**Worship Plan for Sunday, December 15, 2024** **\* Third Sunday of Advent**

**Introduction to the day**

Christ’s presence in our midst in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the God in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of one “more powerful” than John, even with a winnowing fork in hand, is good news—and cause for exultation—for us who are being saved. Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent.

**GOSPEL MESSAGE: Together Rooted in Christ**

The church’s preachers and teachers often distinguish between John’s baptism and our own baptism into Christ. But perhaps we have sometimes gone too far in supposing they are all that different. Both begin with repentance. Both orient us toward the good news that God forgives our sins and claims us as beloved children. Both call us to “grow in faith, love, and obedience to the will of God” (ELW, p. 227.)

The grace and love of God lavished on us in baptism are not the result of simple mechanics whereby we receive forgiveness because we’ve pressed the right buttons on the salvation machine. Instead, we live into God’s forgiveness in deeply transformative and organic ways, like trees bearing good fruit. That John’s baptism is, at its heart, about genuine transformation and living in a new way shaped by God’s grace is apparent from the questions people ask him. Called to bear fruits worthy of repentance, they want to know: “What then should we do?” (Luke 3:10).

Advent offers us a wonderful chance to renew the gift of baptism by asking ourselves important questions about our direction in life and our relationships with others. How are you nurturing your prayer and worship life? What are you learning about your relationship with God? How are you growing in faith? How are you caring for others and the world God made? What help or support might you need on your spiritual journey that you’re not currently receiving?

John turned people’s hearts to God by reorienting them to their community. He encouraged them to share life together by uplifting one another, performing mutual acts of kindness, and nurturing a spirit of thanksgiving. In this season full of expectation, we look to Jesus’ coming among us at the same time as we remember that we ourselves have been reborn children of God. In baptism, we have been welcomed into a community of care and support, together rooted in Christ, bearing good fruit, and proclaiming God’s good news to all the world.

**Processional**

**AM: Welcome**

Good morning! It's wonderful to see all of you this morning! Welcome to Faith Lutheran Church, where grace and love abound and the Holy Spirit uplifts and inspires us. A special welcome to those joining us on line, to those of you who are here for the first time, and to our guest pastor, Glen Egertson. Exciting things are happening here during our search for a permanent pastor, and everyone is encouraged to participate fully, whether you are a first-time visitor, or have been around for a while.

**P: Gathering**

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

**P: 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.**

This is the day that the Lord has made,

**let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

**Advent Litany**

**P:** At every beginning there is a yearning for the one who is coming. O Emmanuel,

**A: Wake us up to your coming.**

**AM:** We gather together to expect the unexpected and imagine the unimaginable. O Emmanuel,

**A: Wake us up to your coming.**

**P:** We wait for the day when God will recycle tanks into tractors and transform minefields into soccer fields. O Emmanuel,

**A: Wake us up to your coming.**

**AM:** We stay awake by telling stories that offer a glimmer of a future and agitate dormant hope within us. O Emmanuel,

**A: Wake us up to your coming.**

**P:** Jesus, we welcome your presence now with the lighting of this candle, whose flame brings warmth to winter and fills this place with the glow of hope.

**Amen.**

**Advent Wreath Lighting**

**LIGHTING SONG: *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (ELW 257, vs. 5, 6)**

**AM: ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The altar flowers were provided by the Bosingers wishing everyone very blessed holidays, and by the Varsobias celebrating Berenice's birthday.

It’s that time again! Order forms for poinsettias to decorate our sanctuary are now in your mailbox! Orders must be in by December 24th!

This Wednesday, the 18th will be the last Advent worship and soup supper of this season! Come over at 5:00 and be fed in more ways than one!

We're all running out of time! The Giving Tree will only be until next Sunday, the 22nd...1 more week! All gift cards will be donated to the Menifee Valley Community Cupboard again this year for Christmas!

New Assistive Listening Devices are now available for those who need/want extra help hearing the worship service.  See the Sound Tech at the back table or an Usher for help.

For the month of December, we are collecting canned soup and chili, grocery bags, and empty egg cartons for the Community Cupboard. In November we collected 90 Thanksgiving sides. So far, we have collected 9 cans of soup and 1 can of chili. It’s getting cold out there so let’s help spread some warmth in our community! Please place donations in the wire basket in the foyer.

The Flower Chart for 2025 is now up just outside Lynn’s office. Feel free to stop by and sign up for as many weeks as you’d like!

For more information and a complete monthly calendar, contact the church office.

**P: Silence**

Let us take a moment of silence to quiet our hearts and minds and prepare for worship.

**AM: Please turn to hymn 239**

Please stand as you are willing and able.

**Gathering Song:*Hark, the Glad Sound!* (ELW 239)**

**P: Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

**Amen.**

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

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

Most merciful God,

**we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.**

**Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

**P: Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

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

**Amen.**

**Children's Chat**

**P: Word**

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

**Lector: First Reading:** Zephaniah 3:14-20

### 14 Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! 15 The Lord has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. 16 On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. 17 The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing 18 as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. 19 I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. 20 At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**AM: Psalmody:** Isaiah 12:2-6

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

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

4 And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the Lord, call on God’s name; make known the deeds of the Lord among the nations; proclaim that this name is exalted.

