

Third Sunday of Advent
December 17, 2023



WELCOME VISITORS

*We invite you to pick up a Visitor's Packet as you leave the service today.
Thank you for joining us this morning! We are blessed by your presence.*

*Children are always welcome in church,
If desired, there is an unstaffed nursery for those age 4 and younger
located downstairs past the elevator, across the hall from the bulletin board.*

*Large print bulletins for today's worship are available,
please feel free to ask an usher if interested.*

THIS WEEK AT FIRST December 17 – December 24

Sunday	9:30 a.m.	Sunday School
	10:45 a.m.	Worship Cantata
	11:45 a.m.	Christmas Lunch & Poinsettia Delivery
Monday	1:30 p.m.	Advent Study & Prayer
	7:00 p.m.	Scouts
Tuesday	7:00 p.m.	Scouts
Wednesday	9:30 a.m.	Quilting
	12:00 p.m.	Ladies lunch at Bob Evans
Thursday	6:00 p.m.	Rose Ringers
	7:00 p.m.	Choir
Sunday	10:45 a.m.	Worship w/Holy Communion
	7:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Service W/Holy Communion

Gathering

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Philippians 4:4

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Rose Ringers

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.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

(Three blue candles are lit on the Advent wreath.)

Reader 1: Today we light the third Advent candle, the candle of joy.
When Mary, the mother of our Lord, visited her kinswoman
Elizabeth, Elizabeth's unborn son John leaped for joy at the sound of
Mary's greeting. Elizabeth was filled with joy, knowing that the
promised Messiah would soon be born. We, too, rejoice as we
prepare to celebrate our Savior's birth.

We will rejoice in the Lord, now and forever!

Reader 2: The prophet Isaiah foretold a highway, the Way of Holiness, a place
where the redeemed would walk. Following that holy Way, the
redeemed would live in the presence of God and know everlasting
joy. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

We will rejoice in the Lord, now and forever!

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the midst of our joy, we are called to repent and acknowledge
our need for a Savior. Let us confess our sins to God and ask his forgiveness.

Almighty God, while we rejoice in the birth of our Savior, we do not always find joy in following him. We seek to satisfy ourselves with earthly joy, joy that does not last. We turn away from the guidance of your Word and follow our own selfish desires. We do not walk in love as Jesus walked and instead put our needs ahead of the needs of others. Have mercy on us and forgive our sins for Jesus' sake. Lead us to find joy in following Jesus our Lord.

God had mercy on us and sent his Son to be our Savior. I announce to you that your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!

AMAZING GRACE

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who called me here below,
Will be forever mine.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, your servant Elizabeth and her unborn son, the prophet John, rejoiced at the greeting of Mary, the mother of our Lord. We give you praise and thanks for the many earthly joys of this Advent season, but above all, we praise you for the gift of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

GATHERING OF GIFTS

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. Online giving is available at felcc.org or through this QR code



ANTHEM

*Children's Choir
Christmas Jubilation*

Please stand as you are able.

OFFERTORY

Musical notation for the Offertory, consisting of four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take
not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the joy of
your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

OFFERING PRAYER

O God of Amazing Grace, by your merciful hand abundance springs up from the earth. Receive and bless these gifts we offer. May these gifts help to shine the light of your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Jesus, our King and Savior, In you, we have eternal joy!

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

Please be seated.

A Noel Celebration

Sounds and Stories of Christmas

Music by Lloyd Larson, Marty Parks, and Jay Rouse

Sing Noel!

Choir



Prepare the Way

Choir

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Choir

Manger Carol

Choir

Noel Festival

Choir

Noel! Christ the Lord Is Born

Choir and Congregation

(Please sing when directed)

Noel, noel! Chrit the Lord is Born! Noel, noel!

To a world of scorn and shame He came for us all, to redeem us from the fall.

Noel, noel, sing noel!

(repeat)

What Child Is This!

Choir



A Noel Celebration (Finale)

Choir and Congregaton

(Please sing when directed)

Noel, noel! Christ the Lord is born! Noel, noel!

To a world of scorn and shame He came fro us all, to redeem us from the fall.

Noel, noel, sing noel!

(Continued on next page)

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"

Joyful all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;
With th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels!
O come, let us adore Him O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

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Our Cantata music is given in loving memory of Richard and Helen Cover

Sending

BLESSING

The God of joy fill you with all peace and hope in believing,
so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in joy.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in joy, prepare the way of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

*Service by Carol Geisler. © 2023 Creative Communications for the Parish, a division of Bayard, Inc., 1564
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Please remember in your prayers ...

Healing: Bonnie (1/5),
Sarah Haschak (12/27),
Denise Heinbaugh (12/28),
Garry Shatzer (1/4) Connie
Twedt (1/4), Marilyn Yaukey (1/4)



Long Term Care: Pat Dent, Charles Kampmeyer and Joe Pine

Military: Tawny & Brad Arnold, Rubens Paul, and Paul Whelan

ATTENDANCE December 10 69 in person 10 on line

CHRISTMAS LUNCH The Women's Breakfast Fellowship will be having a Christmas Lunch on December 20 at the Bob Evans Restaurant -1131 Wayne Ave. at 12:00. We do need a count of those able to attend so please call Janet Friend (717 360 1977) if you are able to attend. All ladies of the church are invited for lunch and fellowship with one another.



