



Faith Lutheran Church

**We warmly greet members
and visitors in Jesus' name**

The Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Eve

4:15 p.m. Carols on the Carillon

4:30 p.m. Special Preservice Music

4:45 p.m. Candlelight Worship



In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

Welcome to Worship at Faith Lutheran Church

Gathered faithfully to love and serve God and all others

7750 Beneva Road, Sarasota, FL, 34238 | 941-924-4664 | www.faithlutheransrq.com

All the baptized are invited to the celebration of Holy Communion, trusting that Christ is present in this sacrament for the forgiveness of our sin and the strengthening of our faith.



The flowers on the altar today are given by
Jerry and Kaye Kempson
in celebration of their 64th wedding anniversary.



Presiding Ministers

Rev. Eric Olaf Olsen
Rev. Marianne Powrie
Rev. Larry Wright

Lector

Mark Nelson

Director of Music/Organist

David V. Patrick

Cantor

Jesse V. Martin

Vocals

Voices of Faith Choir and Voices of Faith Quartet

Greeters & Ushers

Jerry Cooper, Eloise Dettmer, Ashley Garlitz,
Dottie Gustavson, Grace Kaarre, Alf Kirkeeng,
Gail Lidinsky, Judy Millard, Mark Nelson, Jan Phillips,
Scott Rice, Joan Searles, Dave Wardach

Videographers

Kelly Ashlock, Greg Cooper, Kevin Fewell,
Andrea & Sergio Gamboa, Mark Greenwood

Altar Guild

Linda Fewell, Carole Inkrott, Judy Millard,
Mark Nelson, Jan Phillips, Steve & Peggy Ragan

Congregation Council

Scott Rice, president; Ann Greenwood, vice
president; Peggy Ragan, secretary; Anita Wooton,
treasurer; Jane Sanks, assistant treasurer;
Jerry Cooper; Gail Lidinsky; Mark Nelson;
Joan Searles; Lauren Wardach

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Pastor

Rev. Eric Olaf Olsen

Assistant to the Pastor

Rev. Larry Wright

Retired Pastors in Residence

Rev. John Hilficker

Rev. Marianne Powrie

Rev. John Spittal

Rev. David Wagner

Director of Family and Child Ministry

Deborah Dornemann

Lead Cantor/Music Librarian

Tom Tryon

Operations Administrator

Jenniffer Shaffer

Communications Administrator

Linda Fewell

Noted throughout the service - P: Presiding Minister L: Lector **C: Congregation**

Faith has a T-Coil-enabled hearing loop for those whose hearing aid(s) also are enabled.

This service is being live-streamed and recorded. We try to avoid filming congregants, but it may happen at times.

SPECIAL PRESERVICE MUSIC

Schlafe, Mein Liebster from <i>Christmas Oratorio</i>	J.S. Bach
David V. Patrick on Organ	
Christmastime	Michael W. Smith and Joanna Carlson Voices of Faith Choir
Carol Medley	Arranged by Mark Hayes David V. Patrick on Piano
Evergreen	Daniel Pinkham Voices of Faith Quartet

PRELUDE	Prelude on "Greensleeves"	Richard Purvis
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WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE STAND

PROCLAMATION OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

P: Many ages after God created the heavens and earth, when man and woman were formed in God's own image;

Long after the great flood, when God set the rainbow in the clouds as a sign of the covenant;

Twenty-one centuries from the time of Abraham and Sarah;

Thirteen centuries after Moses led God's people to freedom;

Eleven centuries from the time of Ruth and the Judges;

A thousand years from the anointing of David as king;

In the sixty-fifth week as Daniel's prophecy takes note;

In the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad;

The seven hundred and fifty-second year from the founding of the city of Rome;
the forty-second year of the reign of Octavian Augustus;

In the sixth age of the world, all earth being at peace, Jesus Christ, eternal God, Son of the eternal Father, willing to hallow the world by his coming in mercy, was born of the virgin Mary in Bethlehem of Judea.

Tonight is the eve of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, God made flesh.

We sing together

1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king;
 2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
 3 Hail the heav'n - born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righ - teous - ness!



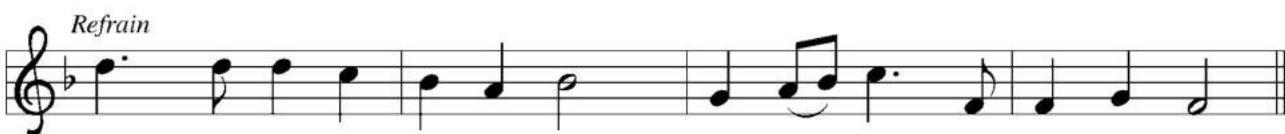
peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled."
 late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
 Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God - head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with an - gel - ic hosts pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!
 born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.



Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.

