

Third Sunday of Advent
December 15, 2024



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 on the second floor in the education wing. First door on the right.*

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

THIS WEEK AT FIRST December 15 – December 22

Sunday	9:30 a.m.	Sunday School
	10:45 a.m.	Worship w/Holy Communion Wreath Lighting
	7:00 p.m.	Bell Fest at St. John
Tuesday	1:00 p.m.	Finance
	7:00 p.m.	Scouts
Wednesday	9:30 a.m.	Quilting
	12:00 p.m.	Ladies lunch at Italian Village Restaurant
Thursday	6:15 p.m.	Rose Ringers
	7:15 p.m.	Choir
Sunday	9:30 a.m.	Sunday School
	10:45 a.m.	Worship Wreath Lighting & Cantata Poinsettia Delivery

Gathering

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Please stand as you are able.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of mercy, **we confess that we have sinned.**
We trust earthly powers and human authority alone.
We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

God of might, **we confess that we have sinned.**
We have turned away from our neighbors.
We have trusted false promises.

God in our midst, **we confess that we have sinned.**
We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.

A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior,
in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy.
By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God
through ✝ Christ Jesus, whose day draws near. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING – WEEK of JOY

Jesus is the Joy of our Salvation,
and at Advent, we light candles to remind ourselves
of the light of hope, promise of peace, and joy of salvation
he brought to a lost and broken world.

Joy is a feeling of great happiness.
It is pure bliss.
It is overwhelming gladness bubbling up in your soul.

LIGHT the first, second, and third candles of the wreath.

These candles represent hope, peace, and joy.
When Jesus came, he brought joy to our hearts.

A reading from Isaiah 9:3-4
You 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.
For 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.

Let us pray: O Lord, our God, thank you for sending Jesus to bring us salvation
and restore our joy. We rejoice because he came to live with us and in us and
through us. May the good news of great joy of Jesus' coming be ever on our lips.
Help us to be yours as we wait for you to come again. We love you. Amen.

Please stand as you are able.

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950 Music: REJOICE, REJOICE, Marty Haugen



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for
2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when
4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing, Sing out your joy, for
man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is
all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing,
qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;
qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.
crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -
mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and
kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to
won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and
sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.
weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

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.**

KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



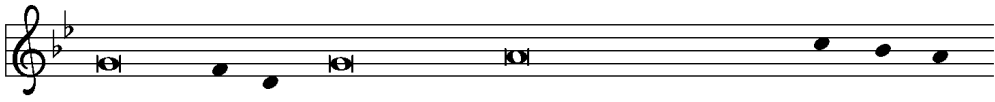
For the peace of the whole world, for the well - being of the church of



God, and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



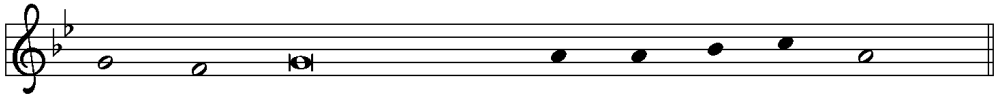
For this ho - ly house, and for all who offer here their wor - ship and



praise, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Please be seated.

WORD

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

FIRST READING

Zephaniah 3:14-20

¹⁴ Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem!

¹⁵ The Lord has taken away the judgments against you,
he has turned away your enemies.

The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.

¹⁶ On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:

Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak.

¹⁷ The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing ¹⁸ as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it.

¹⁹ I will deal with all your oppressors at that time.

And I will save the lame and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth.

²⁰ At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the Lord.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Isaiah 12:2-6

² Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid,
for the Lord God is my strength and my might,
and has become my salvation.

³ **With joy you will draw water
from the wells of salvation.**

- ⁴ And you will say in that day:
 Give thanks to the Lord, call on God's name;
 make known the deeds of the Lord among the nations;
 proclaim that this name is exalted.
- ⁵ **Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously;
 let this be known in all the earth.**
- ⁶ Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

SECOND READING

Philippians 4:4-7


⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION




Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Repeat alleluia



Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

GOSPEL

Luke 3:7-18

The Gospel according to Luke, the 18th chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

⁷ John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” ¹¹ In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” ¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” ¹³ He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” ¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

¹⁸ So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

SERMON

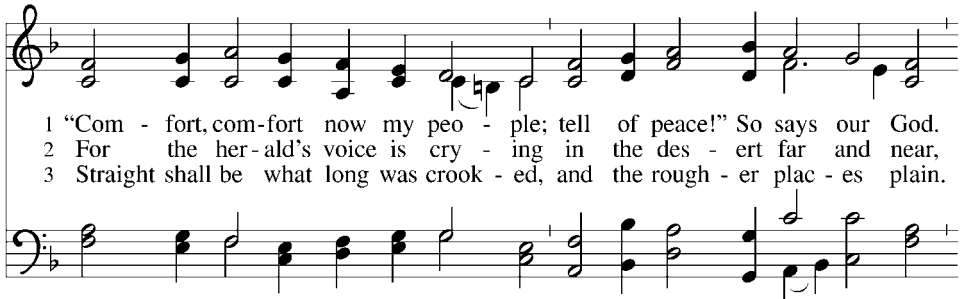
Silence for reflection follows the sermon.

