

*The Nativity of Our Lord
Christmas Eve,
December 24, 2017 11 pm*



First Evangelical Lutheran Church
900 Main Street Brockton, MA 02301
www.firstevlutheran.org

A Congregation of the
900 Main
Telephone:
Website:



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.

First Evangelical Lutheran Church

Street Brockton, Massachusetts 02301
508-586-9021 Fax: 508-583-5501
www.firstevlutheran.org

Ministers: The Members of First Evangelical Lutheran Church

Staff

Pastor: The Reverend Jeffrey C. Johnson

E-mail: jjohnson@firstevlutheran.org Cell: 508-944-7109

Parish Administrator: James E. Benson

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Minister of Music: David N. Burnham

Bookkeeper: Nina Sousa

Youth & Family Ministry Coordinator: Dawn Caffelle

Sexton: Brian D. Gagne

Pastors Emeriti:

The Reverend Michael P. Fruth, Ph.D.

The Reverend Kenneth W. Hilston, Jr.

Minister of Music Emerita: Hope E. Mehaffey

The Altar Flowers are given in memory of Chaplain L. Einar Persson, daughter, Martha, and son, John
by Elsa Persson and Family

The white poinsettia is given in loving memory of Arvid & Edith Swanson
by their son, Harold & Family

Assisting Minister: James Benson **Lector:** Nina Sousa

Crucifer & Acolyte: Katerina Sousa

Vision Statement

Our vision is to become a visible, outreaching community resource consisting of diverse, active, enthusiastic and supportive Christians of all ages, working together with dynamic leadership and ministering to the spiritual and social needs of the congregation and community.

Our Mission Statement

Gathered in Christ, Together We Serve.

Welcome to First Lutheran Church. All are welcome.

No really, we take this pretty seriously; **we want everyone here, including the children.** Children are welcomed and celebrated at First Lutheran Church. We understand that children are children: they make noise; they run around; they like to play games; they even on occasion cry. This bothers the family of the crying child more than it does us as a community. So please stay in worship with your children. Children's Bulletins are available from the greeters. Please take this seriously.

All are welcome. We're glad you're here!

The Nativity of Our Lord
Christmas Eve, December 24, 2017 11 pm

PRELUDE

David Burnham, organ

"Sinfonia" (from the Christmas Oratorio)

J. S. Bach

WELCOME

GATHERING HYMN

283

"O, Come, All Ye Faithful"

Adeste Fideles

We stand and face the Cross as it proceeds to the front of the Sanctuary

DIALOGUE

Read Responsively

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness, on them light has shined.

We have beheld Christ's glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.

To us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

In the Word was life, and the life was the light of all people.

GREETING

Today Christ is born: Alleluia, alleluia! 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.**

HYMN OF PRAISE

300

"The First Noel"

The First Nowell

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray, Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

INTROIT

“Echoing carols”

FELC CHOIR

Carson P. Coomen

THE FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2–7

²The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness —
on them light has shined.
³You 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.
⁴For 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.
⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
⁶For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
⁷His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

The Lesson Ends: Lector: *The Word of the Lord*

Congregation: *Thanks be to God*

PSALM HYMN

“What Child Is This”

296

Greensleeves

THE SECOND READING: Titus 2:11–14

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

The Lesson Ends: Lector: *The Word of the Lord*

Congregation: *Thanks be to God*

GOSPEL PROCESSION

As the Gospel is carried into the midst of the assembly the first two verses of the hymn are sung and as the Gospel is returned to the chancel the final verses are sung.

HYMN of ACCLAMATION

274

“On Christmas Night” (Verses 1 & 2)

Sussex Carol

THE GOSPEL: Luke 2:1–20

The gospel is announced. The holy gospel according to Luke, the second chapter.

Congregation: *Glory to you, O Lord.*

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let

us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The gospel concludes: The gospel of the Lord.

Congregation: *Praise to you, O Christ.*

HYMN of ACCLAMATION

274

"On Christmas Night" (Verses 3 & 4)

Sussex Carol

SERMON

Pastor Jeff Johnson

HYMN OF THE DAY

270

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

Mendelssohn

THE NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation**

**he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;**

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

This night the eternal Word of God is born in us. We pray for Christ's light of life to take flesh in the church, the creation, and all people of God.

A brief silence.

