

First Sunday of Advent

First Communion

December 1, 2024

Greetings and Welcome

Prelude by Marilyn Dichsen – “Gratitude,” by Brandon Lake

GATHERING

**Call to Worship and Confession*

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

C: Amen.

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Silence for Reflection and Confession

P: Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

P: God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

C: Amen.

*Gathering Song – “Emmanuel”

(piano)

*Refrain: Come, come, Emmanuel! Son of God, appear. Heaven and earth, rejoice!
Salvation is drawing near. Salvation is drawing near.*

1. **O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear.** *Refrain*

(Coda) **Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.
Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

*Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: God of deliverance,

**C: You rescued Daniel from the mouths of the lions when he was punished for
worshipping you. Liberate all who are endangered for the sake of their faith, and
rescue us from anything that separates us from worshipping only you, for the sake
of the one who made your name known to all people, across land and seas, Jesus
Christ, our redeemer. Amen.**

*Sharing Christ's Peace

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

C: And also with you.

All are invited to share the peace of Christ with one another.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath with the children

ELW 257

(organ)

1 **O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.**

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

WORD

Reading: Daniel 6:10-22, 25-27

Reader: Carol Kilver

¹⁰Although Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he continued to go to his house, which had windows in its upper room open towards Jerusalem, and to get down on his knees three times a day to pray to his God and praise him, just as he had done previously.

¹¹The conspirators came and found Daniel praying and seeking mercy before his God.

¹²Then they approached the king and said concerning the interdict, ‘O king! Did you not sign an interdict, that anyone who prays to anyone, divine or human, within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be thrown into a den of lions?’ The king answered, ‘The thing stands fast, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked.’

¹³Then they responded to the king, ‘Daniel, one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the interdict you have signed, but he is saying his prayers three times a day.’

¹⁴When the king heard the charge, he was very much distressed. He was determined to save Daniel, and until the sun went down, he made every effort to rescue him. ¹⁵Then the conspirators came to the king and said to him, ‘Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no interdict or ordinance that the king establishes can be changed.’

¹⁶Then the king gave the command, and Daniel was brought and thrown into the den of lions. The king said to Daniel, ‘May your God, whom you faithfully serve, deliver you!’

¹⁷A stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, so that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel.

¹⁸Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no food was brought to him, and sleep fled from him.

¹⁹Then, at break of day, the king got up and hurried to the den of lions. ²⁰When he came near the den where Daniel was, he cried out anxiously to Daniel, ‘O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God whom you faithfully serve been able to deliver you from the lions?’ ²¹Daniel then said to the king, ‘O king, live for ever! ²²My God sent his angel and shut the lions’ mouths so that they would not hurt me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no wrong.’

²⁵Then King Darius wrote to all peoples and nations of every language throughout the whole world: ‘May you have abundant prosperity! ²⁶I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people should tremble and fear before the God of Daniel:

For he is the living God,
enduring for ever.

His kingdom shall never be destroyed,
and his dominion has no end.
²⁷ He delivers and rescues,
he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth;
for he has saved Daniel
from the power of the lions.’

Reader: The Word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

Sermon – We Are People of Hope in the Living God

Song of the Day – “People of Hope”

(piano)

*Refrain: We are people of hope alive in the myst’ry,
growing in faith, learning to love.*

*We are people of hope throughout all of hist’ry,
held by the one who will never let go.*

1. **We are dead in our striving for wealth and for might,
But God rich in mercy has loved us to life. Refrain**
2. **We are what God has made us, created in Christ,
For justice and mercy to be our way of life. Refrain**

In the journey ev’ry day we’re led by the Word, saved by grace. Refrain

SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM

Presentation

All gather at the font.

God, who is rich in mercy and love, gives us a new birth into a living hope through the sacrament of baptism. By water and the Word God delivers us from sin and death and raises us to new life in Jesus Christ. We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God’s mission for the life of the world.