Music: MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–1847; arr. William H. Cummings, 1831–1915

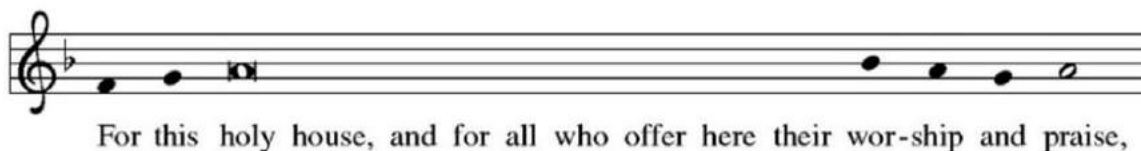
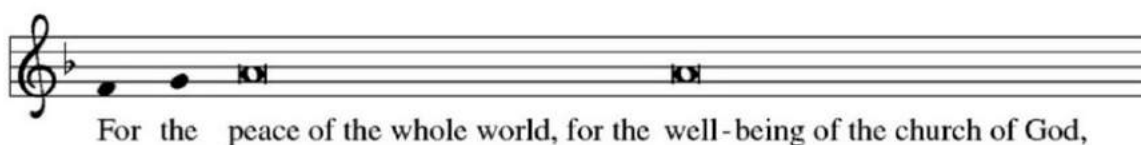
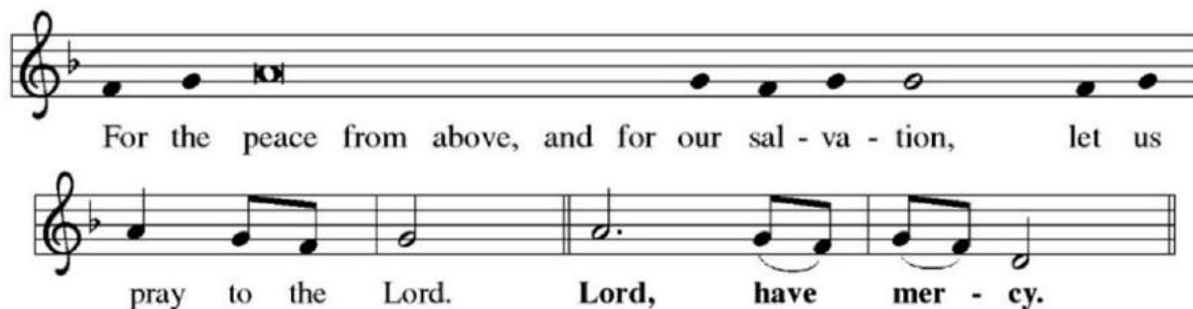
GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
 and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

KYRIE

We sing responsively



GLORIA

We sing together



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



1 Lord God, heav-en - ly King, al - mighty God and Fa - ther, we



wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



2 Lord Je - sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of



God, you take a-way the sin of the world: have mer-cy on us; you are



seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



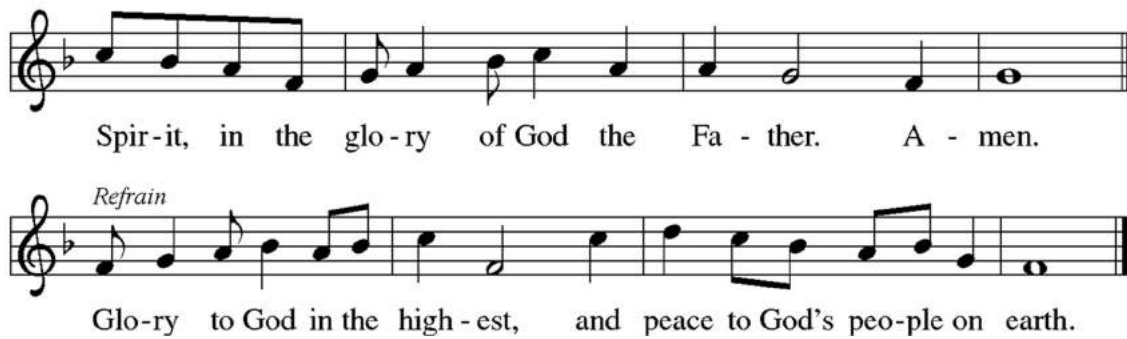
Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



3 For you a - lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly



PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you

P: 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.

C: Amen.

WE SIT

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7

L: A reading from Isaiah

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.

Word of God, word of life.

C: Thanks be to God.

A WORD FOR THE CHILDREN

SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14

L: A reading from Titus

- ¹¹The 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.

Word of God, word of life.

C: Thanks be to God.

WE STAND

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

We sing together



GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-20

P: The holy gospel according to Saint Luke.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

- P: ¹In 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 of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

WE SIT

SERMON

Rev. Eric Olaf Olsen

WE STAND



1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for his bed, the lit - tle Lord
 2 The cat - tle are low - ing; the ba - by a - wakes, but lit - tle Lord
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay close by me for -



Je - sus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked
 Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes. I love you, Lord Je - sus; look
 ev - er and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil - dren in



down where he lay, the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 down from the sky and stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.
 your ten - der care and fit us for heav - en, to live with you there.

Text: North American, 19th cent.

Music: AWAY IN A MANGER, James R. Murray, 1841–1905

NICENE CREED

P: Together, we confess our faith in the words of the Nicene Creed.

**C: 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;
 He ascended into heaven 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.**

WE SIT

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors and the world God loves.

A brief silence.

