

Sunday, December 24, 2017

The Fourth Sunday of Advent
9:00 am



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



A Congregation of the

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

First Evangelical Lutheran Church

900 Main Street Brockton, Massachusetts 02301

Telephone: 508-586-9021 Fax: 508-583-5501

Website: www.firstevlutheran.org

Our 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”

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

E-mail: jbenson@firstevlutheran.org Cell: 508-207-8746

Church/Financial Secretary: Evelyn Reuben

E-mail: ereuben@firstevlutheran.org

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

Our altar flowers this day are given to the Greater Glory of God and in Memory of Chaplain L. Einar Persson, my daughter Martha & my son Johnby Mrs. Elsa Persson & family

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

Presiding Minister: The Reverend Jeffrey C. Johnson

Assisting Minister: James Benson

Crucifer: Gia Kenney **Acolytes:** Sofia Belanger & Manny Robinson **Lector:** Nina Sousa

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

Sunday December 24, 2017

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

ORGAN PRELUDE

David Burnham

Choral Fantasia on “Veni Emmanuel”

Walter MacNutt

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the ☩ holy Trinity,
the one who fashions us,
the one who heals us,
the one who reforms us again and again.
Amen.

Let us confess our sin, calling for God’s transforming power.

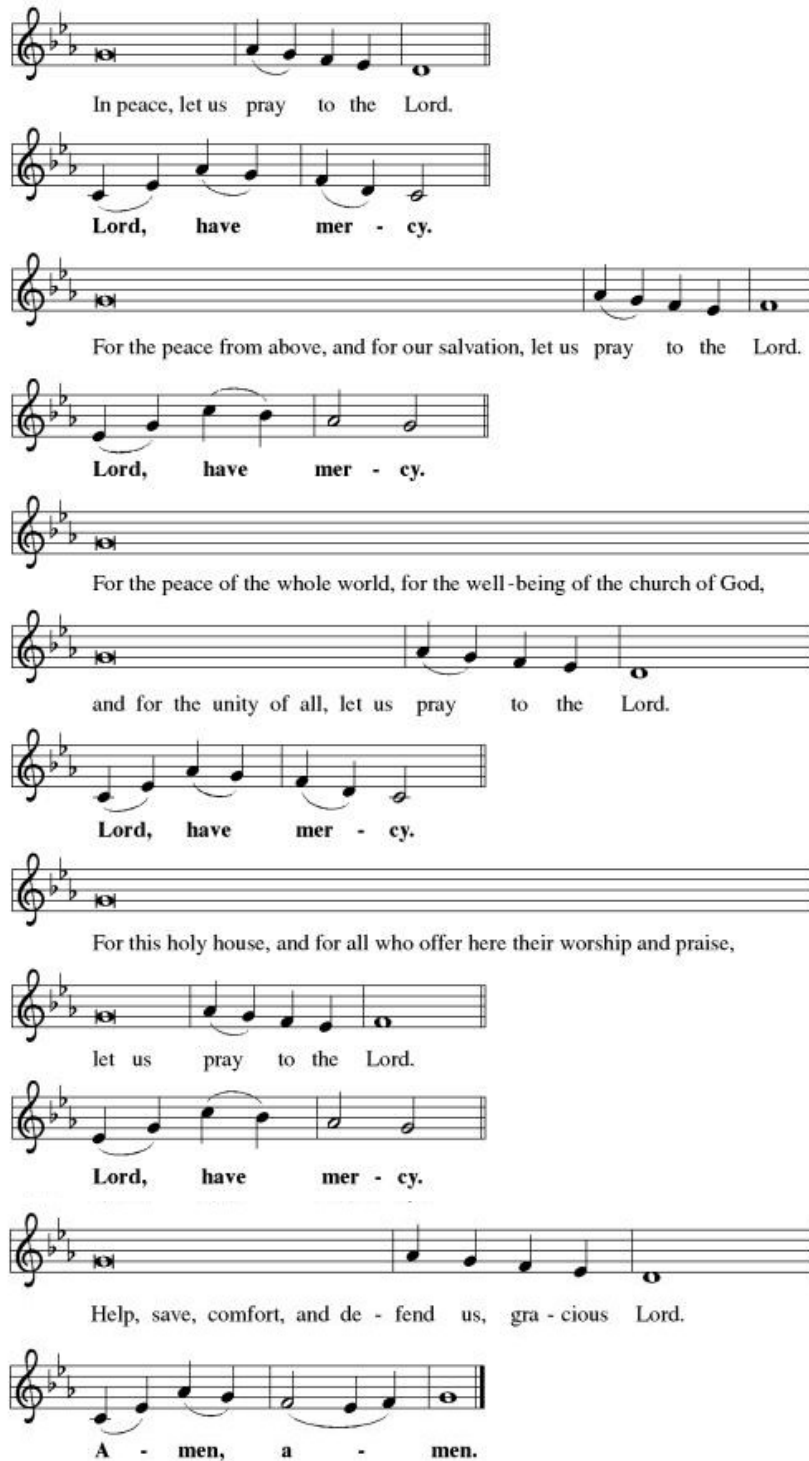
Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Source of all life,
**we confess that we have not allowed
your grace to set us free.
We fear that we are not good enough.
We hear your word of love freely given to us,
yet we expect others to earn it.
We turn the church inward,
rather than moving it outward.
Forgive us. Stir us.
Reform us to be a church powered by love,
willing to speak for what is right,
act for what is just, and seek the healing of your whole creation. Amen.**

