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**December 21, 2025**



**Affiliation: Church of the Lutheran Confession**

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**WELCOME:** *Good morning and welcome to all who are present with us this morning.*

*Today, our hearts are focused through our Scripture Lessons and hymns on what Christ offers to us – the truth of God’s forgiving grace. While the world busies itself with the pursuit of a lesser Christmas experience, Christ provides us with the perfect Christmas, the gift of peace with God through His holy life and the atoning sacrifice for our sins on the cross. Let us listen to Him!*

# **ORDER OF WORSHIP**

**OPENING PRAYER:** *We ask the Lord's blessings on our worship.*

**HYMN:** #65

*"O Lord, How Shall I Meet You"*

When sinners see their lost condition  
And feel the pressing load of sin,  
And Jesus cometh on His mission  
To heal the sin-sick heart within,  
All grief must flee before His grace,  
And joy divine will take its place.

When Jesus enters meek and lowly  
To fill the home with sweetest peace;  
When hearts have felt His blessing holy  
And found from sin complete release;  
Then light and calm within shall reign  
And hearts divided love again.

When Jesus enters land and nation  
And moves the people with His love;  
When, yielding to His kind persuasion,  
Our hearts His truth and blessing prove,  
Then shall our life on earth be blest,  
The peace of God on us shall rest.

When Jesus comes,--O blessed story!--  
He works a change in heart and life;  
God's kingdom comes with pow'r and glory  
To young and old, to man and wife;  
Thro' Sacrament and living Word  
Faith, love, and hope are now conferred.

Then stilled are cries and lamentation,  
Then loosed is Satan's every band;  
In death is hope and consolation,  
The soul is safe in Jesus' hand.  
When we shall walk through death's dark vale,  
His rod and staff shall never fail.

Oh, may He soon to every nation  
Find entrance where He is unknown,  
With life and light and full salvation,  
That heathendom may be o'erthrown  
And healing to the hearts may come  
In heathen land and Christian home!  
Amen.

## INVOCATION

*Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

**Cong: Amen.**

## CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

*Pastor: Dearly loved by God, since we have come to worship our God, we ought to acknowledge that we come as sinners. So let us draw near with a true heart to confess our sins unto God, our Father, imploring Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.*

*Pastor: Our help is in the name of the Lord.*

**Cong: Who made heaven and earth.**

*Pastor: I said, "I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord."*

**Cong: And You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

**ALL: O almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your**

**temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray of your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, be gracious and merciful to me, a poor sinful being.**

*Pastor: On the basis of your confession and by virtue of my office as a called servant of the Word, I announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

**Cong: Amen.**

*Pastor: Shower down, you heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness.*

*Let the earth open and bring forth salvation.*

*Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.*

**Cong: (sung)**

**Glory be 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.**

**Lord, have mercy upon us.  
Christ, have mercy upon us.  
Lord, have mercy upon us.**

**Glory be to God on high,  
And on earth peace, goodwill toward men.  
We thank You, we bless You, we worship You, we glorify You,  
we give thanks to You, for Your great glory. O Lord God,  
heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.**

**O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; O Lord God,  
Lamb of God, Son of the Father, You who takes away the sin**

**of the world, have mercy upon us. You who takes away the sin of the world, receive our prayer. You who sits at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.**

**For You only are holy; You only are the Lord. You only, O Christ, with the Holy Spirit, are most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

*Pastor: The Lord be with you.*

**Cong: And with your spirit.**

### **THE PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

*Pastor: O Lord, we give thanks to You that You have, in the sending of Your only-begotten Son into our flesh have made bare Your holy arm before the eyes of all the nations. We implore You to stir up Your power and come and with great might comfort us so that, by the help of Your grace, whatever is hindered by our sins may be quickly accomplished by Your mercy and and righteousness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.*

**Cong: Amen.**

### **FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON: Deuteronomy 18:9-19**

(ESV) “When you come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominable practices of those nations. (10) There shall not be found among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a sorcerer (11) or a charmer or a medium or a necromancer or one who inquires of the dead, (12) for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD. And because of these abominations the LORD your God is driving them out before you. (13) You shall be blameless before the

LORD your God, (14) for these nations, which you are about to dispossess, listen to fortune-tellers and to diviners. But as for you, the LORD your God has not allowed you to do this. (15) “The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen— (16) just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.’ (17) And the LORD said to me, ‘They are right in what they have spoken. (18) I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. (19) And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.