L: Glory to you, God, for the song of the angels, proclaiming to the world Christ's holy birth. Give your church a joyful song to sing, that we may bring the good news of peace and salvation to all people. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Glory to you, God, for the stars that shine in the depth of the night. Provoke awe in our hearts at the expansive mystery of the cosmos. Open us to find beauty in the clear darkness of night and in the first glimmers of dawn. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Glory to you, God, for the child born to us who establishes a kingdom of justice and righteousness. Break bonds of oppression and bring reconciliation to warring lands, especially Ukraine, Russia, Israel and Gaza. Establish peace from this time onward and forevermore. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Glory to you, God, for Mary's loving care. Lead us to tend to one another in time of need. Share the comfort of your presence with all people tonight who are alone or separated from loved ones due to estrangement, incarceration or illness, especially those on our prayer list and those we name before you now, aloud or in the silence of our hearts. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Glory to you, God, for the faithfulness of the shepherds in their vocation. Grant rest to any who feel exhausted from their work during this season: retail and restaurant workers; church musicians, administrative staff and clergy; organizers of charitable-giving events; and service workers doing essential tasks. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

L: Glory to you, God, for the multitude of the heavenly host. We rejoice in the zeal of all your saints who have witnessed the appearing of your grace, and who reveal to us your salvation for all. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

P: Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace.

C: Amen.

WE STAND

PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Feel free to greet your neighbors with a word of peace.

WE SIT

OFFERTORY



The offering is collected at this time. Online giving is available by scanning the QR Code printed here or at www.faithlutheransrq.com. We deeply appreciate your support of Faith Lutheran's Ministries.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

The Birthday of a King

W.H. Neidlinger

Arranged by Wayne Howorth

Voices of Faith Choir

Jesse V. Martin, solo

In the little village of Bethlehem there lay a child one day.
And the sky was bright with a holy light o'er the place where Jesus lay.
Alleluia! O how the angels sang, Alleluia! How it rang.
And the sky was bright with a holy light. 'Twas the birthday of the King.
'Twas a humble birthplace, but oh! How much God gave to us that day.
From the manger bed, what a path has led. What a perfect holy way.
Alleluia! O how the angels sang, Alleluia! How it rang.
And the sky was bright with a holy light. 'Twas the birthday of the King.

WE STAND

We sing together

Create in Me a Clean Heart

Offering Song

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right

The first system of the song features a treble and bass staff in B-flat major (two flats). The melody is primarily composed of chords, with some eighth-note movement in the treble staff. The lyrics are: "Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right".

spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your

The second system continues the melody. The lyrics are: "spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your".

pres-ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -

The third system continues the melody. The lyrics are: "pres-ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -".

store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion,

The fourth system continues the melody. The lyrics are: "store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion,".

and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

The fifth system concludes the song. The lyrics are: "and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.".

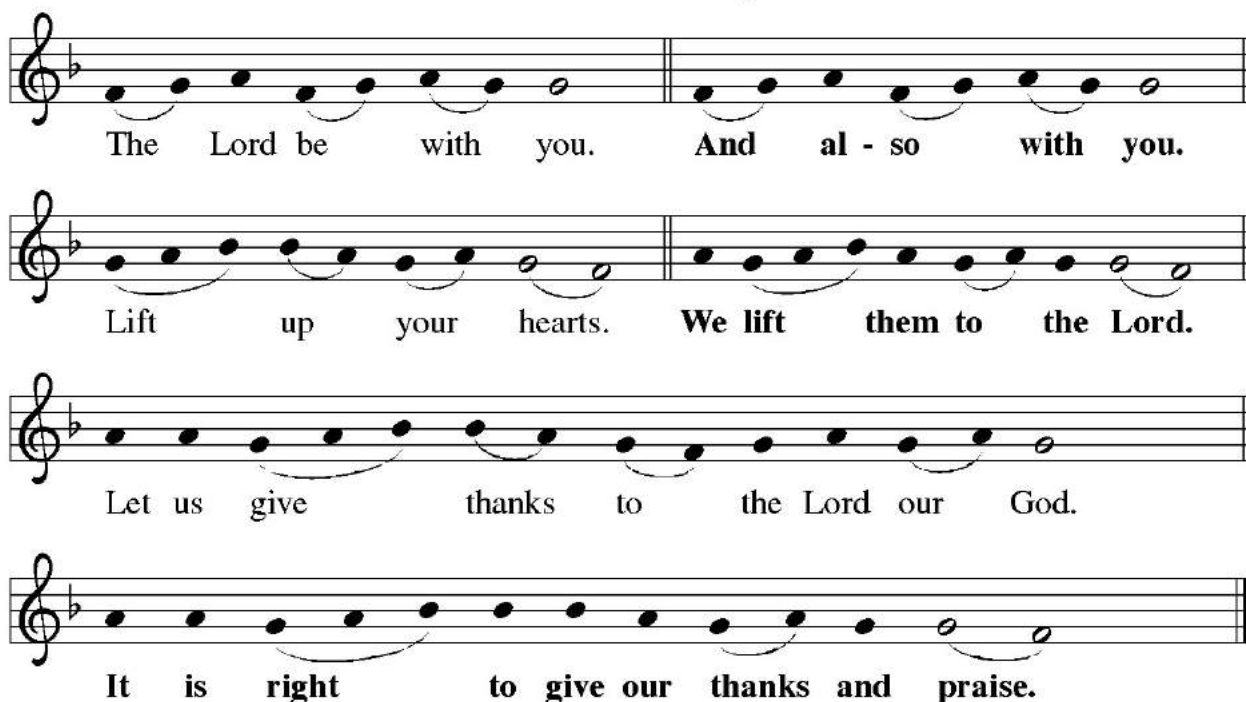
OFFERING PRAYER

P: Let us pray. God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.

