

Sunday, December 1, 2024
First Sunday in Advent:
God's Grace Is for Us



Faith Lutheran Church

Mission Statement

*"Building a welcoming, nurturing faith community that
is guided by Jesus and shares the Gospel."*

MINISTERS

SENIOR PASTOR

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Every Member

Derek Harkins

Sylvia Bull

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ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS & WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

GATHERING HYMN: ELW 248 "People, Look East" *

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH - ELW 239, Hark the Glad Sound (v. 1) *

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

KYRIE: ELW 257 "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" (v. 1 and 2) *

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Word: God speaks to us through scripture reading, preaching and song.

READINGS: see next page

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: "I Wonder as I Wander"

GOSPEL READING: see next page

CHILDREN'S SERMON & SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: ELW 243 "Lost in the Night" *

NICENE CREED

SHARING OF THE PEACE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

OFFERING MOMENT & PRAYER

Meal: God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

HOLY COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMNS:

LAMB OF GOD: ELW Setting 8 (pg 191) *

ELW 240 "Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah" *

ELW 244 "Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers" *

Sending: God blesses us and sends us into the world to love and serve our neighbors.

BLESSING

SENDING HYMN: ELW 242 "Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn"*

DISMISSAL

**ELW = Red Hymnal; ACS = Purple Hymnal*

READING(S)

First Reading: *Jeremiah 33:14-16*

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness."

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

Second Reading: *1 Thessalonians 3:9-13*

How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith.

Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

Gospel Reading: *John 18:33-37*

The Holy Gospel according to John, the 18th Chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord!**

[Jesus said:] "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and

drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

The Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ!**

DWELLING IN THE WORD

- What words or phrases catch your attention in the reading(s)? What surprises you?
- What questions do you have?
- What might God be saying to you, or to us as a community, through the reading(s)?

WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

Monday - Prayer

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. You, O God, work through grace-filled beginnings. Open our eyes to your truth and lead us to your grace. In all things, help us to know that your grace is for us, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Tuesday - Connections with the Liturgy

In the Lord’s Prayer, we ask God to “save us from the time of trial.” It is precisely the dangers and terrors of the eschatological end to which this petition refers. While the historic translation of the prayer uses “temptation,” a 1988 translation more accurately conveys the meaning of the prayer ascribed to Jesus. Most Christians will indeed experience “a time of trial.”

Wednesday - Let the Children Come

Happy New (Church) Year! Year C—the year of Luke—will find Jesus dining and teaching at tables more than in any other gospel. Begin this Advent season by including the children in your life in the process of preparing a table. Set it with a blue tablecloth and a simple Advent wreath. Talk about how Advent is a season of waiting and preparation, much as we take care preparing our tables for a special guest. You could even invite children to pray at the table: “Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest!”

Thursday - Connections with Creation

Could the connections with creation be more obvious in this week's gospel? Anticipation for the arrival of Christ, through whom the universe came into being, calls forth cosmic signs and crashing seas. Jeremiah speaks of the promised arrival of a savior like a shoot from a stump, a once-chopped tree with an unstoppable determination for life. One natural image that we often associate with Advent is conspicuously absent this week, namely pregnancy. Before Mary and her faithfulness take center stage, consider the ways that the earth itself prepares for God's arrival.

Friday - Reflection on the Gospel Reading

The reading calls us to join the Christians of the late first century, wishing for the end of all evil and sorrow and for the coming of the joyous reign of Christ. Christians believe that Christ has already come, is coming this morning in word and sacrament, and will come at the end of all things. Like a tree of life, the fig tree is already full of leaves.

Saturday - A Hymn for the Day

An appropriate hymn for this Sunday is "Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding" (ELW 246). This anonymous medieval Latin hymn is filled with biblical references. Stanza 3 includes the prayer for forgiveness, since we are not blameless, as Paul had hoped. Even if the end of things is tumultuous, God comes to us in mercy. The hymn does a good job of describing what it is that Christians await at Christmas.



CHURCH
Announcements

Thank you for your offering of **\$4,351.52** for the week of **November 24th!**

Altar Flowers for this week are provided by Andi Johnson, in honor of Camille Grothier. **Thank you!**

The **December/January newsletter** is now online and in the mail! You can pick up a paper copy beside the Avenue C door.

Join us on **Wednesday, Dec 4 from 10:30am to 3pm** for a **transformative group approach to Bible study led by U.S. Jones (friend of Rabbi Noah!)** Soup lunch is provided. We will break for Advent mid-week worship at 12pm.