God hears our cry and sends the Spirit to change us
and to empower our lives in the world.
Our sins are forgiven,
☩ God’s love is unconditional,
and we are raised up as God’s people who will always be made new,
in the name of Jesus Christ.
Amen.

*“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”**Veni, Emmanuel***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 above, and for our salvation, 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 unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

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

A - men, a - men.

Fourth candle is lit during the following verse:

“Light Four Candles to Watch for Messiah” (verse 4)

Tif In Veldele

*Light four candles to watch for Messiah:
let the light banish darkness.
He is coming, tell the glad tidings.
Let your lights be shining!*

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

BLESSING *(spoken together)*

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe.
You call all nations to walk in your light and to seek your ways of justice and peace,
for the night is past, and the dawn of your coming is near.
Bless us as we light the fourth candle of this wreath.
Rouse us from sleep, that we may be ready to greet our Lord when he comes
and welcome him into our hearts and homes, for he is our light and our salvation.
Blessed be God forever.

*Light four candles to watch for Messiah:
let the light banish darkness.
He is coming, tell the glad tidings.
Let your lights be shining!*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE FIRST READING: 2 SAMUEL 7: 1-11, 16

¹Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²the king said to the prophet Nathan, “See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.” ³Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.”

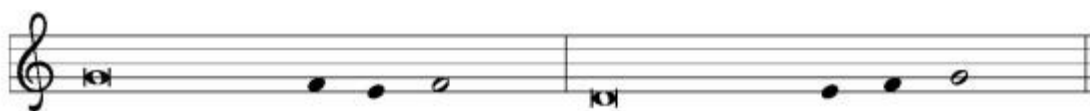
⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. ⁷Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?” ⁸Now therefore thus

you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; ⁹and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. ¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

The Lesson Ends: Lector: *The Word of the Lord* Congregation: *Thanks be to God*

THE PSALM: Psalm Luke 1 :46b-55

Chanted Responsively



^{46b}My soul proclaims the greatness | of the Lord,
⁴⁷my spirit rejoices in | God my Savior,
⁴⁸**for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your | lowly servant.**
From this day all generations will | call me blessed:
⁴⁹you, the Almighty, have done great | things for me
and holy | is your name.
⁵⁰**You have mercy on | those who fear you,**
from generation to | generation.
⁵¹You have shown strength | with your arm
and scattered the proud in | their conceit,
⁵²**casting down the mighty | from their thrones**
and lifting | up the lowly.
⁵³You have filled the hungry | with good things
and sent the rich | away empty.
⁵⁴**You have come to the aid of your | servant Israel,**
to remember the prom- | ise of mercy,
⁵⁵the promise made | to our forbears,
to Abraham and his chil- | dren forever.

THE SECOND READING: ROMANS 16: 25-27

²⁵Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—²⁷to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

The Lesson Ends: Lector: *The Word of the Lord* Congregation: *Thanks be to God*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL: LUKE 1: 26-38

The gospel is announced. The holy gospel according to Saint Luke the first chapter.

Congregation: *Glory to you, O Lord.*

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

The gospel concludes: The gospel of the Lord. **Congregation: *Praise to you, O Christ.***

CHILDREN'S SERMON

9 AM

SERMON

Pastor Jeffrey C. Johnson

HYMN OF THE DAY

275

"Angels, From the Realms of Glory"

Regent Square

SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM

During the hymn the candidate for baptism, parent and sponsors gather with the minister at the font. The minister address the parents and sponsors:

In baptism our gracious heavenly Father frees us from sin and death by joining us to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are born children of a fallen humanity; by water and the Holy Spirit we are reborn children of God and made members of the church, the body of Christ. Living with Christ and in the communion of saints, we grow in faith, love, and obedience to the will of God.