C: Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

We sing responsively



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

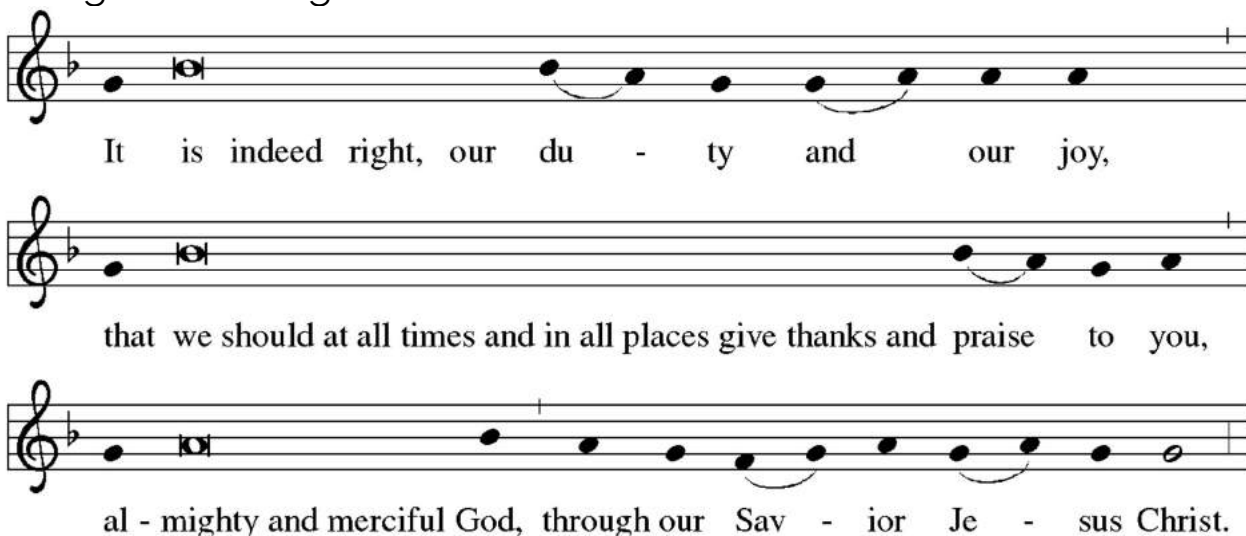
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

The presiding minister sings



It is indeed right, our du - ty and our joy,

that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you,

al - mighty and merciful God, through our Sav - ior Je - sus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Re - deem - er,

through whom you will also make all things new

in the day when he comes to judge the world in righ - teous-ness.

And so, with all the choirs of an - gels,

with the church on earth and the hosts of heav - en,

we praise your name and join their un - end - ing hymn:

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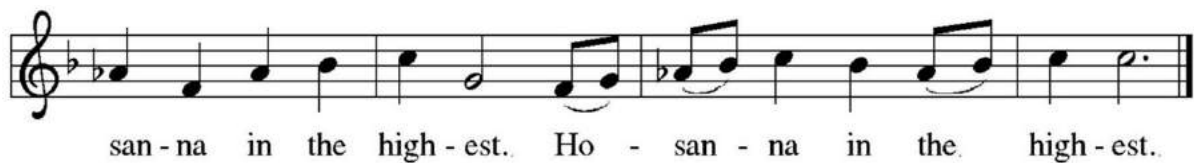
HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

We sing together

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. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P: You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God. You are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory. You so loved the world that you gave your only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life. We give you thanks for his coming into the world to fulfill for us your holy will and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

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

P: Remembering, therefore, his salutary command, his life-giving passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension, and the promise of his coming again, we give thanks to you, O Lord God Almighty, not as we ought but as we are able; we ask you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving and with your Word and Holy Spirit to bless us, your servants, and these your own gifts of bread and wine, so that we and all who share in the body and blood of Christ may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace, and, receiving the forgiveness of sin, may be formed to live as your holy people and be given our inheritance with all your saints. To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.

C: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

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

C: 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;