PASTORAL PRAYER

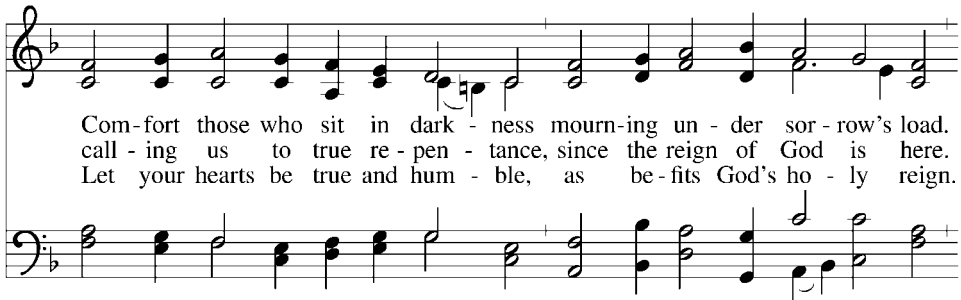
Please stand as you are able.

Comfort, Comfort Now My People

Text & Music: Johann G. Olearius, 1635-1711; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, alt. Geneva, 1551:



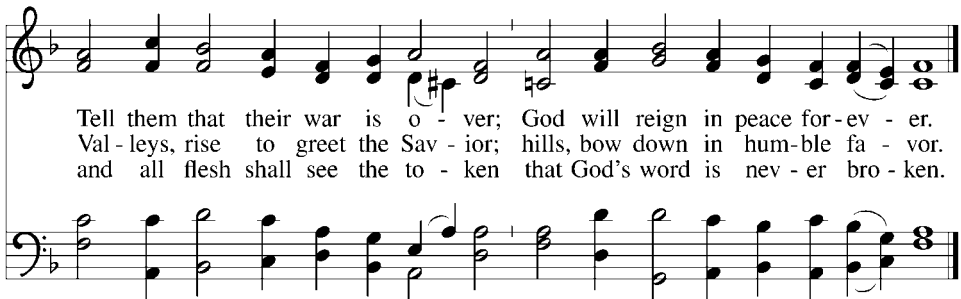
1 "Com - fort, com-fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!" So says our God.
2 For the her-ald's voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,
3 Straight shall be what long was crook - ed, and the rough - er plac - es plain.



Com-fort those who sit in dark - ness mourn-ing un - der sor - row's load.
call - ing us to true re - pen - tance, since the reign of God is here.
Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be - fits God's ho - ly reign.



To God's peo - ple now pro-claim that God's par - don waits for them!
Oh, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way.
For the glo - ry of the Lord now on earth is shed a - broad,



Tell them that their war is o - ver; God will reign in peace for-ev - er.
Val - leys, rise to greet the Sav - ior; hills, bow down in hum-ble fa - vor.
and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.

APOSTLE'S CREED

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
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,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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

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

You may be seated.

MEAL

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 by scanning this QR code



ANTHEM

Please stand as you are able.

OFFERTORY



Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



bles - sing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be



fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u -



nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your



pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERING PRAYER

**Holy One, this Advent season we wait in joy,
And we give with joy.
Joy for all you have given us;
Joy because of your sacred promises.
Receive these generous offerings,
And use them to spread your joy in our world. Amen.**

DIALOG

The Lord be with you.
And also 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.

