ages 6 and under do not hold candles independently.



INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC DURING CANDLE LIGHTING

The assembly stands.

CHRISTMAS PROCLAMATION

The nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ the Twenty-fifth Day of December, when ages beyond number had run their course from the creation of the world, when God in the beginning created heaven and earth, and formed man in his own likeness; when century upon century had passed since the Almighty set his bow in the clouds after the Great Flood, as a sign of covenant and peace; in the twenty-first century since Abraham, our father in faith, came out of Ur of the Chaldees; in the thirteenth century since the People of Israel were led by Moses in the Exodus from Egypt; around the thousandth year since David was anointed King; in the sixty-fifth week of the prophecy of Daniel; in the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad; in the year seven hundred and fifty-two since the foundation of the City of Rome; in the forty-second year of the reign of Caesar Octavian Augustus, the whole world being at peace, Jesus Christ, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father, desiring to consecrate the world by his most loving presence, was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and when nine months had passed since his conception, was born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem of Judah, and was made man:
The nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh.

HYMN OF LIGHT – Silent Night, Holy Night (ELW 281)

Silent Night, Holy Night! *Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!*

Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,
 1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,

ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.
 all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
 at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,

Hol - der Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher
 Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
 heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your

Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh.
 peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792–1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820–1885
 Music: STILLE NACHT, Franz Gruber, 1787–1863

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FINAL BLESSING

May the Word that Mary brought to birth carry you into new and abundant life. **Amen**

May the Word that Joseph cradled in his arms enfold you with love and strength. **Amen**

May the Word that angels proclaimed in song bring harmony to our world. **Amen**

And the blessing of almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen**

CLOSING 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.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

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DISMISSAL

Glory to God in the highest! **Peace to God's people on earth!**

Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

“Joy to the World”

arr. Raymond Haan

2023 Poinsettia Dedications

Warren & Tammy Heilman in celebration of our new granddaughter, Emerson.

The Dingleline Family in memory of Family members who have passed before us.

Pastor Bruce in memory of John C. Williams, Leonard L. Thorsen; In honor of Joyce L. Thorsen.

The Herek Family in celebration of Raymond, Andrew, and Charlie Herek.

Annie Mayer in celebration of Tim, Rob, Allison, Maggie, Charlie, and Jack Mayer.

Mike Eschelbach in memory of Caroline & Allen Eschelbach.

Karen Whitmyer in memory of Ken Whitmyer.

Harry Nawrock, Carl & Kathy Richardson in memory of Rose Marie Nawrock.

Bruce Williams in memory of his parents, Gladys & Stanley Williams.

Walter & Brenda Kopf in memory of William & Hilda Kopf, Richard & Jane Kemmler, Hannes & Eleanor & Hannes Tietje, Sandra Fox, Kaye Pittman, and Glyn Miller.

Ledith Ambs in memory of Max Ambs.



You are welcome to take your poinsettias home following the 8 P.M. service.

FAITH VOLUNTEERS

Reader: Elaine Harrison

Lay Assistant: Walter Kopf

Ushers: Jon & Elaine Harrison

Acolyte: Andrew Herek

Greeter(s): Open

Altar Care: Heidi Bowers

Nursery: Open, but not staffed

Coffee Hour: N/A

Thank you to our brass quartet this evening: Alexander Wilson and Juliana Lewis, trumpet; Dane Webb, mellophone; and Gracy Tomek, trombone. Your beautiful music has enriched our celebration!



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

Faith Lutheran Church's Welcoming Statement:

We, at Faith Lutheran Church, welcome you as a child of God. As Paul said in his letter to the Galatians, “for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith.” (Galatians 3:26) We strive to be a place where everyone is welcomed and affirmed.

No matter your age, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, marital status, faith background, political leanings, or mental or physical ability - you are welcome as you are. As children of God, we are all one in Christ Jesus and rely on the unconditional nature of God’s love and grace to be our help and guide.



Email address

faith@faithlutheranokemos.org

Websites

Faith Lutheran Church ≈ www.faithlutheranokemos.org
North/West Lower Michigan Synod ≈ www.mittensynod.org
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ≈ www.elca.org

Facebook

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You also can find the audio available on Faith’s website under worship Sermons

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