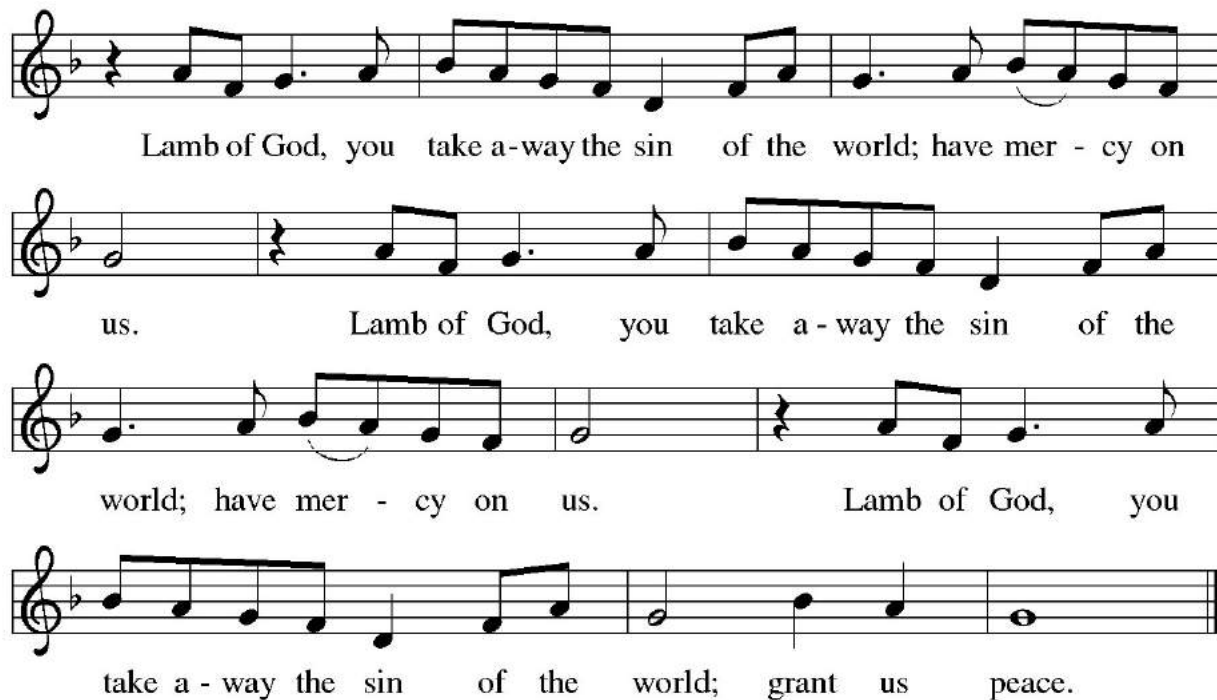
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Glory to God in the highest! Come to the table of peace.

COMMUNION SONG



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.

WE SIT

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you ... The blood of Christ, shed for you.

COMMUNION ANTHEM

Sleep Well Words/Music by Greg Gilpin
Voices of Faith Choir

Oh, dear, tiny child, sleep well. Dream for a little while. Sleep well. Kings and shepherds bow to you. 'Neath a starry sky, angels hover, O so near. Hear their lullaby.

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WE STAND

TABLE BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace.

C: Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P: Let us pray. God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

SERVICE OF LIGHT: *Tip unlit candles to receive the flame from ushers.*

HYMN

Silent Night, Holy Night!

ELW 281



	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

P: The light shines in the darkness.

C: But the darkness has not overcome it.

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. Gracious God, we hear the glad tidings of your love and light. The Word was made flesh and lived among us. Clothed in our humanity, Jesus Christ is not ashamed to call us sisters and brothers, and claims us as beloved children through our baptism. Help us to let our light so shine before others that they may see our good works and give glory to you through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: Amen.

BENEDICTION

P: May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ Child. Almighty God Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

SENDING SONG

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ELW 283

We sing together



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
 2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
 born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;
 sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
 Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!

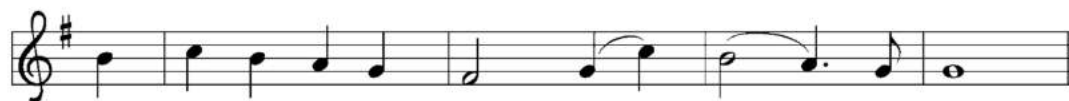


come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:
 Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
 Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

Refrain



Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,
 O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.
 O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

DISMISSAL

P: Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Pastorale on "Gesu Bambino"

Pietro A. Yon

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Poinsettias Honor Loved Ones, Give Glory to God



The poinsettias that grace the sanctuary were graciously given by:

- ✝ Loretta Braun, in loving memory of Roy and Diana Biehayn.
- ✝ Linda Burton, in loving memory of her husband, Tom Schneider.
- ✝ Dorcas (Dee) Burlingame, in loving memory of John Burlingame.
- ✝ Allan and Nancy Dandino, in loving memory of Joan Marie Dandino.
- ✝ Eloise Dettmer, in memory of loved ones.
- ✝ Carolyn DeZutter and Carrie, in loving memory of Chuck DeZutter.
- ✝ Pamela Enright, in memory of love from the Radesk family.
- ✝ Dorothy Gustavson, in loving memory of her husband, Raymond A. Gustavson; and her parents, Otto and Lilly Stoll.
- ✝ Joan Hirsch, in loving memory of Hal Hirsch.
- ✝ Grace Kaarre, in loving memory of her husband, Paul Kaarre.
- ✝ Jerry and Kaye Kempson, in loving memory of family members.
- ✝ Alf and Denise Kirkeeng, in loving memory of their parents.
- ✝ Karen and Jerry Kolschowsky, in honor of family.
- ✝ Mama Lehmann, AKA Susan Lehmann, in loving memory of Bill Lehmann; and in honor of their five sons.
- ✝ Karla Lewis and Michael Leonhardt, in memory of their beloved parents.
- ✝ Florence Marer, in loving memory of her stepdaughter, Carol; her husband, Walter; her parents, August and Margaret Ziegler; and in honor of her loved ones.
- ✝ Patricia McKee, with joyful gratitude for family and all Christmases past!
- ✝ John and Judy Millard, in memory of loved ones.
- ✝ Gail Murphy, in loving memory of her husband, Brian Murphy.
- ✝ Mark A. and Amy Nelson, in loving memory of Frank Nelson.
- ✝ Donna Pappalardo, in loving memory of her husband, Dennis Pappalardo; and her parents, Marion and Danny Ozsvath.
- ✝ Floyd Ryder, in loving memory of his wife, Beverly Ryder.
- ✝ Jane Sanks, in loving memory of her mother, Mildred Cole.
- ✝ Joan Searles, in loving memory of her parents, Clara and Christian Fick; and in honor of her five grandchildren.
- ✝ Pastor Larry and Ann Wright, in memory of loved ones.