Parents: I present Wesley James Patterson for baptism.

Presiding minister addresses parents:

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

We do.

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 he 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.

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

We do.

Presiding minister addresses Godparents:

Chris and Kelsey, do you promise to nurture Wesley 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?

We do.

Presiding minister addresses the assembly:

People of God, do you promise to support Wesley and pray for him in his new life in Christ?

We do.

Thanksgiving at the Font

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

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

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

Water is poured into the font...

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight. Through the waters of the flood, you delivered Noah and his family, and through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you set us free from the power of sin and death and raise us up to live in you.

Pour out your Holy Spirit, the power of your living Word, that those who are washed in the waters of baptism may be given new life. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C: Amen.

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

Do you renounce all the forces of evil, the devil, and all his empty promises?

C: I do.

P: Do you believe in God the Father?

**C: I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

P: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**C: I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.*
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

P: Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**C: 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**

Baptism

Wesley, I baptize you in the name of the Father... and of the Son... and of the Holy Spirit.

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 Wesley 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. **Amen.**

Wesley, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever. **Amen.**

Welcome

Jesus said, “Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”

Let us welcome the newly baptized.

We welcome you into the body of Christ, into this Faith Family, 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!

**Prayers of Intercession*

Stewardship Time

“First Communion Song,” by Richard Connolly
The Faith Singers

—Please take a moment to sign into the Welcome Folder in your pew—

Celebration of First Communion

*Today we celebrate with Nola Crossin, John Robert Hartz, and Lily Snodgrass
as they receive the sacrament of Holy Communion.*

The bread and chalices used today were made by them in our First Communion classes.

P: Nola, John, and Lily, welcome to the Lord’s Supper! ...

I ask you, do you desire to receive our Lord Jesus Christ as he comes to you now in his holy meal?

Yes, I do. Come, Lord Jesus.

P: Do you believe that Jesus' blood was shed for you, that he has died for your sins, and that in this holy supper he offers you forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation?

Yes, I believe it. Come, Lord Jesus.

P: Do you promise to confess your sins, ask for forgiveness, and forgive others, living in God's power and not your own?

Yes, and I ask God to help me.

P: Parents, will you make this meal of forgiveness a regular part of your family life? Will you examine your own hearts, keep your own conscience clear, and help your child prepare rightly each time you come to the altar to receive this gift of grace?

Yes, and we ask God to help us.

P: Siblings, grandparents, godparents, aunts, uncles, and friends, will you pray for these children and encourage them as they continue to discover the grace of God in this meal and at work in their lives?

Yes, and we ask God to help us.

The congregation is invited to stand

P: People of God, when these children were baptized, you promised to support them in their life in Christ. As we welcome them to the Lord's Table today, will you continue to love and support them, affirming God's faithfulness in their lives?

C: Yes, and we ask God to help us.

P: Then all things are ready. Welcome to the Banquet of our Lord!

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 God thanks and praise.

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, 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.

P: Together we pray:

C: 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.

P: Families, please place your hands on your child in blessing and repeat after me: May this day be a new beginning / of new life in our family. / May this gift bring forgiveness / to our hearts and to our home. / And may the living, forgiving presence of Jesus / be a gift of healing and hope / to you, my beloved child / from this day on and forevermore. / In Christ's name. Amen.

Communion is first shared among the families by intinction using the bread baked and chalices made by the students.

