

Service of the Word for the Home and for ZOOM
First Sunday of Christmas
December 27, 2020
10:00 a.m.

Are You Online? Join Zoom Worship!

Please email Caitlyn in the office at officefelc@zoominternet.net to be added to the email list for a link to the service.

Not Online? Join Us Over the Phone!

+1 301 715 8592 US
Meeting ID: 956 305 5281
Password: 408299

WELCOME

ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Silence for reflection

Gracious God,

have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

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. To those who believe in Jesus Christ God gives the power to become the children of God, and bestows on them the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

HYMN

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice (all stanzas)

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice



- 1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
- 2 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
- 3 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;



give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;
now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!
now ye need not fear the grave; Je - sus Christ was born to save!



ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.
He has o - pened heav - en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.



Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Text: Medieval Latin carol; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866
Music: IN DULCI JUBILO, German carol, 14th cent.

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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.

KYRIE *spoken*

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For our homes, and for those who within them offer worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen.

HYMN

Hark the Herald Angels Sing, sts. 1 and 3

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray: Almighty God, you wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and yet more wonderfully restored it. In your mercy, let us share the divine life of the one who came to share our humanity, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE WORD

FIRST READING **Isaiah 61:10--62:3**

To the people who returned to Jerusalem after the exile, the prophet proclaims that God's salvation will fully come to pass. Jerusalem will become a shining light to the nations and righteousness and praise will spring up as surely as the earth puts forth vegetation.

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

^{62:1}For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.
²The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.
³You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 148 *read responsively*

¹Hallelujah! Praise the LORD from the heavens;
praise God in the heights.
²**Praise the LORD, all you angels;
sing praise, all you hosts of heaven.**
³Praise the LORD, sun and moon;
sing praise, all you shining stars.
⁴**Praise the LORD, heaven of heavens,
and you waters above the heavens.**
⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD,
who commanded, and they were created,
⁶**who made them stand fast forever and ever,
giving them a law that shall not pass away.**
⁷Praise the LORD from the earth,

you sea monsters and all deeps;
⁸**fire and hail, snow and fog,
tempestuous wind, doing God's will;**
⁹mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars;
¹⁰**wild beasts and all cattle,
creeping things and flying birds;**
¹¹sovereigns of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the world;
¹²**young men and maidens,
old and young together.**
¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD,
whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.
¹⁴**The LORD has raised up strength for the people and praise for all faithful servants,
the children of Israel, a people who are near the LORD. Hallelujah!**

SECOND READING Galatians 4:4-7

Paul seeks to show the Galatians that the purpose of Christ's birth was to liberate us from the law's condemnation so that we would be fully adopted into God's family as beloved children.

⁴When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. ⁶And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

We welcome the gospel:

Alleluia! Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, and let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. Alleluia!

GOSPEL Luke 2:22-40

The Holy gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke, the second chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Luke's narrative continues with stories that emphasize Jesus' connection to Judaism. His family is devout in its observance of the law, and Jesus himself is recognized as one who will bring glory to Israel.

²²When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, [Joseph and Mary] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), ²⁴and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;

³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles

and for glory to your people Israel.”

³³And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

HOMILY *online*

NICENE CREED

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.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

On this first Sunday after Christmas Day, let us pray for all who are in need, responding to each petition with the words "In mercy, redeem the world."

O God, Abba-Father, Son, and Spirit: bless your church throughout the world with the joy of your salvation and with perseverance through this time of limited assembly worship. Make our homes like temples filled with your praise. We pray for the church, gracious God:

In mercy, redeem the world.

In the cold north, keep safe your whole creation until springtime arrives. Protect the underground seeds and the hibernating animals. Make snowfall into a blessing. We pray for the earth, gracious God:

In mercy, redeem the world.

As 2020 comes to its end, we ask you to help us overcome its heartaches and to welcome 2021 with hope. Keep revelers safe from contagion. In the New Year, give all people an increase of health and harmony. We pray for 2021, gracious God:

In mercy, redeem the world.

Bless our elders with the peace and joy of Simeon and Anna. Strengthen those who have retired, those who work in older age, and those in need of income, food, or health care. Embrace those isolated by dementia, and connect young and old across generations. We pray for elders, gracious God:

In mercy, redeem the world.

This week we remember before you the infants of Bethlehem slain by King Herod. Protect all children around the world from abuse, hunger, and abandonment. Give to all children a loving home and stable education, that they may grow strong and live filled with wisdom. We pray for children, gracious God:

In mercy, redeem the world.