## **SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON: Hebrews 1:1-14**

(ESV) Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, (2) but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. (3) He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, (4) having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. (5) For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”? Or again, “I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son”? (6) And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, “Let all God's angels worship him.” (7) Of the angels he says, “He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire.” (8) But of the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. (9) You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your

companions.” (10) And, “You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands; (11) they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment, (12) like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end.” (13) And to which of the angels has he ever said, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet”? (14) Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

## **CONFESSION OF FAITH**

*The Nicene Creed*

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by Whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven And was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, And was made man; And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures And ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, Whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, Who spoke by the prophets.**

And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins, And I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**HYMN: #59**

*“Hail to the Lord’s Anointed”*

Hail to the Lord’s Anointed,  
Great David’s greater Son!  
Hail in the time appointed,  
His reign on earth begun!  
He comes to break oppression,  
To set the captive free,  
To take away transgression  
And rule in equity.

He comes with succor speedy  
To those who suffer wrong;  
To help the poor and needy  
And bid the weak be strong;  
To give them songs for sighing,  
Their darkness turn to light,  
Whose souls, condemned and dying,  
Were precious in His sight.

He shall come down like showers  
Upon the fruitful earth,  
And joy and hope, like flowers,  
Spring in His path to birth.  
Before Him, on the mountains,  
Shall peace, the herald, go,  
And righteousness, in fountains,  
From hill to valley flow.

Arabia’s desert ranger



To Him shall bow the knee,  
The Ethiopian stranger  
His glory come to see;  
With off'rings of devotion  
Ships from the isles shall meet  
To pour the wealth of oceans  
in tribute at His feet.

Kings shall fall down before Him,  
And gold and incense bring;  
All nations shall adore Him,  
His praise all peoples sing;  
To Him shall prayer unceasing,  
And daily vows ascend,  
His kingdom still increasing,  
A kingdom without end.

O'er every foe victorious,  
He on His throne shall rest,  
From age to age more glorious,  
All blessing and all-blest.  
The tide of time shall never  
His covenant remove;  
His name shall stand forever--  
That name to us is Love.  
Amen.

### **THE SERMON: Luke 21:25-36**

(ESV) The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, (36) and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" (37) The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. (38) Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, "What are you seeking?" And they said to him, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where

are you staying?” (39) He said to them, “Come and you will see.” So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

# “The Perfect Christmas”

## THE OFFERTORY *(sung)*

Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
And renew a right spirit within me.  
Cast me not away from Your presence,  
And take not Your Holy Spirit from me.  
Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,  
And uphold me with Your free Spirit. Amen.

## THE OFFERING OF THANKFUL HEARTS

### GENERAL PRAYER

**HYMN: #704**

*“O Lord, How Shall I Meet You”*

O Lord, how shall I meet You,  
How welcome You aright?  
Your people long to greet You,  
My Hope, my heart's Delight.  
O Jesus, let Your Word be  
A lamp to light my way  
To show me how to please You,  
To guide me ev'ry day.

Your Zion stews before You  
Green boughs and fairest palms;  
And I too will adore You  
With joyous songs and psalms.

My heart shall bloom forever  
For You with praises new  
And from Your name shall never  
Withhold the honor due.

I lay in fetters, groaning;  
You came to set me free.  
I stood, my shame bemoaning;  
You came to honor me.  
A glorious crown You give me,  
A treasure safe on high  
That will not fail or leave me  
As earthly riches fly.

Love caused Your incarnation;  
Love brought You down to me.  
Your thirst for my salvation  
Procured my liberty.  
Oh, love beyond all telling,  
That led You to embrace  
In love, all love excelling,  
Our lost and fallen race.

Rejoice, then, you sad-hearted,  
Who sit in deepest gloom,  
Who mourn o'er joys departed  
And tremble at your doom.  
Despair not; He is near you,  
He's standing at the door  
Who best can help and cheer you  
And bids you weep no more.

He comes to judge the nations,  
A terror to His foes,  
A light of consolation,

**And blessed hope to those  
Who love the Lord's appearing.  
O glorious Son, now come,  
Send forth Your beams most cheering  
And guide us safely home.**

## **THE SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT**

*Pastor: The Lord be with you.*

**Cong: And with your spirit.**

*Pastor: Lift up your hearts.*

**Cong: We lift them up unto the Lord.**

*Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord.*

**Cong: It is good and right so to do.**

*Pastor: It is truly good, right, and spiritually beneficial for us, in all places and in all circumstances, to give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world and calling sinners to bring forth fruits of repentance that they might escape the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we praise and give glory to Your name, evermore praising You and singing:*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord God of heavenly hosts;  
Heav'n and earth are full of Your glory.  
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is He, Blessed is He,  
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.**

*Pastor: 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.*

**Cong: For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

## **THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

**Pastor:** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**Cong:** Amen.

**O Christ, the Lamb of God,  
Who takes away the sin of the world,  
Have mercy upon us.**

**O Christ, the Lamb of God,  
Who takes away the sin of the world,  
Have mercy upon us.**

**O Christ, the Lamb of God,  
Who takes away the sin of the world,  
Grant us Your peace. Amen.**

## **RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION A NOTE TO OUR GUESTS**

*On the basis of the Bible's teaching about Holy Communion, at Faith Lutheran Church we believe that Christ gives to us His true body and blood in, with, and under the bread and the wine. We also understand that, while Christ instituted this meal for the strengthening of His believers' faith, this Sacrament has the potential to bring judgment on those who do not receive it with a proper understanding of its purpose. In love, we ask that if you are not a member of Faith Lutheran Church or a sister church in the CLC, that you NOT come forward to receive the sacrament.*