Communion Songs

“Let Us Break Bread Together” ELW 471 (*organ*)

1. **Let us break bread together on our knees;
Let us break bread together on our knees.
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord have mercy on me.**
2. **Let us drink wine together on our knees;
Let us drink wine together on our knees.
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord have mercy on me.**
3. **Let us praise God together on our knees;
Let us praise God together on our knees.
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord have mercy on me.**

“Living Hope”

(piano)

**How great the chasm that lay between us
How high the mountain I could not climb
In desperation, I turned to heaven
And spoke Your name into the night
Then through the darkness, Your loving-kindness
Tore through the shadows of my soul
The work is finished, the end is written Jesus Christ, my living hope**

**Who could imagine so great a mercy?
What heart could fathom such boundless grace?
The God of ages stepped down from glory
To wear my sin and bear my shame
The cross has spoken, I am forgiven
The King of kings calls me His own
Beautiful Savior, I'm Yours forever Jesus Christ, my living hope**

*Refrain: Hallelujah, praise the One who set me free
Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me
You have broken every chain There's salvation in Your name
Jesus Christ, my living hope*

Final refrain: Jesus Christ, my living hope,

**Then came the morning that sealed the promise
Your buried body began to breathe
Out of the silence, the Roaring Lion
Declared the grave has no claim on me
Then came the morning that sealed the promise
Your buried body began to breathe
Out of the silence, the Roaring Lion
Declared the grave has no claim on me
Jesus, Yours is the victory,**

**Post-Communion Blessing*

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

C: **Amen.**

**Closing Prayer*

SENDING

**Benediction*

P: The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you, the Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

C: Amen.

**Sending Song – “We Praise You, O God” ELW 870 (organ)*

- 1 **We praise you, O God, our redeemer, creator;
in grateful devotion our tribute we bring.
We lay it before you; we kneel and adore you;
we bless your holy name; glad praises we sing.**
- 2 **We worship you, God of our fathers and mothers;
through trial and tempest our guide you have been.
When perils o'ertake us, you will not forsake us,
and with your help, O Lord, our struggles we win.**
- 3 **With voices united our praises we offer
and gladly our songs of thanksgiving we raise.
With you, Lord, beside us,
your strong arm will guide us.
To you, our great redeemer, forever be praise!**

**Dismissal*

P: Go in peace, serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Song Credits

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“People of Hope,” by Larry Olson & Hans Peterson, © 1998 Dakota Road Music. CCLI#973583

“Living Hope,” by Phil Wickham & Brian Johnson, © 2017 Phil Wickham Music. CCLI#973583

The altar plants are given today by
Theresa Savoie in memory of Louise Savoie on her birthday today

Worship Assistants

Communion Assistant: Kay Schnitker
Greeter: Barb Fishback
Reader: Carol Kilver
Usher: Hallie Mayner
Pastor: Adam Dichsen
Music Director: Jean Welch
Organist: Susan Roegge
Pianist: Jean Welch
Drummers: John Demien & Louis Dichsen
Financial Assistants: Greg Kimler & Monica Proefrock
Chancel Committee: Kim Heise
Coffee Hosts: Barb Davenport & Karen Sibert



Singers:

Benen Dichsen	Terri Kimler	Kris Roth	Melissa Street
Kelly Hartz	Adam Krohe	Cole Street	Carol VanderKloot

Church Council Members:

Malinda Carlson	Kelly Hartz	Gaylon Martin	Monica Proefrock
Ken Devlin	Greg Kimler	Patty Nelson	Kelly Street
Marilyn Dichsen			

What's Coming Up at Faith?

Sunday, December 1, 9:30am: Worship **First Communion**
10:30am: Youth Sunday School

Wednesday, December 4, 7-8am: Men's Prayer Group
11:30am: Advent Allegro Lunch in Great Room
12:15pm: Advent Allegro Concert – The Extension Chords

Saturday, December 7, 8:00am: Cooking for
9:00am: Men's Breakfast

Sunday, December 8, 9:30am: Worship
10:45pm: Book Group
1:00pm: Blue Christmas Service at Centenary U. Methodist

Wednesday, December 11, 7-8am: Men's Prayer Group
11:30am: Advent Allegro Lunch in Great Room
12:15pm: Advent Allegro Concert – Tyler Carpenter, percussion

News Updates

Advent Allegro Lunchtime Concerts

We have a great lineup for this year's Advent Allegro concert series.