Come to all who are in need, the hungry, the homeless, the war-torn. Guide us in and through this fearsome pandemic. Visit those sick with COVID-19. Comfort all who live with depression or fear. Abide with all for whom the holiday season is overwhelmed by sorrow. We pray especially for those most on our minds....We pray for all in need, gracious God:

In mercy, redeem the world.

We praise you for all who have died in the faith: for the apostle and evangelist John, and for those we name here before you. . . . And when our own death approaches, let us depart in your peace, ready to join with all your saints in life everlasting. We pray for peace at the end, gracious God:

In mercy, redeem us.

O God, Father, Son, and Spirit: as you received the sacrifices of Mary and Joseph, receive now our prayers, now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Finally, as Jesus have taught us, we are bold to pray:

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 SENDING

BLESSING

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; and may Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

HYMN *Joy to the World, sts. 1 and 4*

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Pastor Gary Roth	Presiding Minister
Sharon Heist Miller	Assisting Minister
Holly Schubert	Reader
Signe Mitchell	Organist
Marlin Boltz	AV Assisting Minister
Holly Schubert	PowerPoint Assisting Minister
Jack and Amy Beiler	Counters

Flowers are given to the glory of God by Ted and Joan Giese, in honor of their anniversary.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST ENGLISH

Monday, 12/28	5:00 PM	Community Dinner
	5:00 PM	NA Meeting
	8:00 PM	NA Meeting
Tuesday, 12/29	5:00 PM	NA Meeting
Wednesday, 12/30	7:00 PM	AA Meeting (Social Hall)
Thursday, 12/31	5:00 PM	NA Meeting
	7:30 PM	NA Meeting
Friday, 1/1	All Day	Office Closed
Saturday, 1/2	9:00 AM	AA Meeting
	12:00 PM	NA Meeting

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We mourn with the family of Marian Boltz, who died in resurrection hope on December 21, 2020. Rest eternal grant her, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon her.

Pastor Kimberly is taking some time off Monday, Dec. 28 through Wednesday, December 30. She can be reached on her cell phone in case of emergency.

Thank you to all who contributed to this year's Christmas Tree Drive! Because of your generosity, First English was able to donate \$560 in gift cards to the Butler County Children and Youth.

EPIPHANY January-February 2021

Hymn #507 in ELW Hymnal – “O God of light, your word a lamp unfailing,
shall pierce the darkness of our earthbound way...”

As a part of this church year season, which follows Christmas, we ask for help from each of you!

You will receive a letter from FELC about designing a star to be hung at the church. It will include helpful information.

The star from your family will join with the stars of all the other families!

Further information is on its way about the art pieces, date to be completed, etc.

Please watch for a letter in your mailbox (to come a little later in December)! Looking forward to hearing from you!

PRAYERS

The family of Marian Boltz, the family of Zack, Sue Morrow, Joan, Joey Lash, Andrea Dubler, Janice Critchlow, Pastor Karl Schoch, Anne Ferguson, the family of Dan Hanczar, Jeanette Cunningham, Marsh Miller, Ida Miller, Helen Wagner, Deanna Golden, the Lawson family, the Bodnar family, Tyler Jacob Huey, Meredith, Mary and Eleanor, Larry, Frederick Miller, Edna Hartman, Jim Buehler, Justin Buehler, Cyndy Halin, Gene Fozard, Cindy Regis & her daughter Angie, Josh, Aryl Bashline, Dave and Diana Braun, David and Gina & family, Ida Miller, Shirley Sellers, Crystal, the family of Mary Heist, Gayle Wynn, Mary Maloney, the family of Ryan Warheit, the family of Scot Taylor, Claude, Audrey & Jonah Clark, Ed Beck, the family of Jim Templet, all those affected by the wildfires in California and Colorado, the family of Edgar Nieto, the family of Marjorie Ellis, Anita, the family of Frances Cypher, Jamie and Kaitlin Sprague, Graham Cannon, Becky Wyckoff, Larry Hamil, Jan Nieto, the family of Mildred Dollhopf, Sandy Snyder, David and Emma Lee Hartle, the family of Hailey Matheson, Ryan, Forest and Marietta White, Christine Pflugh, Asyiah, the family of Nancy, the family of Jean Purvis, Joyce Hall, Bruni Bilowich, Karen Vavro, Doug Horner, Sandy, Lisa, Wendy, Rhonda, Judy M., Mary Ellen, Claudia, Karen, Kitty Walker, Gina Ambrosio, Elizabeth, Jena Wright, Tad Sellers, Ralph D'Antonio.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

Jeremiah 31:7-14

Joy at the gathering of God's scattered flock

Psalm 147:12-20

Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion. (Ps. 147:12)

Ephesians 1:3-14

The will of God made known in Christ

John 1:[1-9] 10-18

God with us: the incarnation of the Word