THANK YOU We are grateful to the decorating committee for their work of preparing our sanctuary for Christmas. Our gratitude is extended to the Palmer family for the beautiful tree that we will be able to use for many years to come. This tree was given in loving memory of Bob Palmer who enjoyed and cherished the tree every year in the sanctuary. We would also like to thank Julie and

Dalton Paul for purchasing the beautiful trees that Bob (and the rest of us) came to love throughout the last 40 years. May God's gift of everlasting love (evergreens) and light (Tree lights) remind us of God's call to love and light in our world.

NEWSLETTER We are working on being good stewards of the resources that have been entrusted to the church. With this in mind, we are requesting that you consider receiving the church newsletter via e-mail. For others, the newsletters will be in printed form and distributed at Sunday worship, choir practice, quilting, etc. To those who have not received it in person, the newsletter will be mailed to your home address the Monday following Sunday worship. Thank you for responding and working with us to try new avenues of communication.

felccoffice@gmail.com

HOMELESS MATTERS DONATIONS will be collected until December 31. There is a collection bin in Memorial Hall. Checks made out to Homeless Matters may be placed in the offering plate or dropped off at the church office.

SUNDAY SCHOOL There will be no Sunday School, Confirmation, or coffee and donuts on December 24 or December 31.



HATS, SCARVES AND MITTEN/GLOVES COLLECTION is in full swing for the January 13-15 fence hanging at First. There is a donation bin marked for items in Memorial Hall.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP— will be at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 24. We will have Holy Communion and Special Music as we come together to hear the story of the Birth of our Lord in a stable and light our candles while singing glorious Christmas Carols of worship and praise. We hope you will be able to join us.



CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP Join us on Christmas morning to celebrate the birth of our Savior. The time of worship is 9:30 a.m. and Holy Communion will be served. Come and praise the Lord!

COREY ROTZ IN A CHRISTMAS CONCERT will be held at Memorial Lutheran Church in Shippensburg today at 3:00 p.m. in the sanctuary at 34 E Orange St., Shippensburg. For information please call 717-532-4614.



POINSETTIA DELIVERY please join us in bringing Christmas cheer and hope to our homebound members today following worship. A light lunch will be offered with visits to follow. A sign up sheet is located in Memorial Hall. Let's share the joy of the season.

A REMINDER FOR END OF YEAR STATEMENTS FOR 2023

Contributions that you wish to be credited to 2023 must be received in the church office NO LATER THAN December 25, 2023. Any contributions that are received after December 25th will be credited to 2024. Any questions, please contact Carol McCoy.

HELP NEEDED the congregation marveled at the gorgeous display of quilts on Sunday, October 8, but if we want to continue this wonderful Lutheran World Relief project we will need more help. Please join us for an hour or two every Wednesday morning. You can plan quilt tops, sew squares together, help construct the quilt "sandwich", tie knots, iron sheets. Everyone is welcome, male or female, young or old. Call Janet Friend (717 360 1977) or Nancy Fricke (717 267 5097) for more information.



HOLIDAY CLOSING Church office will be closed on Monday, December 25 and Monday, January 1. If you have a pastoral emergency during the Christmas Season, please call Pastor Nicholson at home. 717-753-3940.

CONGREGATION ANNUAL MEETING will be held on Sunday, January 21 following worship. This meeting will provide us with the opportunity to review the highlights of the past year and approve a ministry spending plan for 2024. We hope you will be able to join us.



WOMEN OF THE ELCA The January Bible Study will be held on Thursday January 11 at 1:30 p.m. in Meeting Room 1. We will continue our study of Max Lucado's book, He Choose the Nails, with Nancy Fricke as leader for the chapter "I Forgive You". All women of the church are welcome.



VARIETY SHOW Sunday, February 25 after worship. Lunch will be provided. Fundraiser for Youth Events. If you would be willing to be part of the "Show" please talk with Kristy Nienstedt.

REMINDER: If you are a Thrivent member, chances are you have Thrivent Choice Dollars to designate. At the end of the year, please consider designating those dollars to First Lutheran ASAP. The dollars that are not designated from this year are lost. You can designate your dollars by going to www.thrivent.com or calling 1-800-847-4836 and say "Choice Dollars".



YEAR-END APPEAL We are very fortunate to have members who have faithfully contributed this year. Unfortunately, our anticipated giving levels are below what we budgeted for the year. We as a congregation are blessed to have built a “nest egg” from the benevolence of members past; however, it will not last if we continue to draw from it to cover operational costs. Please prayerfully consider supporting YOUR church. (Contributions made by December 25 will be credited to 2023.) Sally Herritt Treasurer

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS



	<u>December 17</u>	<u>December 24</u> <u>10:45 Service</u>	<u>December 24</u> <u>7:00 p.m. Service</u>
Lector:	Doris Burdick	Ralph Burdick	Becki Hoover
Soundboard:	Scott Carbaugh	Rose Wilson	Martha Carbaugh
Communion Assistants:		Karen Maclay Marlin Maclay Karen Sloan	Karen Maclay Marlin Maclay Karen Sloan
Greeters:	Nancy Hamilton Kathy Shoop	Nancy Hamilton Kathy Shoop	Nancy Hamilton Kathy Shoop
Altar Guild:	Barb Evans Karin Woods	Barb Evans Karin Woods	Barb Evans Karin Woods
Ushers:	Gary Fleegal Rick Gates Nicki Johnson Dennis Love Mark Nicholson	Gary Fleegal Rick Gates Nicki Johnson Dennis Love Mark Nicholson	Gary Fleegal Rick Gates Nicki Johnson Dennis Love Mark Nicholson