We bring to the manger our longing for the visible unity of the church of Jesus Christ, that undivided it proclaim the one whose birth brings good news of glad tidings to all people. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring to the manger hope for the well-being of creation, that every valley be exalted and every rough place be made plain so that every living thing may flourish. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring to the manger a vision of the reign of the Prince of Peace, that the nations, tribes, and peoples of this world will see and cherish in each other the very image of Christ, whose scepter is mercy and whose judgment is love. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring to the manger concern for those who have no place to lay their heads this night and for those who dwell in the shadow of loneliness, despair, illness, or death (*especially*). We come begging that the child for whom there was no room will open the doors of our hearts to the needs of our neighbors and ourselves. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring to the manger all people who, like the holy family, gather with children in the splendor of this most holy night, that the gift of faith be lavished on another generation. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring to the manger the hopes and dreams of all the years, that with Mary and Joseph, angels and archangels, saints and martyrs, loved ones of every time and every place, our prayers and praises join in a common song uniting heaven and earth in a single peace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Into your outstretched arms, O God, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Jesus Christ, the light and life of the world.

Amen.

PEACE

The presiding minister and the assembly greet each other in the peace of Christ.

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The assembly is seated

OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“Now Come, Redeemer of Us All”

FELC CHOIR

Michael Praetorious

OFFERTORY

267

“Joy to the World”

Antioch

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

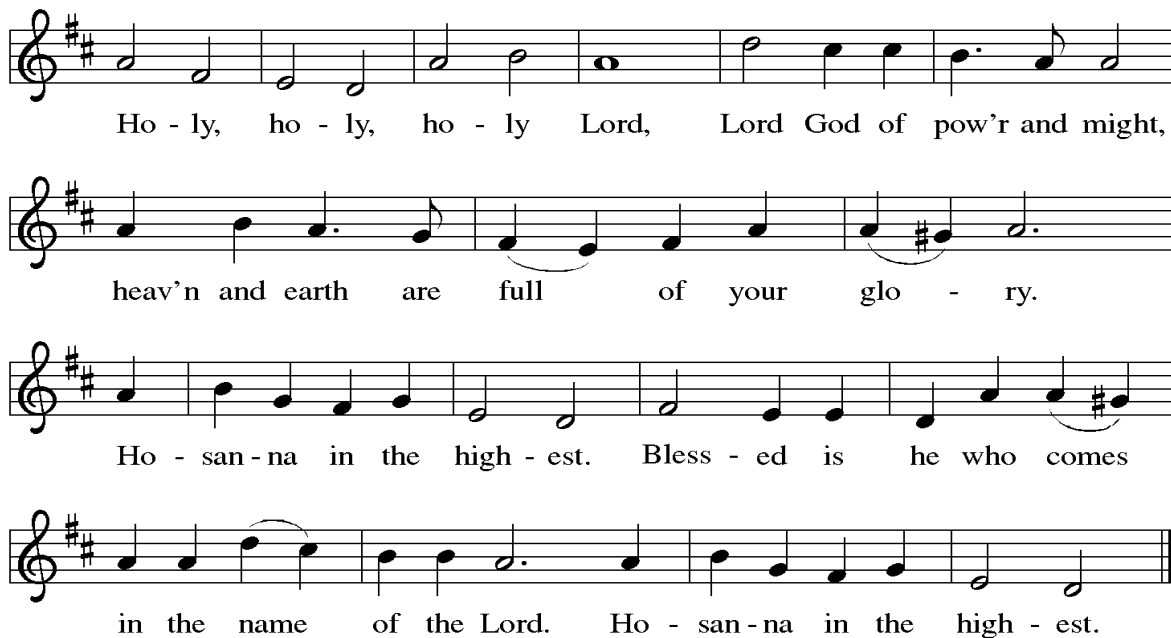
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory that beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God we cannot see. 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



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
the Word made flesh.

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.
Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION



With this bread and cup
we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.
We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.
Come among us.
Bless this meal.
May your Word take flesh in us.
Awaken your people.
Fill us with your light.
Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours,
Holy One of Israel,
Word of God incarnate,
Power of the Most High,
one God, now and forever.

GREAT AMEN



THE LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

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.