Sponsors present the candidates:

We present Aubriana Faith Jahnke for the Sacrament of Holy Baptism.

The minister addresses the parents and sponsors:

Called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, do you desire to have **Aubriana** baptized into Christ?

Response: I do.

The minister continues:

As you bring your child to receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities:
to live with her among God's faithful people,
bring her to the word of God and the holy supper,
teach her the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments,
place in her hands the holy scriptures,
and nurture her in faith and prayer,
so that your child may learn to trust God,
proclaim Christ through word and deed,
care for others and the world God made,
and work for justice and peace.

Do you promise to help **Aubriana** grow in the Christian faith and life?

Response: I do.

The minister addresses the assembly:

People of God, do you promise to support **Aubriana** and pray for her in her new life in Christ?
We do.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

The assembly stands

The minister addresses the parents and sponsors:

I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church.
Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

Response: I renounce them.

Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?

Response: I renounce them.

Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?

Response: I renounce them.

The minister addresses the parents, sponsors and assembly.

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**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 into hell.
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.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**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.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE FONT

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight. Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family, and through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. In the river Jordan your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you set us free from the power of sin and death and raise us up to live in you.

Pour out your Holy Spirit, the power of your living Word, that this child may be washed in the waters of baptism and given new life. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

BAPTISM

The assembly may be seated.

The minister says:

Aubriana Faith I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

The minister continues:

Let us pray.

We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give your daughters and sons new birth, cleanse them from sin, and raise them to eternal life.

Sustain **Aubriana Faith** with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever. **Amen.**

The minister marks the sign of the cross on the forehead of the baptized. As the sign of the cross is made, the minister says:

Aubriana, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever. **Amen.**

WELCOME

A lighted candle is given to the sponsors as the minister says:

Jesus said, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will have the light of life.

The minister and the baptismal group face the assembly. The assembly joins in welcoming the newly baptized.

The minister says:

Let us welcome the newly baptized.

We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share: join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's creative and redeeming word to all the world.

Those who have gathered at the font may return to their places.

The minister accompanies the newly baptized into the midst of the assembly as the hymn is sung.

BAPTISMAL HYMN

276

“Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”

W Żłobie Leży

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Guided by the light of Christ, let us pray for the coming dawn of joy, healing, and comfort for all God's people.

A brief silence.

Your eternal reign has come into the world. Give us ears to hear your call to serve your kingdom, and send us out to those who are hurting and in need of good news. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You created the mystery and beauty of the earth. Replenish rivers, lakes, seas, and all bodies of water, so that plants, animals, and humans can have life and be refreshed. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You bring down the powerful and raise up the lowly. Where war rages, shatter hatred with forgiveness and peace. Where fear rules, make your all-powerful and eternal presence known. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You remember us with mercy, Lord, as you have done for all generations. Fill us, comfort us, strengthen us, and enlighten us. Make your will known to all in need. Today we pray especially for Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You called Mary to bear your Son. We pray for pregnant women, for mothers and fathers of infants and small children, and especially for couples who bear the pain of infertility, miscarriage, or stillbirth. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Your kingdom has no end. With your servants throughout time, women and men, old and young, unite us forever in your reign of peace and joy. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We raise our prayers to you, O God, in the name of the one who is, who was, and who is to come, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE

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

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OFFERING

ORGAN OFFERTORY

“Lo, How A Rose E’er Blooming”