December 4: "The Extension Chords" (*with Jean Welch*)

December 11: Tyler Carpenter on percussion

December 18: Devon Carpenter on harp

The brief concerts will last approximately 30 minutes and begin at 12:15pm. Lunch of soup, chips, fruit, and dessert will be served beginning at 11:30am and after the concert for \$5.

We could use some help with serving the meal and providing cookies and soup. If you would like to pitch in, contact the church office (245-8919 or faithlutheran62650@frontier.com) or **sign up on the sheet on the counter by the coffee sales.**

Men's Prayer Group

Help us grow our group! You can meet in person at Faith on **Wednesday mornings at 7:00**, or on zoom. Contact one of the guys to let them know you are coming: Kevin Krohe or Larry Kuster.

Men's Breakfast

Come and connect with other men as we share our faith and enjoy some good food on **Saturday, December 7**. At 8:00, we hang out in the kitchen, helping to cook, drink coffee, and visit. At 9:00, we sit down for some conversation and discussion on a specific topic.

Music is a Great Way to Connect!

We are always looking for people to sing or play special music for a prelude or a stewardship offering. Please contact Jean Welch if you are interested in sharing your musical gifts. jrwelch53@msn.com or 217-652-7009 (phone/text)

Christmas Eve Concert

Once again, we will have a short Christmas concert before our 7:00pm candlelight service on December 24th. Please let me know if you might be interested in being a part of that concert. Jean Welch, Music Director

Contact Jean for more information.

jrwelch53@msn.com or 217-652-7009 (phone/text)

Holiday Greetings Christmas Concert

The Sound Celebration Chorus invites you to their 4th Annual Christmas Concert, featuring: The Sound Celebration Chorus, The Extension Chords, Chorus Quartets, and special guest Tyler Carpenter on steel pan and vibraphone. **Today at 2:00pm**, St. John's Lutheran Church (2477 W. Washington, Springfield). A portion of the free-will offering will be donated to the Grace Food Pantry in Springfield.

Blue Christmas Service – a community gathering for comfort and hope

The holiday season can be difficult for those who have experienced loss, challenges, or difficulty. Blue Christmas is a community-wide service to offer comfort and hope. **Sunday, December 8, at 1:00pm** at Centenary United Methodist Church (331 E. State St., Jacksonville).

Christmas Caroling

Join us as we head into the community to visit friends of Faith for caroling and Christmas joy. Meet at Faith at **2:00pm on Sunday, December 15** to fill up your mugs of hot chocolate. We will carpool around town and return to Faith by 3:30.

Book Group -- *Holy Disruption*

Our Advent book read is *Holy Disruption: Discovering Advent in the Gospel of Mark*. The Gospel of Mark doesn't have an advent story, but begins with Jesus' Baptism. Author Tracy Daub suggests that Mark's Advent story is in every aspect of Jesus' life, to his death and beyond. "*Holy Disruption* presents a fresh understanding of the holiness of Christmas grounded, not in a conventional cozy Christmas message, but through Mark's disquieting gospel which invites its readers to experience God's disruptive but transformative love for us and our world." Join us after worship on Sundays in Advent (December 8, 15, and 22) to discuss where we see God in the life of Jesus and in our own holy disruption. Books are available in the gathering area under the working cross for **\$10.00**.

Poinsettias

To purchase a poinsettia to help decorate the church for Christmas, please sign up at the counter by the Coffee Sales and drop your check (or cash) into the decorated box; the cost is **\$12.00**. Please make your check out to Faith Lutheran Church, with a notation for *Poinsettia*, or call or email the church (245-8919 or faithlutheran62650@frontier.com) **by December 20** and send your check to the church (1385 W. Walnut St., Jacksonville, IL 62650). Please indicate if the poinsettia is in honor or memory of someone special.