If you donated one or more plants, you may take them home following the 7 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight worship service. Thank you!

Welcome, Visitors!

We are so glad you have joined us for worship. Please let us know that you visited by filling out a Visitor Card located on the table near the entrance. Kindly give the card to an usher or place it in the offering plate.



Adult Forum Takes a New Year's Eve Break

Adult Forum is on a holiday hiatus. On Sunday, Jan. 7, it will reconvene between the two worship services to focus on "Isreal in Bondage," in Volume 8, "God Heard Their Cry – Finding Freedom in the Midst of Life's Trials," in the "That the World May Know" video series.

Faith Sunday School Welcomes All Young People

Following the Children's Sermon during the 10:15 a.m. service, Director of Family and Child Ministry Deborah Dornemann and volunteers show young people to the classroom, where they learn about the gospel of the day through age-appropriate lessons and fun activities. The children rejoin the congregation for Holy Communion.



Coffee Hour: Volunteer to Set Up, Clean Up

Coffee hour is an important fellowship ministry at Faith that needs additional volunteers. All you have to do is put out snacks and clean up afterward. Please sign up on the sheet beside the coffee pot in fellowship hall. Questions? Contact Karen Naulty, knaulty@yahoo.com or 406-334-1063; or Denise Kirkeeng, kirkeengd@verizon.net or 941-468-6668.

Men of Faith Meet for Prayer Breakfast

All Men of Faith are invited to breakfast and prayer **at 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, Dec. 26, at Skillet's, 8635 S. Tamiami Trail.** Join in!



Women's Bible Study Takes a Two-Week Break

G.I.F.T.S (Growing in Faith Through Scripture) Women's Bible Study is on holiday break. It will reconvene **9:30-10:30 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 9, in the conference room** to resume study of "Be Still and Know — A Study of Rest and Refuge" by Deb Burma. Questions? Contact Peggy Ragan, 941-302-7722 or pragan12@aol.com. All women are welcome!

Prayer Group Gathers at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday

Join in prayer with Faith friends at **10:30 a.m. Wednesday in the chapel**. We pray for ourselves, loved ones, those in need, our community, our nation and our world. We conclude with Holy Communion. Can't attend in person? Join via Zoom: **Meeting ID 871 4720 3661, Passcode 041291**.



Bereavement Group Meets at 1 p.m. Wednesday



The Bereavement Group meets at **1 p.m. Wednesday in the chapel**. If you or a friend can use help bearing the burden of grief, this group is for you. There is strength and hope in community.

Stitch 'n' Chatter Meets Thursdays

Ladies and gents, grab your hooks and needles for Stitch 'n' Chatter, **1-2:30 p.m. Thursdays in room 212**. For info, contact Doris Anne Prieur-Lucia, 941-266-8101.



Confirmation Class Meets Thursday Evening

Confirmation Class meets at 7 p.m., Thursday via Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83054124705?pwd=jkQYOlazk519ubnglAeJxxa6USxWOA.1>,
Meeting ID 830 5412 4705, Passcode 688400.

Contact Pastor Eric with questions.

Faith Food Pantry Needs Your Donations and Volunteer Spirit

The Faith Food Pantry needs your help on Thursdays! Sign up on the sheet on the narthex table, via the online sign-up in the Faith Friday Update email, or contact Karen Naulty, 406-334-1063 or knaulty@yahoo.com.

Especially during the holidays, remember BOGO – Buy One Give One – for food and paper products (toilet paper, facial tissues, paper towels, feminine hygiene products, etc.), then leave them in the car so you don't forget to bring them to church. Place donations in the barrel in fellowship hall. Thanks!



Safety Committee Seeks Volunteers

Members of the safety committee review Faith's building and grounds for hazards that could cause tripping or slipping -- raised sidewalks, rugs that don't lay flat, wet floors, parking-lot bumpers with rebar that should be pounded back to ground level, etc. They report concerns to the property committee. Interested in joining the committee? Please contact the church office.



S.U.R.E. Team Advocates for Care, Funding to Help End Homelessness

Pastor Marianne, Pastor Eric and other members of the Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity (S.U.R.E.) affordable housing committee recently met to plan a presentation to the Sarasota County Commission in support of funding for the Community Services Information System, which helps ensure federal funding to aid in the fight to end homelessness.

