

Service of the Word for the Home and for ZOOM
Second Sunday of Advent
December 6, 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

Today is the second Sunday of Advent! As you prepare your home worship space for Advent, consider setting up an Advent wreath—a ring of four candles or lights. There is no hard and fast rule about what color the candles have to be. Four blue candles, three purple and one pink candle, or four white candles, are traditional. You can also use LED lights or electric candles or flashlights. The image of the Advent wreath is to remind us of the light of Christ that comes into the world.

WELCOME AND LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Blessed are you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!

You spoke to the prophets of old of a Saviour who would bring peace. You helped them to spread the joyful message of his coming kingdom. Help us, as we prepare to celebrate his birth, to share with those around us the good news of your power and love. We ask this through Jesus Christ, the Light who is coming into the world.

Amen.

ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

To make our hearts ready for the Holy Spirit, let us confess the sin which separates us from God and our neighbor and seek the forgiveness God offers us in Jesus Christ.

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 *“Comfort, Comfort Now My People”*

Comfort, Comfort Now My People



1 "Com - fort, com-fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!" So says our God.
2 For the her-ald's voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,
3 Straight shall be what long was crook - ed, and the rough - er plac - es plain.



Com-fort those who sit in dark - ness mourn-ing un - der sor - row's load.
call - ing us to true re - pen - tance, since the reign of God is here.
Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be-fits God's ho - ly reign.



To God's peo - ple now pro-claim that God's par - don waits for them!
Oh, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way.
For the glo - ry of the Lord now on earth is shed a - broad,



Tell them that their war is o - ver; God will reign in peace for - ev - er.
Val - leys, rise to greet the Sav - ior; hills, bow down in hum-ble fa - vor.
and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.

Text: Johann G. Olearius, 1635–1711; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
Music: FREU DICH SEHR, *Trente quatre psaumes de David*, Geneva, 1551

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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

HYMN OF PRAISE *O come O Come Emmanuel, sts 1 and 5*

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

**O come, O Key of David, come,
and open wide our heav'nly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray: Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

BLESSING OF THE JESSE TREE

Let's pray through the season of Advent! At the end of this bulletin is an explanation of the Jesse tree and devotions based on the Jesse tree symbols for each day of the week. These devotions will also be put online on our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/firstenglishbutler.

THE WORD

FIRST READING **Isaiah 40:1-11**

In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. God will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for the sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of God.

¹Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

³A voice cries out:
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

⁵Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

⁶A voice says, "Cry out!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"
All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.

⁷The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.

⁸The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand forever.

⁹Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;

say to the cities of Judah,
"Here is your God!"

¹⁰See, the Lord GOD comes with might,

and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM 85:1-2, 8-13 *read responsively*

¹You have been gracious to your land, O LORD;
you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.
²**You have forgiven the iniquity of your people
and blotted out all their sins.**
⁸I will listen to what the LORD God is saying;
for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.
⁹**Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you,
that your glory may dwell in our land.**
¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together;
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
¹¹**Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth,
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.**
¹²The LORD will indeed grant prosperity,
and our land will yield its increase.
¹³**Righteousness shall go before the LORD
and shall prepare for God a pathway.**

SECOND READING 2 Peter 3:8-15a

This short letter deals with pressing concerns regarding the final advent of Jesus, especially concerns that could arise over its apparent delay. The author of the letter calls on Christians to anticipate the promised coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.

⁸Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

¹¹Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? ¹³But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; ^{15a}and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

We welcome the gospel:

Alleluia! Prepare the way of the Lord. All flesh shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!

GOSPEL **Mark 1:1-8**

The Holy gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark, the first chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.

¹The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.’”

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

HOMILY *online*

CHOIR ANTHEM

“Ev’ry Valley”

Isaiah 40: 4, 5

- John Ness Beck, ASCAP

Ev’ry valley shall be exalted,
And ev’ry mountain made low,
And the crooked made straight,
And the rough places plain.

