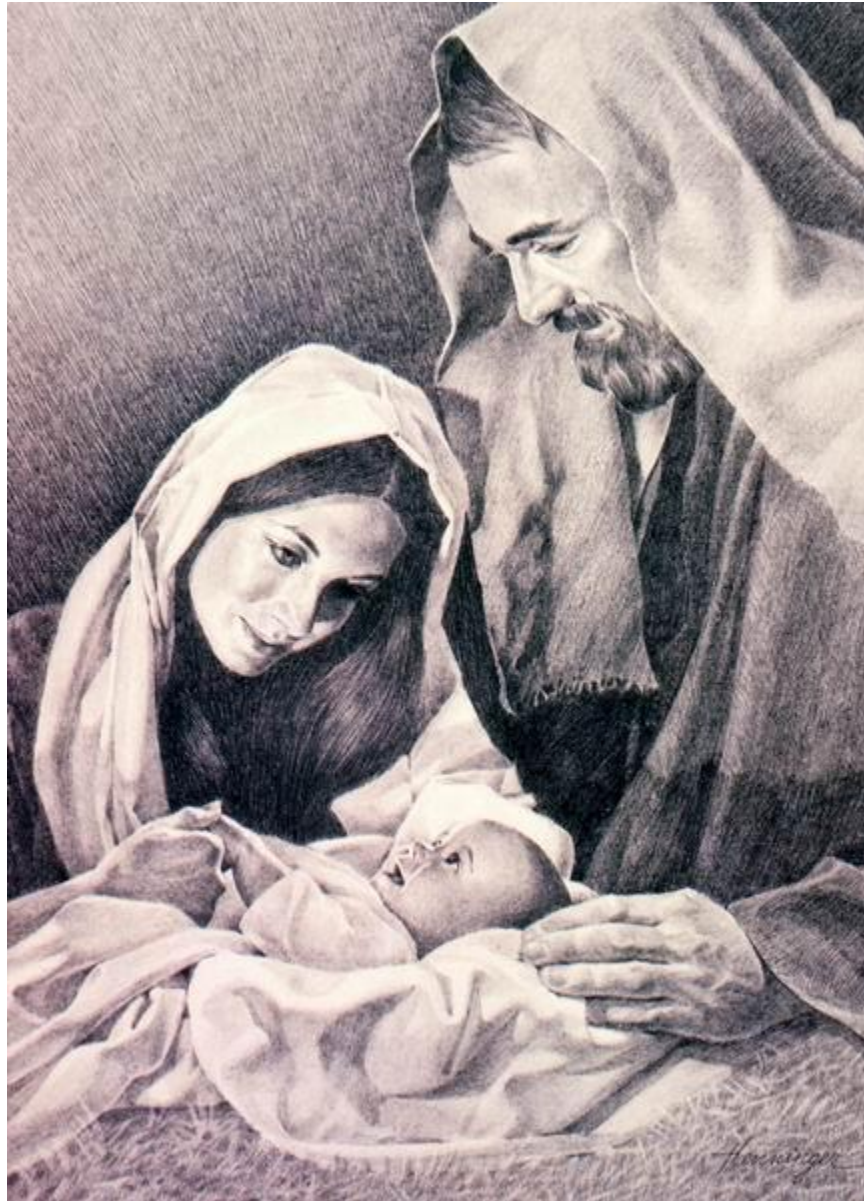

Thursday, December 24, 2020

5:00 and 8:00 PM Christmas Eve

Faith Lutheran Church



<http://www.alivingfaith.org>

e-mail: office@alivingfaith.org

551 Rotonda Boulevard West – Rotonda West, FL 33947

(941) 697-3313

Welcome to Faith Lutheran Church. We pray this celebration of the Christ Child's birth will uplift and encourage you.

THE WELCOMING OF GUEST AND VISITORS

THE PRELUDE

PLEASE STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, Love from the beginning, Word made flesh, Breath of heaven, Come to us.

C Amen.

Let us confess our sinfulness before God and one another, trusting in God's endless mercy and love.

SILENCE FOR REFLECTION AND MEDITATION

Together we pray,

C Merciful God, we confess that we are not perfect. We have said and done things we regret. We have tried to earn your redeeming grace, while denying it to others. We have resisted your call to be your voice in the world. Forgive us, loving God. Give us your righteousness, the strength to put aside our failures, and the courage to try again. Amen.

