**Worship Plan for Friday, December 24, 2021**

Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Eve

**Introduction to the day**

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.

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

**Greeting**

Welcome to worship tonight, we are glad to have you with our Faith Lutheran Church community. I'm Pr. John Barton and I will be leading our service tonight. This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!

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.**

**NOTE: If you did not grab communion on your way in or bring it with you, please do go back to the narthex entrance and collect enough for your whole household.**

**Call to Worship**

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

**All: 0, come let us adore him.**

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

**All: 0, come let us adore him.**

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

**All: 0, come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

L:We have beheld Christ’s glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father

**All: 0, come let us adore him.**

L:For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

**All: 0, come let us adore him.**

L:In him was life and the life was the light of all people.

**All: 0, come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

**And now please turn to page 283**

Please stand as you are willing and able.

**Processional:*O Come, All Ye Faithful* (ELW 283)**

**Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

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

**Amen.**

**Word**

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

**First Reading:** Isaiah 9:2-7

2The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. 3You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. 4For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. 5For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. 6For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**And now please turn to page 270**

Please stand as you are willing and able.

**Carol:*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* (ELW 270)**

**Second Reading:** Titus 2:11-14

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 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. **Thanks be to God.**

**Carol:*I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve: Jeg er så glad hver julekveld* (ELW 271)**

**Gospel:** Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

The holy gospel according to Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

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!”

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

**Sermon**

**Hymn of the Day:*Away in a Manger* (ELW 277)**

**Christmas Eve Prayer**

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

**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.**

**Prayers of Intercession**

Joining our voices with the heavenly host and Christians throughout time and space, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

Love proclaims that a Savior has been born to us! Inspire your church throughout the world to proclaim the good news of Jesus’ birth to all who seek salvation, hope, and new life. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Love whispers to a weary world that the time for rest and restoration has come. Maintain healthy cycles of wake and sleep for all creatures. Where light pollution disrupts natural rhythms, encourage new practices. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Love cries to a warring world that the time for peace is at hand. Direct those in power who make decisions on behalf of others, that they nurture and sustain all that is healthy, good, and holy. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Love sings through the wails of a newborn baby. Respond to all who cry out in pain, despair, or need this night (especially). Bring comfort to those for whom separation, grief, or loss makes the Christmas season especially difficult. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Love murmurs words of comfort to a newborn child and exhausted parents. Bless new and expectant parents or caregivers, especially those who are alone or afraid this night. Pour out your love upon families of every kind. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

God’s ever-present love is proclaimed through the faithful who came before us. We give you thanks for Mary, John the baptizer, Elizabeth his mother, Joseph the dreamer, and all who point toward your love (especially). Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Rejoicing in your Word made flesh among us, we commend these prayers to you, confident of your grace and love made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**Amen.**

**Prayer List**

Susan Aldrich; Gloria Anderson; Arnette Calkins; Luca Candela; Julie Chevraux; Robin Connelly; Daniel Conner; Vicki Crow; Sally Duncan; Roger and Carole Erickson; Joni Gray; Kally Homchick; Marlon Jay; Francis Key; Loni Knowles; Sandra Miller; Carol Morris; Pat Myers; Sheila Neal; Ron Neumen; Tina Peteroski and family; Andrew Quinn; Edy Rose; JoAnne Schriock; Dee Seel; Sharon Seims; Jan Simon; Amy Sinclair; the Van Oort family; Earlean Wagner; Diana Ward; Bernie Weston; Mary Yturralde; the homebound; the Emergency responders; and those grieving and anticipating surgery/tests. We especially pray for those affected by COVID-19 and those who have lost loved ones. At this time we also pray for those we name aloud or silently in our hearts.

If you would like your name added to our prayer list, please contact the church office.

**Peace**

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

**Offering**

At this time, we remember that the giving of our offering is an authentic part of worship.

This month we are highlighting the ministry of Altar Guild, a vital ministry whose members fly under the radar. Behind the scenes, Altar guild members set the table and the worship space. Every Saturday a team of two persons meet at the church to set the table and the worship space.

...Your offering, gathered in praise of God, helps this ministry by...

Thank you so much for all the ways you give and help to make the ministries of this church possible!

**Offering Prayer**

Let us pray.

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

**INSTRUCTION FOR COMMUNION**

Now, I invite you to gather bread and drink for communion and share with anyone in your household.

As a note, it helps to take the wafer off first then the juice separately afterward.

Gathering at Christ's table, we trust in God's all-reaching power and grace to provide each one of us the complete and total sacrament in these extraordinary times.

**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.**

**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; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. 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 (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.**

**Thanksgiving at the Table (ELW p. 153)**

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.**

**Lord’s Prayer**

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

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

**Invitation to Communion**

Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

**Communion**

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

**Prayer after Communion**

Let us pray.

Radiant God, with our eyes we have seen your salvation, and in this meal we have feasted on your grace. May your Word take flesh in us, that we may be your holy people, revealing your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**Candle Lighting**

Instructions: Soon we will be dimming the lights and lighting our candles. Please hold your lit candle upright and let your neighbor light their candle from yours. Parents, please supervise children for safety.

Dim lights

**CANDLELIGHT PRAYER**

P.       Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light of Jesus Christ.  Continue to shine your light on us so that we may walk in the light of Jesus’ presence forever.  We need you to shine in the dark corners of our world.  Come to us and shine in our lives that we may reflect your love on earth.  In Jesus’ name we pray.

**All:      Amen**

**Candle Light Carol: *Silent Night, Holy Night! Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!* (ELW 281)**

**Benediction and Candle Extinguishing**

P.         The faith of Joseph, the wonder of Mary, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the Shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ Child abide with you always.

**All:      Amen**

(Please extinguish your candles)

**Sending Song:*Joy to the World* (ELW 267)**

**Blessing**

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

**Amen.**

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

**Amen.**

The God of all grace ☩ bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

**Dismissal**

Go in peace. Share the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

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