S.U.R.E., a faith-based community organizing entity of which Faith is a covenant member, is focused on **affordable and accessible housing**, an issue with which neighbors who visit the Faith Food Pantry regularly struggle. While this problem might not affect every member of our parish, we are compelled by the gospel of Jesus Christ to care deeply about our neighbors' needs. **Interested in getting involved? Contact Pastor Eric.**

Pastor's Discretionary Fund Helps Needy

Pastor Eric often speaks with people about aid they might require. The Pastor's Discretionary fund allows him to assist financially, when appropriate. If you are able, please consider a donation to the fund so those in need can receive assistance.



December Stewardship Message

We should ask God to give us wisdom to comprehend the brevity of life.

A prayer of Moses:

For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night. Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom. Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.

(Psalm 90:4, 12, 14)



From Your Stewardship Ministry Team: Merry Christmas

No season of the year is quite like Christmas. Most of us have wonderful memories of happy family gatherings, the smell of fresh-baked cookies, the Christmas tree, the church decorated with evergreens and poinsettias, and wonderful music of the season. As a

contemporary musical proclaims, "It's the most wonderful time of the year!"

That's especially true for those of us who call ourselves "Christians." We get our name from the Savior born in Bethlehem. Believers in that Savior were first called "Christians" or "Christ's Ones" at Antioch. Through faith in Jesus Christ, we are "Christ's Ones." We belong to him for time and for eternity. We are "Christ's Ones" because the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world (1 John 4:14).

That's why we give gifts at Christmas. When we give gifts, we commemorate the greatest gift of all, the gift of Jesus Christ to be our Savior. And that's also why we give gifts to the Lord. Not because "poor God" needs our help to pay the bills. Not because it is Jesus' birthday, so we should give the guest of honor a present. None of that is what motivates us in our giving. We give out of hearts of gratitude for the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ. We give out of hearts of love because Christ has redeemed us and given us a new name, that of Christians. We give in response to God's love for us, knowing all that we have belongs to God.

As the calendar year draws to a close, the needs here at Faith Lutheran are great, but as we join together in a sacrifice of praise to God through a special Christmas offering, the needs can be met — and more. Thanks for prayerfully considering your response to God's love for you, and for giving as God enables and leads in your life. May the joy of the Christ Child who became our Savior be yours.

Consider Donating Altar Flowers



Please consider donating altar flowers in honor of a special occasion, in memory of a loved one or to glorify God. The cost is \$30 for one vase or \$60 for two. Make checks payable to Faith Lutheran Church with "altar flowers" in the memo line. Check the altar flowers donation board in fellowship hall to see if your desired date is available. If not, please choose an alternate date. **The next open date is Sunday, Jan. 28.**

When you purchase altar flowers, your name and dedication will be published in the bulletin on your selected Sunday. To make a dedication:

- At church, complete an Altar Flowers envelope with your payment, and place it in the offering plate. Indicate your wish to keep or donate the flowers on the donation board in fellowship hall.
- By mail, send payment with a note indicating your desired date and dedication, and if you want to keep the flowers or donate them.
- By email or phone, contact the church office with your desired date and dedication, and whether you want to keep or donate the flowers. Pay through the Altar Flowers option on the Online Giving page of the Faith website, www.faithlutheransrq.com.

If you have specific requests about who or what facility should receive your donated flowers, contact Judi Melander, judimelander629@gmail.com or 941-927-2502.

Year-to-Date Giving Reports Will Be Available in Early January

Calendar year-to-date giving reports will be available during the first week of January 2024. The reports will be:

- Emailed to those with a valid opted-in email address on file on or before Jan. 5.
- Sent via U.S. Mail to the address on file for those without email addresses or those who have opted out of using email communication.



Paper copies will be provided on request.

Giving reports are based on the calendar year for tax records and reporting. But please be aware that Faith Lutheran's fiscal year is March 1-February. As a result, your records show:

- January and February giving in the fund year 2023.
- March through December giving in the fund year 2024.

If you have questions, need your record sooner, or if your contact information has changed, please contact the church office, 941-924-4664 or officeadmin@faithlutheransrq.com; or Patty McKee, 941-921-3709 or financialsecretary@faithlutheransrq.com.

Helpful Tips Provide Guidance as You Contemplate Year-End Contributions to Faith

As we prayerfully and joyfully await the coming of our Savior, the calendar year and the tax year are drawing to a close, so it's time to prepare. Here's helpful information:

- You will receive year-end giving statements from Faith by Jan. 6 (see story on previous page).
- To check the status of your 2023 pledge or to request an early copy of your giving statement, contact Financial Secretary Patty McKee, 941-921-3709 or financialsecretary@faithlutheransrq.com.



Thank offerings to Faith that are made before year-end qualify for an income tax deduction. If you are contemplating a year-end gift, you can:

- **Write a check or give electronically via the Online Giving page on the Faith website, faithlutheransrq.com/onlinegiving.** Donations of record qualify if you itemize.
- **Donate appreciated securities** that you have owned for more than one year, thus eliminating tax on the appreciation. Consult with your tax advisor, and keep in mind that the gift date is the date on which the securities enter Faith's account.
- **Open a Donor Advised Fund (DAF) or contribute through your existing DAF.** You can request a grant from your DAF to support Faith or any of Faith's mission funds.
- **Make a gift from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA).** If you are 70 1/2 or older, you can transfer funds directly to Faith to eliminate taxes on any gift up to \$100,000. If you must make required minimum distributions, this is a great way to meet all or part of that obligation.