Advent is here! **Starting Wednesday, December 4th**, we will be offering a **12pm Worship service, with Soup Lunch at 11:15**, along with our 7pm Worship service. We are also looking for **ushers for our 12pm services**, sign-ups can be found in the Gathering Place with our Christmas sign-ups. Please join us as we prepare for the Christmas season!

An informational session about our 2025 Congregational Trip to Newland, NC to participate in a disaster response mission camp will be held on **Wednesday, December 4 at 7:45pm**. Anyone entering 9th grade through adult is welcome to join us for this time of serving others and growing in faith!

Come to our next **All Comers' Choir Rehearsal on Wednesday, December 4th, at 6:30pm** All singers are invited to come to one rehearsal, and then perform a piece for the prelude of the 7pm service that day.

Please join us for our **Congregational Meeting on Sunday, Dec 8th at 9:45am**. This is a great opportunity to reflect on the past year, and plan for the future! We will also be voting on the 2025 budget, and a few spots in our Compass Group and Executive Committee.

Message: Pastor Derek Harkins

Liturgy: Pastor Sylvia Bull

Music: Judy Kubischta, All Comers' Choir

Worship Assistants:

8:30 - Team C: Ron Scheider, Mary Schneider, GT Solseth, Erica Solseth, Brendan Solseth, Allen Pedersen, Avis Pedersen, Deb Bensen, Orlin Bensen

11:00 - Team 2: John Wittenberg, Nikki Wittenberg, Shelby VonWahlde, Joe VonWahlde, Hope Schreiner, Shannon Schreiner, Billie Ann Caya, Sara Caya Giltner, Joyce Hellman



CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS

At Faith Lutheran

This year's **Cookie Walk will be Saturday, Dec 14th at 9am.** Come out to grab your Christmas cookies, and contribute to our Sunshine Basket Ministry and Kitchen Fund! We are also looking for people to help bake cookies at church (ingredients provided and using our new oven!) on Wednesday, Dec 11th and Thursday Dec. 12th, and workers for the event. **Sign-up sheets** are available on the back counter! You can also bring cookies from home on Friday, Dec 13th.

The annual (37th) **Men's Christmas Supper** will be held on **Thursday, Dec 5 2024 at 6:00 PM.** The meal will consist of the timeless favorite of ham, potatoes, green beans and of course, those infamous Faith bars. There will be a **freewill offering**, of which the funds will be distributed to the kitchen fund, baptismal meals and Boy Scouts.

The **Faith Lutheran Crafters** have ornaments for sale in honor or memory of loved ones again this year! These can be purchased for **\$5 between services on Nov. 17, 24, and Dec. 1,** or by calling the office. The ornaments will hang on the church tree during the Christmas season, and will be available for pick-up as a keepsake starting in January. Proceeds will go to a mission or need in the church, to be decided at a later date.

Altar Guild will be **selling poinsettias in honor or memory of a loved one on Sunday, Dec. 1 and 8** between services for \$15! Poinsettias will decorate the church during the Christmas season, and then will be available for pick-up in January.

We are trying something new! On **Tuesday, Dec 24th,** we will have **3pm, 5pm and 11pm services.** The 11pm will be a candlelight service. On **Wednesday, Dec 25th,** we will have a **10am service ONLY.** There will be **NO SERVICE on Wednesday, January 1st.** We will return to our usual Wednesday schedule of one 7pm service on Wednesday, January 8th. Look out in the Gathering Place for **sign-ups for Worship Assistants** this holiday season!

CALENDAR

Monday, December 2

7:00 AA

Tuesday, December 3

9:00 Quilting

2:00 Crafts

7:00 Scouts

Wednesday, December 4

10:30 Scripture Circle

11:15 Soup Lunch

12:00 Worship

4:30 8th/9th Confirmation

5:30 Handbells

5:30 BLAST Meal

6:00 Christmas Program Practice

7:00 Worship

7:15: Summer Trip Info Meeting

Thursday, December 5

9:00 Esther Circle

6:00 Men of Faith

Friday, December 6

8:00 NA

Saturday, December 7

Sunday, December 8

8:30 Worship

9:45 Christmas Program Practice

9:45 Congregational Meeting

11:00 Worship

4:00 Cub Scouts

MISSION Focus



DECEMBER: GIFT CARDS & BUS PASSES

For December, we are collecting gas gift cards, grocery gift cards, and bus passes (any kind, monthly, one day, or one way). These gift cards will be kept at Faith Lutheran Church, and handed out to those in need that are members of our church, as well as people in our community that reach out to us for assistance. All amounts are greatly appreciated!

Please write the amount on each gift card with pen or marker. Thank you for your generosity!

How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? - 1 John 3:17