

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 22, 2024

Greetings and Welcome

Prelude by Susan Roegge – “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel,” arr. Mark Hayes

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 – “Comfort, Comfort All My People” (piano)

*Refrain: Comfort, comfort all my people with the comfort of my Word.
Speak it tender to my people: All your sins are taken away.*

1. **Though your tears be rivers running; though your tears be an ocean full;
though you cry with the hurt of living: comfort, comfort.
Ev’ry valley shall be lifted, ev’ry mountain shall be low,
ev’ry rough place will be smoother, comfort, comfort!** *Refrain*
2. **Though your eyes see only darkness, though your eyes can see no light,
Though your eyes see pain and sorrow: comfort, comfort.
Ev’ry night will have its morning, ev’ry pain will have an end,
Ev’ry burden will be lightened: comfort, comfort.** *Refrain*

*Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: God our Parent,

C: There is no miracle as grand as birth. As we prepare for the coming of your son, Jesus, create in us new life. Transform us so that we may reflect the light of your son, and become beacons of goodness, kindness, compassion, generosity, honesty, patience, and peace, for the sake of the one whose name brings deliverance and life to all the world, Jesus Christ, infant king. 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.

Children’s Sermon

Lighting of the Advent Wreath with the children ELW 257 (organ)

- 4 **O come, O Branch of Jesse, free your own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.***

WORD

Reading: Luke 1:26-45 (46-56)

Reader: Patty Nelson

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.' ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' ³⁴Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' ³⁵The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God.' ³⁸Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

³⁹In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴²and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

⁴⁶And Mary said,

 'My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

 Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
 and holy is his name.

⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him
 from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

⁵²He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;

⁵³he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,

⁵⁵according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.’

⁵⁶And Mary remained with her for about three months and then returned to her home.

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

Song – “Majesty”

(piano)

**Majesty, worship His majesty. Unto Jesus be all glory, honor, and praise.
Majesty, kingdom authority flow from His throne unto His own; His anthem raise.
So exalt, lift up on high the name of Jesus.
Magnify, come glorify Christ Jesus, the King.
Majesty, worship His majesty;
Jesus who died, now glorified, King of all Kings.**

Sermon – Hope Magnified

Song of the Day – “The Annunciation and Magnificat”

(piano)

An angel went from God to a town called Nazareth to a woman whose name was Mary.

The angel said to her “Rejoice, O highly favored, for God is with you.

You shall bear a child, and his name shall be Jesus, the Chosen One of God Most High.”

And Mary said, “I am the servant of my God, I live to do your will.”

**All: 1. My soul proclaims your greatness, O God, and my spirit rejoices in you,
You have looked with love on your servant here, and blessed me all my life through.
Great and mighty are you, O Holy One, strong is your kindness evermore.
How you favor the weak and lowly one, humbling the proud of heart.**

2. You have cast the mighty down from their thrones,
and uplifted the humble of heart.

You have filled the hungry with wondrous things, and left the wealthy no part.
Great and mighty are you, O Faithful One, strong is your justice strong your love,
As you promised to Sarah and Abraham, kindness forevermore.

**The Apostles' Creed*

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

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 to the dead. 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.

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*

Stewardship Time – “Mutual Ministry” with Pastor Adam

“All Through the Night,” arr. James Koerts
Susan Roegge

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

**Great Thanksgiving*

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 our thanks and praise.

**Words of Institution*

P: 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.

**Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Communion Songs

“In Thee Is Gladness” ELW 867 (organ)

- 1 **In thee is gladness amid all sadness, Jesus, sunshine of my heart.
By thee are given the gifts of heaven, thou the true redeemer art.
Our souls thou wakest; our bonds thou breakest.
Who trusts thee surely has built securely and stands forever: Alleluia!
Our hearts are pining to see thy shining, dying or living, to thee are cleaving;
naught can us sever: Alleluia!**

- 2 **Jesus is ours! We fear no powers, not of earth or sin or death.
He sees and blesses in worst distresses; he can change them with a breath.
Wherefore the story tell of his glory with heart and voices; all heav'n rejoices
in him forever: Alleluia!
We shout for gladness, triumph o'er sadness,
love him and praise him and still shall raise him
glad hymns forever: Alleluia!**

- 1 **Rejoice, rejoice, believers, and let your lights appear;
the evening is advancing, and darker night is near.
The bridegroom is arising and soon is drawing nigh.
Up, pray and watch and wrestle; at midnight comes the cry.**
- 2 **The watchers on the mountain proclaim the bridegroom near;
go forth as he approaches with alleluias clear.
The marriage feast is waiting; the gates wide open stand.
Arise, O heirs of glory; the bridegroom is at hand.**
- 3 **The saints, who here in patience their cross and suff'rings bore,
shall live and reign forever when sorrow is no more.
Around the throne of glory the Lamb they shall behold;
in triumph cast before him their diadems of gold.**
- 4 **Our hope and expectation, O Jesus, now appear;
arise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this benighted sphere.
With hearts and hands uplifted, we plead, O Lord, to see
the day of earth's redemption that sets your people free!**