NOTE: 2024 giving envelopes are scheduled for delivery before the end of December. They will be available in the narthex as soon as they are available.

About Faith Lutheran: Gathered faithfully to love and serve God and all others.

Our Vision: To be an ELCA congregation that displays the true, unending love of Christ. To promote peace, social justice and grace in all we do.

The ELCA: Faith Lutheran Church is part of the greater Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). We are ecumenical, saved by grace and love Jesus.

Subscribe to Receive the Latest News and Updates: To receive the latest news and updates from Faith Lutheran, subscribe to our weekly Friday Update at www.faithlutheransrq.com or email communications@faithlutheransrq.com.



Prayer List

Please remember in your prayers this week:



Marsha Anderson, sister of Gail Murphy
Tim Anderson, son-in-law of Dick and Jetty Zarfes
Anna Bancroft, 6-year-old
friend of Alyene Weaver
Chuck Banta
Sean Brett, son of Alyene Weaver
Sandra Brinker
Charles Budreau
Jason Byrne, friend of Anita Wooton
Elise Carmona
Evelyn Conlon
Jordan Demers, cousin of Hannah Boyd
Eloise Dettmer
Philomena Dimichelle, friend of Conrad Zabor
Ken Dixon
Ryan and Valerie Donahue
Elizabeth Farmer
Judy & Robert Ferguson
Carolyn & Marty Friedman,
friends of Marlene Radesk
John Gallo, friend of April Shettler
Andrea Gamboa
Amanda Gerber,
daughter of Sandy Gerber
Elaine Graham
Paula Haas, friend of Eloise Dettmer
Jon Hale
Alyssa Hansen, cousin of Lisa Olsen
Jeff Hansen, nephew of Joan Searles
Patricia Head, mother of Wayne Head
Michael Helpin, friend of Marlene Radesk
Christiana Holmes
Kevin Hooks, son-in-law of
Anita and Jon Wooton
Jesus & Rita Jimenez
Alf Kirkeeng

Lillian Lapenckas
Jacqueline Laurent,
friend of Margaret Borrows
Lois Light
Shirley Manning, friend of Margaret Borrows
Paul & Debby Maresch
Vincenzo Mariani, friend of Conrad Zabor
Alexis Martincek, 13-year-old
friend of Heather Stuebe
Kathleen McBride
Judi Melander
Jeremy & Yvonne Mullins
Beverly Novak, cousin of Patty McKee
Judy Osborn, sister of Peggy Ragan
James & Virginia Pease
Fran Perkins
Wally Pina
Kristen Pizan
Marlene Radesk
Fritz Rappold
Gabriel Rockwell
Ted and Carol Rodi
Floyd Ryder
Phillip Schlueter
Rev. John Spittal
Dianne Stoll, friend of Dorothy Gustavson
Cathy Stubenvoll
John Stuemke, brother of Terry Copper
Ron and Leigh Tarrantino
Werner Thomsen
Colette Thornbloom
David Turnbull
Aylene Weaver
Nancy Wilborn
Jon Wooton

- **Contact officeadmin@faithlutheransrq.com** if you or someone you know would appreciate a **communion visit, hospital or home visit, to be contacted or to receive a card in the mail.**
- **Contact communications@faithlutheransrq.com** if you have an **addition to the Prayer List.** Please send updates when prayers are answered.

Worship and Service Calendar

Sunday, Dec. 17

Online views	62
8 a.m. in person	29
10:15 a.m. in person	115

Next Sunday, Dec. 31

No 8 a.m. service

10:15 a.m. Service

First Reading

Isaiah 61:10–62:3
Clothed in garments of salvation

Psalmody

Psalm 148
The splendor of the Lord is over earth and
heaven (*Ps. 148:13*)

Second Reading

Galatians 4:4-7
Children and heirs of God

Gospel

Luke 2:22-40
The presentation of the child

This Week at Faith

Monday, Dec. 25

Merry Christmas! Church Office Closed

Tuesday, Dec. 26

- 8:30 a.m. Men of Faith Prayer Breakfast,
Skilletts, 8535 S. Tamiami Trail
- 9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study,
conference room
- 6 p.m. Diversity Voices of Sarasota,
sanctuary

Wednesday, Dec. 27

- 10:30 a.m. Prayer Group, chapel
- 1 p.m. Bereavement Group, chapel

Thursday, Dec. 28

- 9 a.m. Receive and Prep Food Delivery,
food pantry
- 1 p.m. Stitch 'n' Chatter, room 212
- 4:30 p.m. Food Pantry Prep
- 5 p.m. Food Pantry Open
- 6 p.m. Jazzercise, gym
- 7 p.m. Confirmation, Zoom

Friday, Dec. 29

- 8:30 a.m. Jazzercise, gym

Saturday, Dec. 30

- 8:30 a.m. Jazzercise, gym
- 9 a.m. Diakonia, conference room

Sunday, Dec. 31

- 10:25 a.m. Sunday School, classroom