Johannes Brahms

OFFERTORY CANTICLE



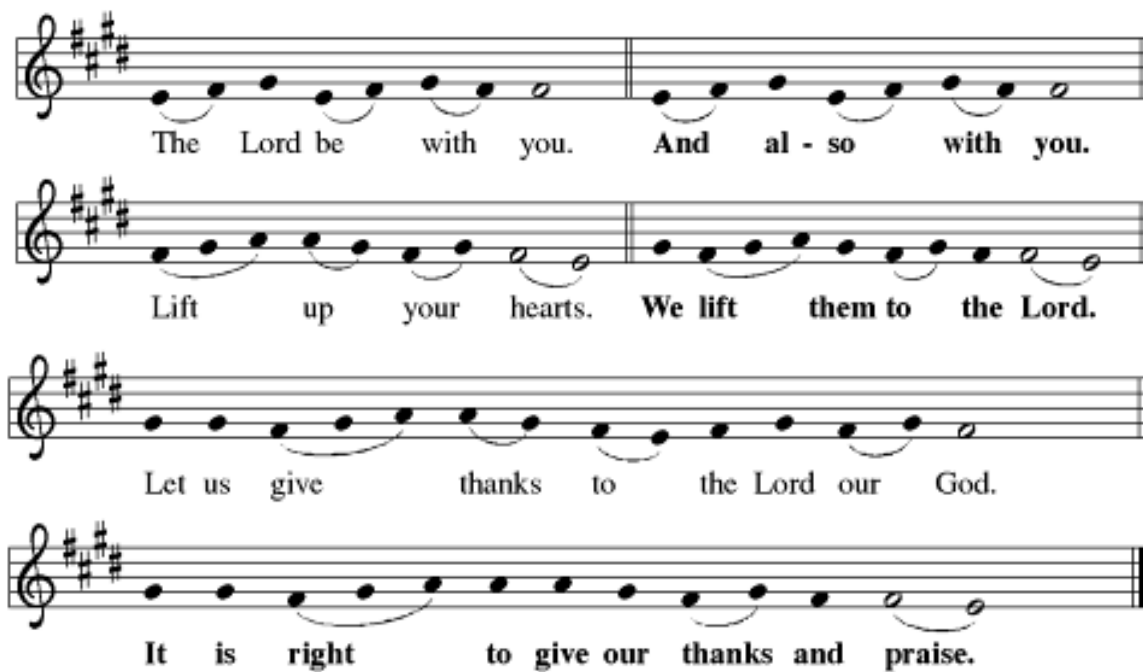
Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that
we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and dreams of
all; u - nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble
with your pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and 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.

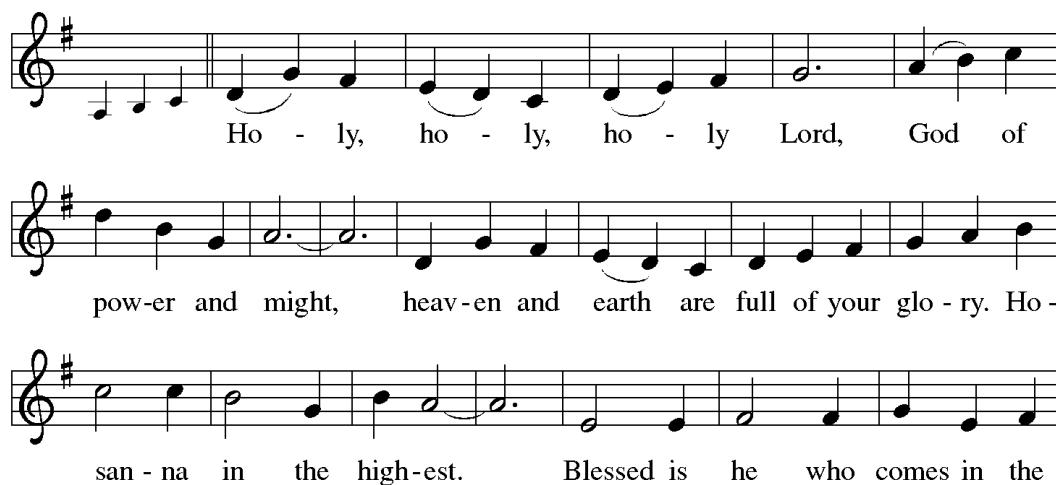
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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. 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



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of

pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -

san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the



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:
Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

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.
Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

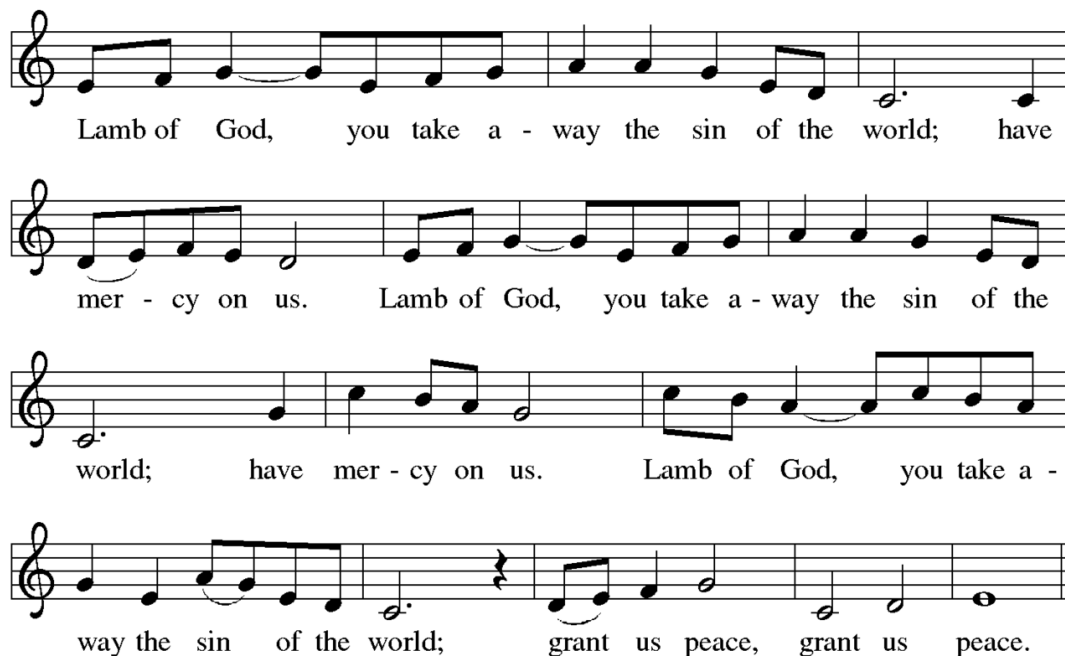
Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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