**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 – “Sing We the Song of Emmanuel”*

(piano)

**Sing we the song of Emmanuel; this the Christ who was long foretold.
Lo in the shadows of Bethlehem, promise of dawn now our eyes behold.
God Most High in a manger laid; lift your voices and now proclaim:
Great and glorious, love has come to us. Join now with the hosts of heaven.**

**Come we to welcome Emmanuel; king who came with no crown or throne.
Helpless He lay, the Invincible, maker of Mary, now Mary's son.
O what wisdom to save us all, shepherds, sages, before Him fall.
Grace and majesty, what humility. Come on bended knee, adore Him.**

**Go, spread the news of Emmanuel; joy and peace for the weary heart.
Lift up your heads, for your King has come; sing, for the Light overwhelms the
dark.**

**Glory, shining for all to see, hope alive, let the gospel ring.
God has made a way, He will have the praise; tell the world His name is Jesus.**

**Glory, shining for all to see, hope alive, let the gospel ring.
God has made a way, He will have the praise; tell the world His name is Jesus.**

**Gloria! Gloria! Gloria! Gloria!
Gloria! Gloria! Gloria! Gloria!
Gloria! Gloria! Gloria! Gloria!**

**Dismissal*

P: Go in peace, serve the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

The plants at the altar today are provided by
Gayla Smith in honor of her baptismal birthday
and by Linda & Melvin Thies' 37th wedding anniversary on December 17
and Melvin's 85th birthday on December 23

Worship Assistants



Communion Assistant: Hallie Mayer
Greeter: Lynette Hamilton
Reader: Patty Nelson
Ushers: Angie & Mike Fenner
Pastor: Adam Dichsen
Music Director: Jean Welch
Musician: Susan Roegge
Guitarist: Marilyn Dichsen
Drummers: John Demien & Louis Dichsen
Financial Assistants: Ken Devlin & Kelly Street
Chancel Committee: Mary Jane Esslinger
Coffee Hosts: Verla Buckner & Laura Sweatman

Singers:

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

Church Council Members:

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

Song Credits

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“Majesty,” © 1981, Rocksmith Music. CCLI#973583
“The Magnificat,” from **Holden Evening Prayer**, GIA Publications, Inc., © 1990. CCLI#973583
“Sing We the Song of Emmanuel,” arr. Dan Galbraith, © 2015 Getty Jusic Pub. CCLI#973583

What’s Coming Up at Faith?

Sunday, December 22, 9:30am: Worship

10:30am: Youth Sunday School

10:45pm: Book Group

Tuesday, December 24, 4:00pm: Family-Friendly Christmas Service

7:00pm: Christmas Eve Communion Service

Wednesday, December 25, 9:30am: Christmas Day Communion Service

Sunday, December 29, 9:30am: Service of Lessons and Carols

Saturday, January 4, 8:00am: Cooking for
9:00am: Men's Breakfast

News Updates

Christmas Eve Worship -- Two Opportunities to Celebrate Jesus' Birth

Join us on Tuesday, December 24 as we gather for Christmas Eve worship. There will be a **Family-Friendly Service at 4:00pm** with familiar Christmas carols, the story of Jesus' birth, and Silent Night by battery candlelight. Many of our families with young children are unable to attend our later service, and this gives them an opportunity to celebrate with us at Faith. **At 7:00pm, we will have our traditional Christmas Eve worship** with carols on piano and organ, communion, and Silent Night/Night of Silence by candlelight. Both services are great opportunities for outreach. Invite a neighbor or friend as we celebrate Emanuel... "The King Has Come".

Christmas Morning Worship

Christmas morning, December 25, we gather at 9:30 to celebrate that God has brought Joy to the World by taking on flesh. We participate in God's incarnation through Holy Communion in a liturgy set to Christmas Carols. This service will be live streamed for those who cannot attend or prefer to worship from home.

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)

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 today** 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.

Annual Reports

Anyone who would like to have an **Annual Report** included in the Annual Report Packets for 2024, please have your report to the church office (by e-mail is preferred) **by January**

12. The Annual Meeting will be held on January 26, and we need time to duplicate the reports into a packet to distribute on Sunday, January 19.

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.

"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. *Melissa Street*

Bible Boot Camp & Faith Inkubators

Stay tuned for a schedule for 2025!

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 (pkg or can)	Canned Green Beans	Evaporated Milk
Egg Noodles	Mushroom Soup	Cereal
	Stuffing Mix	Flour & Sugar

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

Doorbell Dinners

THANK YOU to everyone who helped deliver Doorbell Dinners in October! Our next time will be **January 13-17**. Please sign up by the Coffee Sales in the gathering area.

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. The Giving Tree, in the gathering

area, 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.

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.