*We welcome all who worship with us this evening and invite to the Lord's Table all
who are baptized in the name of the Triune God.*

Administration of Communion Holy Communion will be distributed kneeling as you are able, at the altar rail by the intinction method. The pastor will administer the bread, the first cup following is wine, the second is grape juice, please dip the bread into the wine/grape juice. Please use caution when returning to your seats around the Christmas decorations. For those unable to come forward to the altar communion will be administered at your seat. Gluten free hosts are available if needed

COMMUNION ANTHEM

FELC CHOIR

“O little one sweet ”

J. S. Bach

Congregational Hymns During Communion

“It came Upon the Midnight Clear”

282

“Away in a Manger”

278

“In the Bleak Midwinter”

294

“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”

272

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

Assembly stands

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

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE

279

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

St. Louis

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray,

Great and saving God, you have gathered your scattered people around gifts of grain and wine, the body and blood of our Savior Christ. As we, like the shepherds, return on our way, may we proclaim all we have heard and seen, praising you in word and loving deed for the gift of Jesus, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

THE BLESSING

The God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

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

The God of all grace + bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

CANDLELIGHT: *At this time in the service the candle that you were handed when you entered church will be lit. The pastor will light his candle at the altar and in turn light the candle of the assisting minister and servers who in turn will light the candle of the first person on each side of the church — each member of the congregation will in turn light the candle of the person next to them from their lit candle — the person at the main aisle end of the pew is asked to light the candle of the person behind them. Use caution if you are seated near a swag or wreath.*

Please keep candles upright so that wax does not drip on you, the floor, pews or carpet. Parents—please assist young children with their candles. Following the dismissal please extinguish your candle and separate the candle and cardboard disc and place them in the proper receptacle as you leave church. Please DO NOT leave candles in the pews.

THE SENDING HYMN

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

Stille Nacht

Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,
1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,

ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.
all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,

Hold - er Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher
Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your

Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh.
peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792–1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820–1885
Music: STILLE NACHT, Franz Gruber, 1787–1863

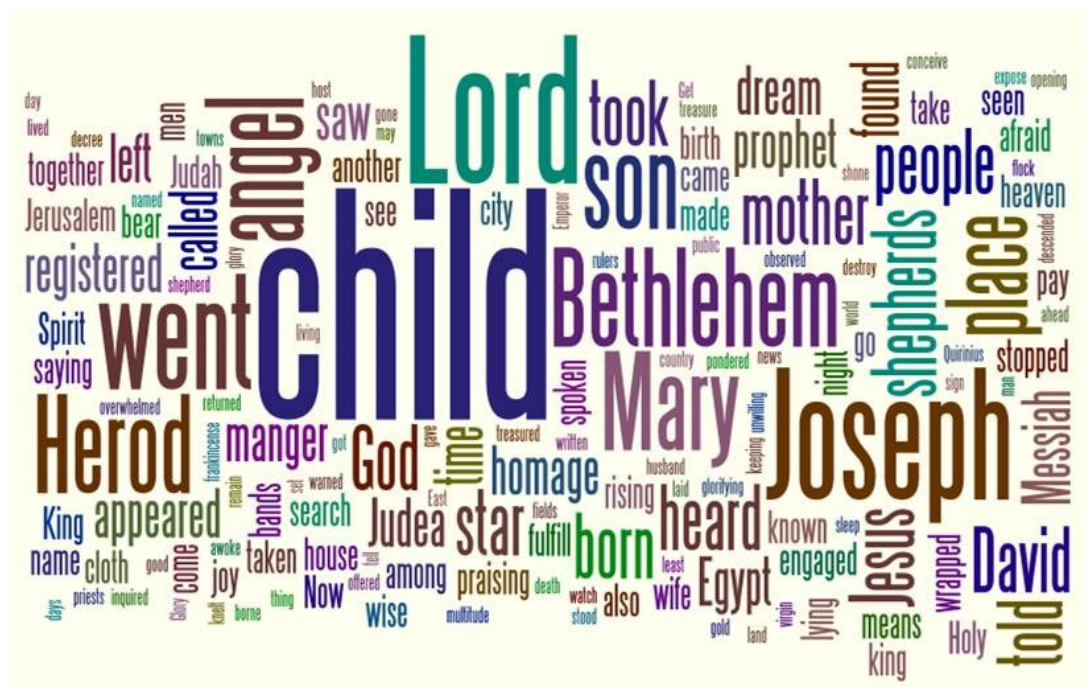
Go in peace. Share the Good News!
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