*If you would like more information concerning receiving Communion with us in the future, please speak with the pastor following the service.*

## **SIMEON'S SONG FOR A PEACEFUL DEPARTURE**

**O Lord, now You are letting Your servant  
Depart in peace according to Your Word.**

**For my eyes have seen Your salvation  
Which You have prepared before the face of all people.**

**A Light to lighten the Gentiles  
And the Glory of Your people, Israel.  
Glory be to the Father and to the Son  
And to the Holy Spirit,  
As it was in the beginning, is now,  
And ever shall be, forevermore. Amen.**

*Pastor: Oh, give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,*  
**Cong: And His mercy endures forever.**

*Pastor: We give thanks to You, Almighty God, that You have  
refreshed us through this special means of grace. We ask that,  
of Your everlasting mercy, You would strengthen us through it in  
faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another, through  
Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy  
Spirit, one God, forever and ever.*  
**Cong: Amen.**

*Pastor: The Lord be with you.*  
**Cong: And with your spirit.**

*Pastor: Bless we the Lord.*  
**Cong: Thanks be to God.**

*Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face  
shine upon you and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up His  
countenance upon you and give you peace.*  
**Cong: Amen.**

**SILENT PRAYER**

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE

Wednesday @ 7:00 PM – Christmas Eve Worship

Thursday @ 7:00 AM Christmas Day streamed devotion

Sunday @ 9:00 AM Bible Class

@ 10:00 AM Divine Service

**CHRISTMAS SERVICES:** This Wednesday we will have our Christmas Eve service, which will be centered on the theme: *Lessons & Carols*. That service will begin at 7:00 PM. While we will not have a Christmas Day service, Pastor Gantt will live stream a special devotion which will conclude the Advent theme: The Miracles of Christmas. On Christmas Day the theme of the devotion will be “The Miracle in the Manger.” That devotion stream will begin at 7:00 AM.

**CHRISTMAS CONCERT:** The choirs of Immanuel Lutheran High School, College, and Seminary presented a service of Word and Song this past Friday with the overall theme being “Light Born From Light” (O Nata Lux de Lumine). If you would like to make use of the service as part of your Christmas preparations you can find it here: <http://www.youtube.com/@ilcvideos>

**CALL NEWS** Pastor Joe Naumann of Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church, Mankato, MN, has received the call to Holy Cross Ev. Lutheran Church, Phoenix, AZ. <> Pastor Emeritus David Schierenbeck has accepted the call to serve as Assistant to the Pastor at Berea Ev. Lutheran Church, Inver Grove Heights, MN, after he concludes serving as vacancy pastor of Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church, Red Wing, MN, at the end of January. <> Pastor Cory Drehle of Berea Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, SD, has received the call to Living Hope Lutheran Church, Appleton, WI. <> Pastor Dave Naumann of St. John's Lutheran Church, Clarkston, WA, and Peace Lutheran Church, Orofino, ID, has returned the call to Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Spokane, WA. <> Pastor Terrel Kesterson of Ascension Lutheran Church, Batavia, IL, has returned the part-time call to

Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church, Red Wing, MN. <> Pastor Emeritus Michael Eichstadt has accepted the vacancy call to Holy Cross Ev. Lutheran Church, Phoenix, AZ. <> Pastor Ben Libby of Redeemer Ev. Lutheran Church, Cheyenne, WY, has received the call to Messiah Lutheran Church, Eau Claire, WI.

## **Daily Bible Readings for Home Devotions**

### **December 22 - December 27, 2025**

**Mon John 1:19-28** John the Baptizer turns aside all renown from himself, that it may go instead to the One far greater "whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie" (v27). To Him must go the praise!

**Tues Philippians 4:4-7** Joy in the Lord goes together with gentleness toward others, for our hearts are not guarded by sharp words and weapons, but by the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding (v7).

**Wed Luke 2:1-14** On the night before Christmas, we remember how the Christ came quietly to Bethlehem, and was announced to unnamed shepherds at night. But the angels already knew, and rejoiced!

**Thurs John 1:16-18** "Grace upon grace" describes our God. And His grace and truth came to us through Jesus Christ. Through the only-begotten Son we learn to know the Father!

**Fri Titus 2:11-14** It is the grace of God that brings salvation to all people. This grace also trains us to say "No" to ungodliness, since He gave Himself to redeem us from all lawlessness, and to be His own people.

**Sat Isaiah 9:2-7** Joy, light, and freedom are encompassed in the promised child (v6). There will be no end to the peace that He brings, for He will be everything that His names imply!