

First Evangelical Lutheran Church

Reverend Tracy S. Megli

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Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Eve

December 24, 2025

5:00 pm

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Mission Statement

First Lutheran church **strives to inspire hope**
for a wounded world;

Gathers in worship
that both **uplifts** and **challenges**;

And **builds life-affirming relationships**
inside and outside the walls of our building.

As a Reconciling in Christ congregation, First Lutheran Church
welcomes all because God welcomes all,
and we recognize that our differences are gifts to our communal life.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

DECEMBER 24, 2025

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.

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!

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.

Gospel: Luke 2:1-20

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.

Please stand when the () indicates standing. Know the communion of Saints, both living & departed, stand for you if you should choose to remain seated for any reason.*

God bless you and your family as we worship the birth of our newborn King.

Prelude

<i>O Come, All Ye Faithful</i>	<i>arr: Clayton J Foor</i>
<i>God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen</i>	<i>John Stainer</i>
<i>Were You There on That Christmas Night?</i>	<i>Natalie Sleeth</i>
<i>Gesu Bambino</i>	<i>Pietro Yon</i>
<i>Exultate Deo</i>	<i>Clayton J Foor</i>

***The Welcome and Greeting**

Pastor: Today Christ is born: Alleluia, alleluia! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And also with you.

Pastor and Communion Assistant light the Christmas wreath.

***A Dialog for Christmas**

Pastor: Blessed are you, O Christ, Son of God. You were before time began and came into the world to save us.

All: Blessed are you, Son of Righteousness, you shine with the Father's love and illumine the whole universe.

Pastor: Blessed are you, Son of Mary; born a child, you shared our humanity.

All: Let all people and angels sing of your glory.

Pastor: O Mystery of the Word made flesh, with all the voices of heaven, we celebrate your coming as our Savior.

All: Let all people and angels sing of your glory.

Pastor: O Splendor, the Father's Light, with all the creatures on earth we sing and dance at your birth.

All: Praise and honor and glory to you, O Incarnate Word.

***The Gathering Song** *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

***The Prayer of the Day**

P: 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.

A: Amen.

The First Reading

Isaiah 9:2-7

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.

R: Word of God; Word of Life.

A: **Thanks be to God.**

The Second Reading

Titus 2:11-14

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.

R: Word of God; Word of Life.

A: **Thanks be to God.**

*The Announcement of the Gospel Reading

ELW 174



The verse will be sung by the cantor, then the alleluia is repeated by all.



P: The Holy Gospel according to St Luke.

A: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

***The Reading of the Gospel**

Luke 2:1-20

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.

P: The Gospel of our Lord.

A: Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon

We observe a brief silence for reflection

O Little Town of Bethlehem



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

The Prayers of the People

Empowered by the news of Christ's birth, let us pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Gathering God, you bring your people from every corner of the earth together before the manger that you have made a throne. Unite the church in love as we rejoice in the news of your coming. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Creating God, you brought forth the earth and all that is in it. Join our voices with the roaring seas, the exulting fields, and the trees of the forest singing for joy on this holy night. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Transforming God, the world trembles amid violence and war. Empower our hands, feet, and hearts with your Spirit to shatter the rod of the oppressor and turn swords into plowshares. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Shepherding God, you lead us to your love in the face of our neighbor. Send us into the world to find your Word made flesh in one another, especially those who are sick or struggling. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Nurturing God, you dwell with us in humble places. Sustain housing and clothing ministries in this community, that all find shelter and warmth. We pray especially for youth seeking safety and care. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Abiding God, you remain at the side of all the departed. Grant all who mourn hope in the resurrection and peace in Christ Jesus. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

***The Peace**

P: The peace of the Lord be with you all.

A: And also with you.

P: Let us offer one another the sign of the Risen Christ's peace.

*As a Reconciling in Christ congregation, we welcome all because God welcomes all,
and we recognize that our differences are gifts to our communal life.*

Please be seated.

Anthem

Angels We Have Heard on High

Sandra Eithum

FELC Handbell Choir

***The Offering Prayer**

P: 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.

A: Amen.

*The offering plates will be available on the table in the Narthex.
Please place your offering there, as you leave.*

*The Great Thanksgiving

The musical notation consists of four staves, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The notes are quarter notes, and the lyrics are written below the staves. The first staff has a double bar line after the first measure. The second staff has a double bar line after the first measure. The third staff has a double bar line at the end. The fourth staff has a double bar line at the end.