G. F. Handel

*Our church Christmas tree is the gift
of David Sigren*

***Thank you* to all who have this Christmas at First Lutheran so special. Our heartfelt thanks goes to Ron Newman, Don Newman, members of the Worship & Music Commission, our Youth, our Minister of Music, David Burnham and the members of the choir.**



*The wreaths, swags and poinsettias in the Church
and Chapel are given to the Greater Glory of God
and in Loving memory of*

*Sven & Anna Ahlgren and Mr. & Mrs. Wesley C. Ahlgren
by the Gift of their Estate*

Corinne, Joseph & Karen Finnegan by the Gift of their Estate

Astrid, Paul & Patricia Johnson by the Gift of their Estate

Arlene L. Moberg by the Gift of her Estate

Vilma Hall & Phyllis Cousins by the Gift of their Estate

*Mary & John Core and Florence & George Govoni
by Jeanne & Dennis Govoni*

Loved Ones by Harold, Janet & Kristine Swanson

*Astrid Anderson, Donald A. Anderson, Mr. & Mrs. Alden Ander-
son, Sr., Mr. & Mrs. John P. Pearson and all Loved Ones
by Alden Anderson & Family*

My wife, Leah A. Benson by S. Erick Benson

*Our mother, grandmother & great-grandmother, Leah A. Benson
by James E. Benson, Cheryl & Skip Packard,
Corinne & Scott Packard-Bradley, Chris & Nikkii Packard,
Abigail Rose Bradley & Cole James Packard*

Friends & Loved Ones by Pete & Alice Carlson

*Paul Pearson by Jan, Mr. & Mrs. Scott Mulgrew & Jack,
Mr. & Mrs. Jason Dahlgren, Hannah & Justin*

*Winston & Shirley Bolinder, Carl & Margery Pearson &
Loved Ones by Janice Pearson, Mr. & Mrs. Scott Mulgrew & Jack,
Mr. & Mrs. Jason Dahlgren, Hannah & Justin*

Merle Newberg by his wife, Susan Newburg

Harvey, Meredith & Bill Freer by Susan Newburg

My family by Anna Haskins

All Our Loved Ones by the Hruzd Family

Elsie M. Burgeson by Jean-Ellen Ouellette-Kenney

*Elsie Sondeen & Gertrude Forsstrom
by John & Jean-Ellen Ouellette-Kenney*

*Orie D. & Ruth B. Ouellette and Edward & Beatrice Kenney
by John & Jean-Ellen Kenney*

*Our parents: Ken & Jeanne Buker, John & Ellen Newman, my sis-
ter, Susan Buker Coelho & Loved Ones
by Mr. & Mrs. Donald Newman*

*Bror Algot & Ellen M. Benson, Frederick E. & Olga A. Soell,
George V. Hollertz & Elsa C. Hollertz
by the Benson & Packard Families*

Esther & Russell Staff by Barbara & David Staff

*Grace & Howard Lundgren by Linda, Peter & Michael Tupper
and Lauren Willis*

*Edith & Joe Tupper by Linda, Peter & Michael Tupper
and Lauren Willis*

Bob Sigren by Sonja Sigren

Mom & Dad, Mary & Al Farkas by Sandy White

*Mr. & Mrs. C.S. Franzen & Capt. Eric P. Franzen
by Gail & Buddy Franzen*

Loved Ones by Bruce & Nancy Pearson

*Carl A. Anderson by wife, Jean, Ron, Karen, Janet,
grandchildren & great-grandchildren*

Janet R. Anderson by Mum & Dad, Ron & Karen

All Our Loved Ones by Ken & Grace Bjorklund

Anna & Gustaf Benson by Bob Parsons

Loved Ones by Mr. & Mrs. Ronald B. Newman, Sr. & Family

Leon Beaulieu by His Loving Wife, Natalie and three daughters

*My mother, Ivy May Pearson
by Brian, Lynn, Carley & Johnny Pearson*

*My mother, Karen Cuzzi
by Lynn, Brian, Carley & Johnny Pearson*

*Mr. & Mrs. Philip J. Giordano, Mr. & Mrs. Donald Curr, Helen S.
Clement, & Beverly Turner by Mr. & Mrs. Philip Giordano*