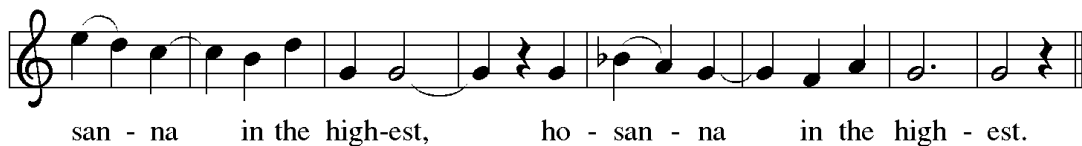
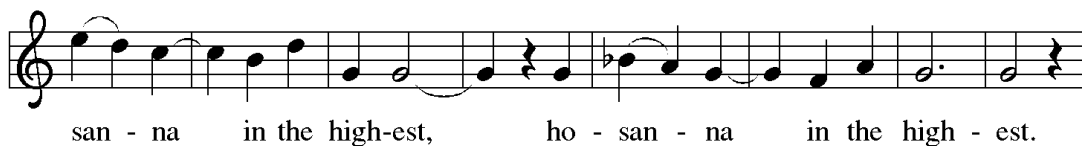
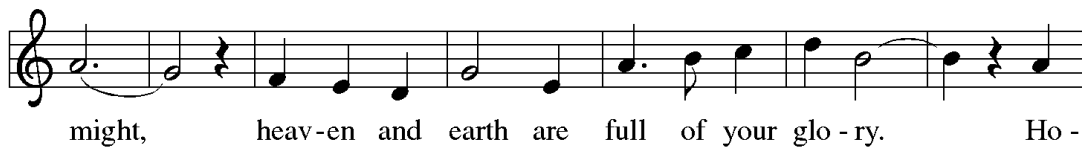
PREFACE

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.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.

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



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

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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to the table.
Thanks be to God.

Please be seated.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

*All Christians who believe that Jesus is truly present in the bread (body of Christ)
and in the wine (blood of Christ) are welcome at the Lord's Table.
To receive Holy Communion, please come down the center aisle, take a glass
(the prefilled glasses contain grape juice), and gather at the altar.
Non-communicating children and adults may come forward for a blessing.*

LAMB OF GOD



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, grant us peace.

Fling Wide the Door

Text: Georg Weissel, 1590-1635; tr. Gracia Grindal, b. 1943 Music: 1704; arr. hymnal version



1 Fling wide the door, un - bar the gate; the King of glo - ry
2 He is the rock of our be - lief, the heart of mer - cy's
3 Oh, hap - py towns and bless - ed lands that live by their true
4 Come, Lord, our Sav - ior, Je - sus Christ; our hearts are o - pen



comes in state; the Lord of lords and King of kings, the
 gen - tle self. His king - ly crown is ho - li - ness; his
 king's com - mands. And bless - ed be the hearts he rules, the
 wide in trust. Oh, show us now your love - ly grace, up -

Sav - ior of the world who brings his great sal - va - tion
 scep - ter is his love - li - ness; he brings our sor - rows
 hum - ble plac - es where he dwells. He is the right - ful
 on our sor - rows shine your face, and let your Ho - ly

to the earth. So raise a shout of ho - ly mirth and
 to an end. Now glad - ly praise our king and friend, and
 Son of bliss who fills our lives and makes us his, cre -
 Spir - it guide our jour - ney in your grace so wide. We

praise our God and Lord, Cre - a - tor, Spir - it, Word.
 wor - ship him with song for sav - ing us from wrong.
 a - tor of the world, our on - ly strength for good.
 praise your ho - ly name, from age to age the same!

Please stand as you are able.

TABLE BLESSING

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

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray.

God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

SENDING

BLESSING

God of endings and beginnings,
God in the darkness and the light,
God, our hope for the journey,
✠ bless and keep you now and forever. **Amen.**

Hark, the Glad Sound!

1 Hark, the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior
 2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's
 3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing
 4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of peace, your wel - come

prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -
 bond - age held. The gates of brass be -
 soul to cure, and with the trea - sures -
 shall pro - claim, and heav'n's e - ter - nal

pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.
 fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.
 of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.
 arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702-1751
 Music: CHESTERFIELD, Thomas Haweis, 1734-1820

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

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Altar Flowers are given in loving memory of my son, Nicholas, and my husband, Harold, by Becky Hoover.

Please remember in your prayers ...

Healing: Bonnie (1/3), LaVonne Dorseth (12/15), Joanne Fisher (12/22), Destinee Gray (12/29), Denise Heinbaugh (1/7), Toni Uglow (1/9), Joyce Morschhauser (12/20), Angie Morris (12/7), Galen Myers (12/3), Jane Stockhousen (12/25), Paul Stockhousen (12/25), Tom Woods (12/16)

Long Term Care: **Pat Dent, Julie Diehl, June Diehl, Charles Kampmeyer, Mary Alice Ross, Garry Shatzer,** and Joe Pine

Military: Tawny & Brad Arnold and Parker Brown.

Grief: Family of Mary Alice Ross

ATTENDANCE December 8 59 in person

SUNDAY SCHOOL On December 29 we will not have donuts or Sunday School.