5 **Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth.**

6 Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

Amen.

**Lector: Second Reading:** Philippians 4:4-7

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

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation (ELW p. 151)**

**Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.**

***Please stand for the gospel***

**P: Gospel:** Luke 3:7-18

The holy gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

7 John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. 9 Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.” 10 And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” 11 In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” 12 Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” 13 He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” 14 Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.” 15 As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, 16 John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.” 18 So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon**

**AM: Please turn to hymn 249**

Please stand as you are willing and able.

**Hymn of the Day:*On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry* (ELW 249)**

**AM: Apostle's Creed**

We continue as we confess our faith using the words of the Apostle's Creed.

**Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**Pastor and Assisting Minister: Prayers of Intercession**

As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God’s presence.

God who reforms, fill your church with courage to do your will. Empower your people in taking risks that bear fruit. Raise up leaders who will proclaim the good news. Lord, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

God who creates, you hold in balance diverse ecosystems. Encourage efforts to protect wild lands from devastation. Care for animals and people in the path of destructive fires, storms, and other disasters. Lord, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

God who leads, this world cries out for true justice. Guide legislatures, judges, and lawyers in actions steeped in love and restoration. Increase the desire to advocate for all who are confronted with discrimination and oppression based on race, gender, sexuality, class, or age. Lord, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

God who embraces, help us notice the places where your people are hurting or sick. We pray especially forKiki; Lynn Bennett; Arnette Calkins; Vicki Crow; Reba Dyer; the family and friends of Ruth Ditsch; Yvonne Fields; Doris Hays; Leah Henroid; Sarge Hunter; Patricia Lee; Pat Loughboro; Patsy Loughboro; Donna McCain; Jean Miles; Sandra Miller; Thordis Moe; Carol Morris; Michael Myers; Esther Neumen; Marilyn Rieti; Dee Seel; Amy Sinclair; Joyce Stromberg; Diana Ward; the homebound; the emergency responders; and those grieving and anticipating surgery or tests. At this time, we also pray for those we name aloud or silently in our hearts. Show your compassion and remember your people in love. Lord, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

God who abides, you dwell among the people of this congregation. Deepen our relationships with one another, and make us aware of the diverse talents and gifts present here. Lord, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

God who consoles, we thank you for the time we have had with loved ones who have died, especially Ruth Ditsch. Comfort us with the promise of everlasting life in you. Lord, in your mercy,

**receive our prayer.**

Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

**P: Peace**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**P: Offering**

This week we highlight the ministry of the Church Council, the governing body of Faith Lutheran. They assure that the constitution of our congregation is followed and updated when necessary. They also oversee staffing, general activities of the various committees, teams, special ministries and finances of the church.  They can approve or disapprove certain expenditures. It is an honor and privilege to be invited to be nominated and elected to serve on the council. Please consider helping in this necessary and vital ministry. A multitude of thanks to those who have and are currently serving on the Church Council. We are grateful for your generous gifts of time and dedicated service.

**AM: 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.**

***Please feel free to either listen to our musical offering or sing along***

**Musical Offering: *How Great is our God (*CHRIS TOMLIN)**

**P: Great Thanksgiving**

**Dialogue (ELW p. 152)**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**P: Preface (ELW p. 153)**

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 (all sing) (ELW p. 153)**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of pow’r and might: Heav’n and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

**P: 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.**

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.**

**P: INSTRUCTION FOR COMMUNION**

As you are comfortable, you are invited to come forward to receive communion. All of God’s children are welcome to Christ’s table.

Gather at the altar rail to receive the communion elements or if you wish to receive a blessing, please cross your arms over your chest. You may commune yourself once you’ve received the communion elements. Please commune the bread first, turn over the vessel and then carefully open the grape juice. A gluten-free option is available upon request. Please deposit empty cups in the provided baskets on your way back to your seat.

If you would like communion brought to you at your seat, indicate by raising your hand for the Assisting Minister to see and they will bring communion to you.

**P: Invitation to Communion**

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

**During Distribution: *Christ, Be Our Light* (ELW 715)**

***Eat This Bread: Jesus Christ, Bread of Life* (ELW 472)**

**P: Communion**

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

**AM: 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.**

**P: 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.**

**P: Please turn to hymn 253**

Please stand as you are willing and able.

**Sending Song:*He Came Down* (ELW 253)**

**AM: Dismissal**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**AM: Invitation**

The Church Council Members invite guests and visitors to come and meet us in the narthex as you exit so that we can meet and welcome you. All are welcome to join us in the Fellowship Hall for cookies, coffee and conversation.

**THIS WEEK AT FAITH**

Tuesday, the 17th: 4 Plus 1 Group meets at 10:00; the Fellowship Team meets at 2:00

Wednesday, the 18th: Finance Team meets at 12:00; Advent Worship & Soup Supper begins at 5:00; Menifee Reads! meets at 7:00

Thursday, the 19th: Snip 'N Stitch meets at 9:00; WELCA Bible Study meets at 6:00pm

Friday, the 20th: the Stewardship Team meets at 10:00; Al-Anon meets at 10:30; the Transition Team meets at 1:00

Sunday, the 22nd: Worship begins at 9:30 with Pr. Shane

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