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

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

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

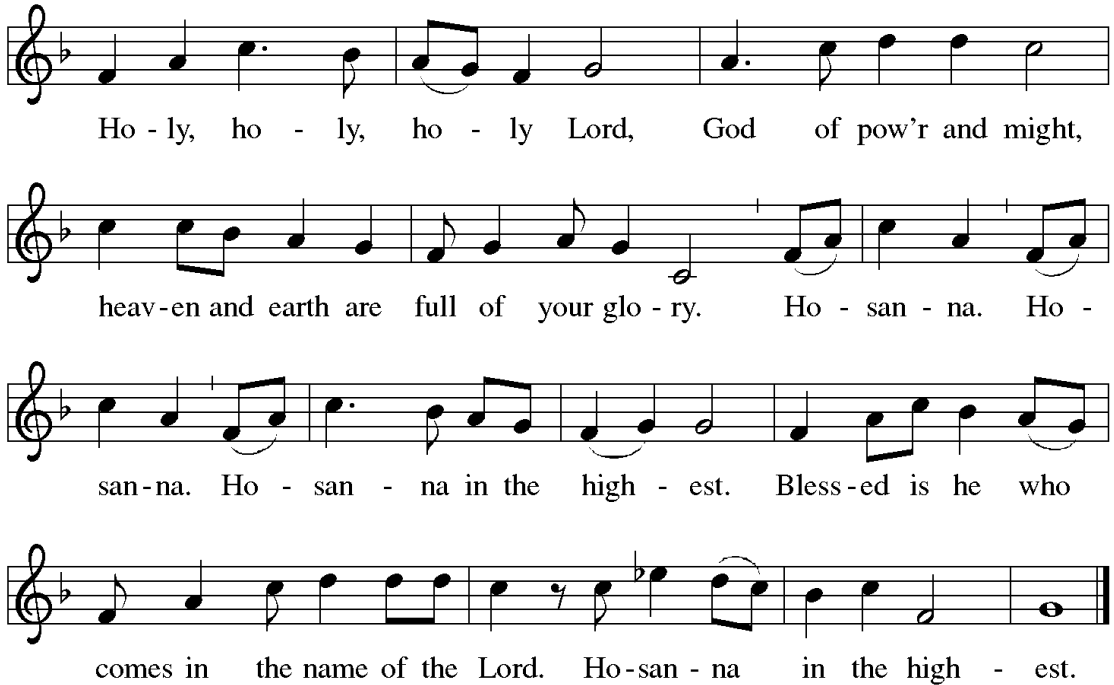
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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

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**

ELW Setting 3



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are 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 in the high - est.

***Eucharistic Prayer**

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

***Lord's Prayer**

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

A: **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.**

The Celebration of Holy Communion

Please remain standing during the singing of the Lamb of God.

*Lamb of God

ELW Setting 3

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.

The Invitation to Communion

P: God is now in flesh appearing.
Come to the feast of joy!

All are welcome at Christ's table.

Please come to the communion rail and kneel (or stand). We will receive communion by intinction. Receive the bread, dip it into the wine or white grape juice, then take and eat.

Please be seated.

Communion Music

ELW 282

It Came upon the Midnight Clear

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-gracious 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

Choral Anthem

O Holy Night
Solo: Jeni Lipe

Adolphe Adam
arr: Clayton J Foor

***The Prayer After Communion**

P: 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.

A: **Amen.**

***The Song of Simeon**

Pastor: Lord, now let your servant go in peace; your word has been fulfilled. My own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the sight of every people: a light to lighten the nations and the glory of your people Israel. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

All: **Amen.**

The Candle lighting Service

During the singing of “Silent Night,” the congregation is asked to stand. The Pastor will light his candle from the Christ Candle and the light will then be passed to the worshipers. Please share the light with your neighbor until all candles are lit and shine for all to see.

The Reading

John 1: 1-5, 14

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Silent Night

ELW 281

The German verse will be sung by soloist, Jeni Lipe.

The Assembly will then join on Verse 1.



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,



Hold - er 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

(Please extinguish candles)

*The Blessing

P: The triune God, glorious Mystery, holy Incarnate One, abiding Comforter,
✙ bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy.

A: Amen.

*The Sending Song

ELW 267

Joy to the World



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

***Dismissal**

P: Glory to God in the highest!

A: And peace to God's people on earth!

P: Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.

A: Thanks be to God.

Organ Postlude

Joy to the World

Reader & Assisting Minister: *Barry Lewis*

Crucifer: *George Otey* Usher(s): *George & Cathy Otey*

Music Director: *Clayton Foor*

Organists: *Clayton Foor & Kathie Schiermeister*

Soloist: *Jeni Lipe*

Duet: Sara Brightwell & Rona Erickson

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