A HYMN: *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* **(ELW 257)**

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

Refrain

6 O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer,
O Sun of justice, now draw near.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadow put to flight.

Refrain

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

Dear people of God, hear the good news: Christ the Savior is born! You are loved and forgiven in the name of † Jesus, who is God with us. You are freed from proving that you deserve to be loved, because God's love is given to you as the most precious gift of all. Rejoice in this love and share it with the world. Amen.

A HYMN: *It Came Upon the Midnight* (ELW 282)

1 It came up - on the mid - night clear, that glo - rious song of old,
3 And you, be - neath life's crush - ing load, whose forms are bend - ing low,
from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
who toil a - long the climb - ing way with pain - ful steps and slow:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all - gra - cious king."
look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing;
The world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
oh, rest be - side the wea - ry road and hear the an - gels sing!

THE GREETING

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

C The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

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

C We have beheld Christ's glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.

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

C In him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;

yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

PLEASE BE SEATED

THE GOSPEL OF THE INCARNATION: John 1.1ff

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God... ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ¹⁴the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

THE LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS CANDLE

Jesus Christ is the Light of the world!

C He is the Light no darkness can overcome.

At darkest night we gather to celebrate the great light of our salvation.

C With the heavenly host we sing, "Glory to God in the highest heaven."

In Christ, God's Word is made flesh and lives among us.

C With the shepherds, we will tell of the wonders we have seen and heard.

The Christ Candle is Lit

Together we pray,

C 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.

THE FIRST LESSON: 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 God.

C Thanks be to God.

THE GOSPEL READING: Luke 2:1–20

C Glory to you O Lord

In 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 our Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ

A HYMN:

Away in a Manger

(ELW 277)

1 Away in a manger, no crib for
his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down
his sweet head;
the stars in the bright sky
looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on
the hay.

3 Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask
you to stay
close by me forever and love
me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in
your tender care
and fit us for heaven, to live
with you there.

THE SERMON *THE LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS* **PASTOR ARMEN**
PLEASE STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE

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



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

THE OFFERING *in thanksgiving for God's gift of the Christ Child*

A HYMN: *The Doxology* **(ELW 884)**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heav'nly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

THE OFFERTORY PRAYER

Together we pray,

C Generous God, you have given us life, this community, and these gifts that become your meal of your grace. Move in our hearts, that we might receive and use your gifts to bring hope and blessing wherever we go, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE PREFACE

The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give him thanks and praise.

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. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see.

Gathering at the table we celebrate Emmanuel, the love of God with us:
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace

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.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Together we 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

THE INVITATION

Love has come: God's love for all people. Come to the table, for Christ invites you.

THE DISTRIBUTION

As we celebrate the meal of our Lord, ALL are welcome. If you are a guest and regularly commune at your church, you are welcome to commune here. If you have a question about communion please speak with the Pastor or an usher. For those not communing, please keep your hands folded to receive a blessing.

If you would like a gluten-free wafer, please raise your index finger when the host is offered. Both wine (red, around the outside of the tray) and grape juice (white, at the center of the tray) are available for communion. If you are unable to come to the altar rail and would like to receive communion in your seat, please notify an usher.

AFTER ALL HAVE COMMUNED: PLEASE STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C Amen

Together we pray.

C Emmanuel, God with us, you grace us with life and breath and give us bread for the journey. Send us out in service to this world that you love, telling the amazing news of your coming to be Savior and Lord of all. Amen.

THE CANDLE LIGHT SERVICE

The lights are turned off

As we light our candles, we celebrate the life of Christ, who comes into our lives and, through us, lights the darkness of our world.

Turn on the candles

HYMN:

Silent Night

(ELW 281)

1 Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

3 Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

A PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

Silence before and after the prayer.

THE BENEDICTION

May the Lord God who has called you out of darkness to share the gift of Jesus' light, grant you the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, and the peace of the Christ Child. In the name of our † God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

*The lights are turned on as we turn off the candles
Please leave the candles in the baskets by the doors as you
exit the building*

HYMN:*Joy to the World***(ELW 267)**

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
 plains re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.

THE DISMISSAL

Christ is born! Emmanuel, God is with us.

Carry the light of the Christ Child in your life.

C Thanks be to God.

THE POSTLUDE

Merry Christmas from the Staff



and a Happy New Year

Tonight the memorial garden is decorated with luminaries and poinsettia. On your way out you are welcome to visit.