“Faith’s Little Flock”

Faith's Little Flock meets in the classroom next to the nursery after the children's sermon until communion time. Activities this month will follow Pastor's theme of God's promises. The children can look forward to making fun crafts while listening to Bible stories. We are also adding some fun music for the little ones called "Sing the Bible". A special thanks to everyone who has volunteered your time this Fall. We will be working on a schedule for volunteers and getting things organized for the remainder of the year. *Melissa Street*

Bible Boot Camp

We introduced Bible Boot Camp, a new program for elementary-school-aged children, in September. Pastor Adam warmed them up with singing, dancing, and some retelling of Bible stories from recent worship services. Patty Nelson and Shelley McDaniel led them in some creative play and crafts, and then we all joined with parents and older youth for a meal. **Our next event will be on Sunday, December 15, from 4:30-6:00,** Spread the word and bring a friend!

Faith Inkubators

Our Confirmation Class has resumed under a different name. Our Faith Inkubators youth nights incorporate all the learning of confirmation, but also some games and activities so that it is open for some upper-elementary-aged kids that are up for the challenge and our high school youth to still be involved. **Our next event will be on Sunday, December 15, from 4:30-6:00.** Spread the word and bring a friend!

Holiday Food Basket Needs – Jacksonville Area Community Food Center

The Food Center will be assembling over 300 holiday baskets, so your donations truly make a difference – Thank You! **We will be collecting donations up till Christmas.**

Sweet Potatoes	Chicken Broth	Macaroni & Cheese
Instant Potatoes	Canned Corn	Pumpkin Pie Mix
Gravy Mix	Canned Green Beans	Evaporated Milk
(pkg or can)	Mushroom Soup	Cereal
Egg Noodles	Stuffing Mix	Flour & Sugar

Please put your donations in the cloth baskets in the Ministry Center/Coat Room.

Salvation Army Bell Ringers

Please see Sharon Zuiderveld if you'd be willing to ring bells this season. We'll decide on a date and time.

Pillars Giving Tree

Bring Christmas Joy to the Children at the Pillars of Africa Children's Ministry

This Christmas season, we again have the opportunity to share the love of Christ with the children at the Pillars of Africa Children's Ministry. Starting **December 1**, the Giving Tree will be up in the church gathering area. The Giving Tree is adorned with ornaments, each representing a child and their needs this Christmas. Choose an ornament, make your donation payable to HUGS, and place it in the offering box by **December 15, 2024**.

Your generosity will bring joy and hope to these precious children, reminding them that they are loved and valued. Thank you for helping make this Christmas a special one for those in need. For questions or more details, please contact Melissa Street, Kevin Krohe, or Patty Nelson. Thank you for being a blessing this holiday season!

Count Up to Advent in our Reverse Advent Project

It is that joyful time again for our Reverse Advent project. Reverse Advent adds up rather than counting down to Christmas, by adding a different food item each day of Advent. Take home a festive bag located next to the Working Cross in the Gathering Area and collect food. You will find the suggested list of food items and suggestions in each bag. This year there are two lists: one for families in need and one for homeless in our community.

Consider reaching out to friends to participate with us. Take them a bag and let them experience the joy of sharing the spirit of the holiday. Then volunteer to bring their bag back to church. Better yet, invite them to an Advent Allegro concert or a worship service, and they can place their bag with the others.

If you find your bag too small for all your items, just take another one. Tie the handles together when you return your bags to the church.

We hope to fill the area under the Working Cross with bags for our neighbors. Please bring your bags to the church by Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. If you would like to help deliver them, contact Hallie Mayner.

LSSI Foster Care

Last month we heard about the ministry of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois. With so many in our Faith Family engaged in foster care, we would like to support LSSI's efforts in this ministry. If you would like to make a donation, make your check to Faith Lutheran Church, designate it to "*LSSI Foster Care*," and drop it in the offering box.

Doorbell Dinners

THANK YOU to everyone who helped deliver Doorbell Dinners in October!
Our next time will be **January 13-17**.