Speak to us, O Lord, in the breaking of the bread, and make us one with you.

LAMB OF GOD



THE COMMUNION

(The assembly may be seated)

Christ welcomes you to this Feast of the Baptized. Our communion distribution is at the rail using intinction as the method of distribution. Please come forward at the direction of the ushers, receive the bread from the Pastor or Assistant, then to the cup and dip the bread in either the wine (the chalice closest to the bread) or in the grape juice and proceed back to your seat by the side aisles. If you require gluten free bread, please indicate such to the Pastor/Assistant. Please Do Not Drink from the Cup. Small Children and infants are assisted by adults.

COMMUNION HYMN: (sung following distribution)

279

“O Little Town Of Bethlehem”

St. Louis

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

313

“O Lord, Now Let Your Servant” (verse 1)

Kurotane

O Lord, now let your servant depart in heav’nly peace,
For I have seen the glory of your redeeming grace:
A light to lead the nations unto your holy hill,
The glory of your people, your chosen Israel.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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.**

THE BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.
Amen.

THE SENDING HYMN

267

“Joy to the World”

Antioch

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Postlude on the Christmas Carol
“Deck The Halls”

Jean Pasquet

***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 Manor
 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 Philipe Pinto-son of
Sonia Pinto

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

- ◆ Michael McHone--friend of Dennis Govoni
- ◆ Caitlin Ledin--friend of Diane Perry
- ◆ Susan Berry--friend of the Bjorklunds
- ◆ Laurie Dolan Dellarocco-- aunt of Chelsea & Patrick Dolan
- ◆ Rick Venti--friend of the Thompsons
- ◆ 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 MacNevins
- ◆ 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 MacNevins
- ◆ 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



CHRISTMAS AT FIRST

Sunday, December 24
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 11 pm

Monday, December 25
The Nativity of Our Lord, Service at 9 am

Be Watchful & Cautious: Recently there have been a number of thefts on FELC property, several occurring in unlocked cars as well as an unattended pocketbook. Please lock your cars and keep valuables with you or if need be Pastor Jeff, Jim or Evelyn can lock them up for you. If you see something or someone suspicious please bring it to Jim's or Pastor's attention as soon as possible. If you are a victim of a theft please let Jim know as soon as possible so that he can work with the police department on this issue.

YELLOW CARDS

On your way into church this morning you were handed a Yellow card. This card is a way of 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

Reminder Commission/Committee chairpersons:

Annual reports are due to Jim Benson the week of December 26. Please e-mail to Jim at jbenson@firstevlutheran.org if at all possible and please use 12 point Times New Roman font. If you have any questions please speak to Jim.

This deadline is critical as the annual reports must be completed, printed and ready for distribution on Sunday, January 14, two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting on January 28.

2017 has been a big year, with lots of big events, lots happening--please make your reports reflect the true sense of this great Jubilee year.

MAY GOD BLESS YOUR WORK

Stewardship is...



...EVERYTHING we think, say, and do after we say “I believe”

**“God does not need your good works
but your neighbor does.**

Martin Luther



Fellowship & Fundraising Spaghetti &

Saturday, January 20
6 pm in the church vestry
Donation: \$10 adults \$5 under 12



Sacrament of Holy Baptism

Today we welcome into the fellowship of the church of Christ
Aubriana Faith Jahnke daughter of Caitlyn Jahnke through the
Sacrament of Holy Baptism

*We ask God's richest blessings be upon Aubriana,
her family and her sponsors, Annalise Olsen and Caroline Olsen*

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.