Uncle Al & Uncle Paul by Abby Rovaldi & Chris Abate

*Julie B, Mom B, Trudy, Teddi & Uncle Gene
by Susan, Aaron & Abby Rovaldi*

*Francis W. & Phyllis P. Nielsen
by John & Joanne Shotwell*

*Karen D. Demers
by John & Joanne Shotwell*

*Mr. & Mrs. Hans Christensen, Sr., Mr. & Mrs. Carl Freberg,
Mr. & Mrs. John Nihill, Mr. Erick Benson, Mr. & Mrs. Paul Olson,
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Freberg, Mr. Jack Foye, Mr. & Mrs. Waldemar
Ekberg, Mr. Devin Ness by the Christensen Family*

Loved Ones by Lois Ness

*Our parents and grandparents: John & Norma Dissauer, Roy C.
Anderson, Jr., Irene Woleen, Mr. & Mrs. Roy C. Anderson, Sr.
by Jan & Ken Anderson*

Our Friend, Gary Blanchard by Ken & Jan Anderson

Russell S. Grabau by The Moxie Cottage Crew

Rita & Jake Ascí by Nancy Barry

*Carol Tupper, peter & Tania Hruzd, Edith & Joe Tupper,
Ellen & Art Hammerquist by Debbie, Tony, Scott, Shaun. Merley
Hruzd & Their Families*

*Helen A. Hermanson and Lars Gary Eliasson
by Mario & Nina Sousa, Katarina Sousa,
Lillia & Olivia Eliasson-Parrott*

Ivan Weatherbee, Jr. by Stacey Fitzgerald and His Grandchildren

*Evelyn & John Lagerval, John "Bud" Ness, Devin Ness, & Karen
Finn by Cindy & Richie*

*In Honor of Donna J. Persson and in memory of
Kenneth R. Persson by Their Grateful Children*

Loved Ones by The Reverend Jeffrey C. Johnson

Paul Sullivan by His wife and Children

Oyur friend, Don Anderson by Mark & Maxine Richardson

*Our parents: Lloyd & Martha Thompson, Hal and Louise
Richardson & Loved Ones by Mark & Maxine Richardson & Family*

Norman Porter by Marilyn Williams

Arthur Williams by Marilyn Williams

*Great-grandparents: Nils Peter & Johanna Christine Thompson,
John Edward & Hildur Lagerstedt
by Lloyd & Willette Thompson*

*Grandparents: Joel & Edythe Thompson,
Carl Victor & Hilma Erickson
by Lloyd & Willette Thompson*

*Our parents: Lloyd & Martha Thompson,
William Hin & Dorothy Chang Wong
by Lloyd & Willette Thompson*

Let Us Pray for our members that are homebound or ill, or otherwise in need of our prayers:

***Let Us Pray for our members
that are homebound or ill, or
otherwise in need of our prayers:***

Debbie Johnson
Francella McFarlane--St. Joseph's
The Grabau Family
Marilyn Tyler
David Tyler
Lisaann Czarnowski
Gustaf Dahlgren--West Acres
Anna Haskins--St. Joseph's
Scott Dunn
Marian Nelson-Hannah B. Shaw
Donna Persson
Eric Johnson
Jeanne Newman
Vivian Tofteroo
Trudy Ciancarelli-Notre Dame Health
John F. Kenyon Jr.

***And for a Special Measure of
God's grace to be upon:***

- ♦ Robert Wedge, E-5 Master of Arms
US Navy, stationed in Bahrain-
friend of Pam Mansbach
- ♦ Ensign Jonathan Daus-US Navy-
recently deployed-granddaughter's
husband of Grace & Ken Bjorklund
- ♦ Sgt. Erik Akerblom-son of William
Akerblom-deployed to North Africa
- ♦ Sgt. Ryan R. Casey, USMC-
stateside-grandson of Carole Casey
- ♦ SPC Shawn Jenkins-stateside-son
of Tana Jenkins,
- ♦ Pvt. 1st Class Philippe Pinto-son of
Sonia Pinto