END OF YEAR GIVING Contributions that you wish to be credited to 2024 must be received in the church office NO LATER THAN December 29, 2024. Any mailed contributions need to be received in the church office by December 27, 2024. Any contributions that are received after December 29th will be credited to 2025. Any questions, please contact Carol McCoy at 717-263-0739.



THE CHAMBERSBURG CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS will present a recital of Advent and Christmas music today at 3:00 PM in the sanctuary of St. Paul United Methodist Church, 750 Norland Avenue. Free will donations will be gladly accepted.

MEMBER PHOTO DIRECTORIES Please send any address or contact information updates to our parish administrator (felccoffice@gmail.com). An updated information sheet will be printed to insert in your photo directory.

WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS LUNCH The Women's Breakfast Fellowship will be having a CHRISTMAS LUNCH on December 18 at the Italian Village Restaurant at 5267 Philadelphia Avenue in Chambersburg at 12:00. Please RSVP to 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.



HOMEBOUND POINSETTIA DELIVERY First Lutheran is planning to visit our home-bound, shut-ins, and nursing home resident members on Sunday, December 22. Families or groups will meet in Fellowship Hall after the service to pick up poinsettias and cards to deliver. If you would like to help with the holiday visits, please contact the church office or Tim or Mary Gotwald. You may make the visits that afternoon or later that week as your schedule permits. Thank You!

GUATEMALA WISH LIST This January we have a team of folks traveling to Tree-4-Hope school for girls in Guatemala. They have received an extensive wish list of donations to bring with them. Here is an update on that list: Children's Tylenol and Motrin (chewable or liquids); Children's chewable vitamins; Adult Tylenol and Motrin (generic brands are acceptable on all medications); kitchen tea towels and hot pads; large containers of spices: Garlic Powder, Onion Powder, Italian Seasoning, Oregano, Cinnamon, Black Pepper, Cash donations are also welcome for purchasing supplies. Contact: Cheryl at the church office.

SPIRITTRUST LUTHERAN CHAMBERSBURG AUXILIARY favorite recipes have been donated from Lutheran Church Members. Cookbooks make great gifts at \$15 each. Contact Mary Beth McGraw-Warne at 717-372-8282.

HATS SCARVES AND MITTENS HANGING TIME IS HERE AGAIN the Neighborhood Task Team is planning to hang items on the church fence for our neighbors to stay warm. What can you do to help with this project? Purchase new or donate gently used hats, scarves and mittens for men, women and children to donate to this project. Share this with your friends, relatives and neighbors. Come and help us sort the donated items-January 6 at 10 am. Volunteer to hang items on the fence. Dates are January 18, 19, 20. Contact Mary Beth Warne.

CANTATA Come and Behold Him: The King of Kings created by Joe E. Parks will be presented by the Adult and Children Choirs and musicians of First Lutheran as our main message at worship on Sunday, December 22. Please invite your neighbors.

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS First Lutheran is reviewing its Eucharistic Ministry Partners. If you or someone you know who is homebound would like to receive Holy Communion, please be in touch with Pastor Nicholson. If you would be willing to visit one or two people each month or every other month and take them communion, please speak with Pastor Nicholson as well. This is a life giving ministry for our homebound members. Thank you for the consideration.



SPECIAL FINANCIAL GIFTS on November 17 our congregation approved the repair of the stained glass windows and the replacement of the air conditioning unit in the sanctuary. If you would like to make a special financial gift toward these items, please talk with Carol McCoy (financial secretary) 717-816-0712 1cjmccoy@comcast.com , Sally Herritt (treasurer) 717-262-5063 felcctreasurer@gmail.com or Pastor Nicholson. Your donations would make wonderful memorial gifts or a gift to honor someone.

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

	<u>December 15</u>	<u>December 22</u>	<u>December 24</u>
Lector:	Becky Hoover	Jane Love	
Soundboard:	Scott Carbaugh	Scott Carbaugh	Scott Carbaugh
Communion Assistants:	Karen Sloan Gerry Wilson Rose Wilson Kathy Shoop	Kathy Shoop	Karen Sloan Gerry Wilson Rose Wilson Kathy Shoop
Greeters:	Nancy Hamilton	Nancy Hamilton	Nancy Hamilton
Closer:	Jeff Dorand	Jeff Dorand	Jeff Dorand
Altar Guild:	Barb Evans Karin Woods	Barb Evans Karin Woods	Barb Evans Karin Woods
Ushers:	Rick Gates Nikki Johnson Denny Love Mark Nicholson Bob Wildeson	Rick Gates Nikki Johnson Denny Love Mark Nicholson Bob Wildeson	Rick Gates Nikki Johnson Denny Love Mark Nicholson Bob Wildeson