***We offer our prayers for those members of our
extended family:***

- ♦ Susan Berry--friend of the Bjorklunds
- ♦ Caitlin Ledin--friend of Diane Perry
- ♦ Laurie Dolan Dellarocco-- aunt of Chelsea & Patrick Dolan
- ♦ Rick Venti--friend of the Thompsons
- ♦ Michael McHone--friend of Dennis Govoni
- ♦ Liisa Johnson--friend of Jeanne Govoni
- ♦ Harry & Colleen Hammerquist--brother and sister-in-law of
Elaine Sullivan
- ♦ Nettie Johnson--Aunt of Linda Whittemore
- ♦ James Chapman Sr. & James Chapman Jr.--father-in-law and
brother-in-law of Brian Gagne
- ♦ Mary Petrie--friend of Diane & David Perry
- ♦ Alberto "Booty" Rogers-- former co-worker of Dennis Govoni
- ♦ Chuck Warnock--friend of Dennis Govoni
- ♦ Danny Furtado--friend of Sandy White
- ♦ Robert Silke--uncle of Jeanne Govoni
- ♦ Carlos Evandro Azeredo--brother of Ana Paula Azeredo
- ♦ Beverly Conley--sister of Skip Packard
- ♦ Gary Lewis--friend of Diane Perry
- ♦ Kelley Newman Milliken--daughter of Ron & Jeanne Newman
- ♦ Jean Burgeson--cousin to Barbara Johnson & Jean-Ellen
Ouellette-Kenney
- ♦ Jennifer Anderson--cousin of Diane Perry & niece of Alden An-
derson
- ♦ Junior Nicholas--son of Rosa Nicholas
- ♦ Sheri McIntire--friend of Anne & Rick Martin
- ♦ Donna Jeffreys--friend of Jean Anderson
- ♦ Christina Crosby--niece of Marian Grabau
- ♦ Doninick D'Agostino--father of Jessica Burke
- ♦ Judy Dolan--grandmother of Pat & Chelsea Dolan
- ♦ John Cunningham--friend of the Thompsons
- ♦ Frankie Vigorito--friend of the Rovaldis
- ♦ Lorena Giordano--sister-in-law to the Giordanos
- ♦ Steve McLeod--friend of the MacNevens
- ♦ Marilyn Gilmetti--friend of The Thompsons
- ♦ Bob Lowe--friend of the Rovaldis
- ♦ Sharon Palumbo--friend of Jean-Ellen Ouellette-Kenney
- ♦ Maureen Pigeon--friend of Pat McAfee
- ♦ Velia DeCarli--mother-in-law of Barbara DeCarli
- ♦ Martha Myers--aunt of Sandy White
- ♦ John Bordieri--friend of the MacNevens
- ♦ Eleanor Canty--cousin of Marian Nelson
- ♦ Holly Hamilton--friend of Roberta Battaglia
- ♦ Hildred Tatro--friend of Hope Mehaffey
- ♦ Robert D'Andrea--cousin of Barbara DeCarli

Join Us As We Celebrate

***The Nativity of Our Lord, Christmas Day,
Sunday, December 25***

Service of Holy Communion at 9 am

Sunday, December 31, 2017

Service of Lessons & Carols at 9 am
(single service only this day)



SAVE THE DATE

**Fellowship &
Fundraising
Spaghetti &**

Meatball Dinner

**Saturday, January 20
6 pm in the church vestry**

*With a special appearance by Katie Luther,
Martin's wife*



Adult Donation: \$10.00 Children under 12: \$5:00

***Ticket will be available beginning December 31, 2017 after church or
from the church office.***

THANKFUL FOR OUR CHURCH STAFF

MAY GOD BLESS YOUR WORK

At the December meeting of the Congregational Council it was voted unanimously, on a recommendation brought by the members of the Finance Committee, that an envelope be included in this week's and next week's bulletin giving members of the congregation an opportunity to make a Christmas gift to the members of the church staff as thanks for a job well done and appreciation for what they do throughout the year. You may place your gift in the envelope and place the envelope in the offering plate. We thank our staff, Pastor Jeff, Jim Benson, David Burnham, Evelyn Reuben, Brian Gagne, Nina Sousa and Dawn Caffelle for all they do and wish them a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

2018 Offering Envelopes are on the tables outside the Chapel, please pick your up as well as family and friends . If you cannot find your box please speak to Jim Benson. All boxes are in numerical order and the



number is on the address label atop the box.

If your box number is over #500

you will need

to have a new box number assigned as we have reduced the number of boxes needed over time. Please see Jim Benson or Nina Sousa if you need a new box number.

YELLOW CARDS

In your bulletin you will find a Yellow Communications Card. This card is a way for you communicating with the pastor and staff the following that help us communicate and keep in touch with you:

Updated address

Updated telephone

Updated e-mail

The following that help us share with you:

What are you thankful for

Any information you would like us to be aware of

Prayer concerns for family and friend

And, on the reverse:

Share your feelings with the Pastor

ANNUAL REPORTS

In preparation for our Annual Report and our 151st Annual Meeting on January 228 we ask that all committees, groups and individuals submit their written reports to Jim Benson no later than Monday, December 26. If possible please e-mail to Jim as a Word document with 12 point, Times New Roman type. Thank you!

The Giving Tree

Liz Belanger & Lynn Pearson would like to thank everyone who so generously contributed to this year's Giving Tree. We collected \$3,960.00 to provide gifts to residents of the Ruth House, FELC members in need of assistance, the residents of the YMCA Independent Living program at the Fruth Center, and others. One gift was for \$1,000.00 from a person outside of FELC and we also received a \$250.00 gift from Thrivent Financial. A special thanks to Liz and Lynn for once again taking on this special Christmas Ministry that means so much to so many.

SPECIAL THANKS

We want to thank everyone who contributed to the Giving Tree. We had a larger list this year yet through your generosity, First Lutheran helped spread the joy of the season to all.

Following is a special thank you from Ruth House:

The ladies will have a great Christmas! Please extend our thanks to the youth group as well. We are getting geared up for Santa to arrive, I think the staff have more fun than the kids! Thanks again for all your hard work and effort into our families, we currently have a great set of girls that are willing to put the work in for their future. This will be a great support for them, knowing there are people out there that are rooting for their success.

Christmas Blessings to You All!
Liz Belanger and Lynn Pearson

THINE BE THE GLORY

*Our newly produced compact disc,
"Thine is the Glory".*

This CD, produced to honor the 50 plus year career of our Minister of Music Emerita, Hope E. Mehaffey and featuring organists, David Burnham, Pastor Jeff Johnson and Peter Sykes as well as the First Lutheran Choir and soprano soloist, Sarah Pillow and trumpeter, Pastor Carl Evans contains many of the favorite hymns and music chosen by you.

Available in the hallway after services and from the church office.

\$20.00 each

In this bulletin you will find a 2018 Commitment of Giving or Pledge card which you may use to make your financial commitment to the work of your church in this place in 2018. This card also gives you the opportunity to indicate your willingness to also give of your time to help the church in this place. Please place this card in the offering plate as well. Thank you!

2018 Pledge Update: As of Sunday, December 17, 83 pledges have been received for a total of \$127,126.00 If you have not made your pledge for 2018 we ask that you prayerfully consider doing so. To those who have pledged we thank you for your financial commitment to First Lutheran Church. Pledge cards are available on the table in the hallway of from an usher.

A Christmas Message from the Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Just this. Just now.

I was driving to work one day thinking about my schedule – the meetings I needed to attend, reports I needed to finish, preparations for upcoming travel, email, phone calls, and making a grocery list in my head so that I could pick up what I needed for supper on the way home from work. All of a sudden, I found myself pulling into the parking garage at the Lutheran Center. I had driven the 9 miles to work and had no idea how I got there. I didn't remember the traffic lights, the turns, the scenery – nothing. I had been so absorbed in what was coming up that I was completely oblivious to the present.

I think this experience is not unique to me. We set part of our lives on autopilot and set the planning, list-making, what-if scheduling part on overdrive. Now, planning is a good and necessary thing. One ought to be aware of what is coming up and what needs to be done, but I found that I was so driven by the contingencies and possibilities that I was everywhere all of the time, and, therefore, not anywhere at all.

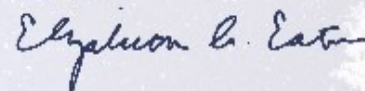
I asked my spiritual director about this, and she recommended that I meditate on these four words: "Just this. Just now." It's a simple discipline but not an easy one. It can alleviate all that anticipatory stress but only if we are willing to be still.

Here we are in Advent. This season doesn't exist in secular culture where everything is barreling toward Christmas. No time to wait, no time to notice, no time to be present. Not this. Not now. All of a sudden, we will find ourselves on the day after Christmas not knowing how we got there.

Advent is a holy season, a season that bids us to be present, to be still. So much is evoked in this season – hope, longing, and the bittersweet awareness that the world is beautiful and broken. Consider all of these things. Sit with them. Pray with them. Be aware of this time of great promise that comes, at least in the Northern Hemisphere, when night is longest. Come, Lord Jesus.

Wait for the Lord. Disengage the autopilot. Notice. Just this. Just now.

Blessed Advent and merry Christmas, dear church!



The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.