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
And all flesh shall see it together,
For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

SINGERS Linda Mathias, *soprano*, Sue Morrow, *alto*, Kevin Mathias, *tenor*, Jim Cunningham, *bass*
Harry Cunningham, *director*

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

Trusting in his promised return, let us lift up all our concerns and requests to Christ our Savior. The response after each petition is, "Lord, have mercy."

That we, the church, prepare for the coming of Christ by distinguishing divine from human comfort, and that we turn toward the comfort that only God's word can give, let us pray:

Lord, have mercy.

That refugees throughout the world find safety from war, hunger, and illness, let us pray:

Lord, have mercy.

That God would give the leaders of our nation discerning hearts, a spirit of wisdom, the willingness to cooperate, and a spirit of peace, let us pray:

Lord, have mercy.

That we discover paths to economic and social repair that prevent hunger, promote learning, ward off addiction, and rescue people from desperation, let us pray:

Lord, have mercy.

That the continued development and distribution of coronavirus vaccines be safe, swift, and just, let us pray:

Lord, have mercy.

That essential workers, medical personnel, and caretakers for those who are elderly, disabled, or infirm be protected as they work each day, let us pray:

Lord, have mercy,

That those who are sick, isolated, overwhelmed, bored, or exhausted, receive what they need from God's hand, and that those who are grieving any loss during this time do so with clarity and relief, let us pray:

Lord, have mercy.

That being aware of the frailty of our lives, we may receive each day as a gift, and that we may use the time we have to pursue peace, let us pray:

Lord, have mercy.

That those who have died in resurrection hope be remembered with gratitude and love, especially.....let us pray:

Lord, have mercy.

Come, Lord Jesus, do not delay; give new courage to your people who trust in your love. By your coming, raise us to the joy of your kingdom, where you live and reign, with the Father and the Spirit, one God for ever and ever. **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 Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior Christ came among us in great humility, sanctify you with the light of his blessing and set you free from all sin. **Amen.**

May he whose second Coming in power and great glory we await, make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love. **Amen.**

May you, who rejoice in the first Advent of our Redeemer, at his second Advent be rewarded with unending life. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you forever. **Amen.**

HYMN

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Pastor Kimberly van Driel	Presiding Minister
Sharon Heist Miller	Assisting Minister
Jeanne Graff	Reader
Josh Kamerer	AV Assisting Minister
Brandon Stein	PowerPoint Assisting Minister
Signe Mitchell	Organist
Jim and Jeanette Cunningham	Counters

Flowers are given to the glory of God by the congregation of First English Lutheran Church.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST ENGLISH

Monday, 12/7	5:00 PM	Community Dinner
	5:00 PM	NA Meeting
	8:00 PM	NA Meeting
Tuesday, 12/8	5:00 PM	NA Meeting
	7:00 PM	Council Meeting
Wednesday, 12/9	11:00 AM	Staff Meeting
	7:00 PM	AA Meeting (Social Hall)
Thursday, 12/10	5:00 PM	NA Meeting
	7:30 PM	NA Meeting
Saturday, 12/12	9:00 AM	AA Meeting
	12:00 PM	NA Meeting

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our 2020 Christmas Tree Drive continues through December 13th for our Butler County Children and Youth. Your generous donations will make this Christmas more special for these children. Please use the special line of your offering envelope and make your check payable to First English Lutheran Church. Thank you!

This Sunday, December 6th is the last day to order your Christmas flowers. Please place your order with the church office (724) 283-2378 or officefelc@zoominternet.net. Options include: Poinsettia - \$6.25 (red, pink, white, burgundy, jingle bells or marble), Cyclamen - \$8.30 (red, pink, white, or purple), or Christmas Cactus - \$4.15.

The 2021 Flower Chart is posted. If you would like to sign-up for a date in 2021, please let the church office know (724) 283-2378 or officefelc@zoominternet.net.

PRAYERS

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, Hope & Bruce Keeler, Gina Ambrosio, Elizabeth, Jena Wright, Tad Sellers, Ralph D'Antonio.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Righteousness and praise flourish like a garden

Psalm 126

The LORD has done great things for us. (Ps. 126:3)

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Kept in faith until the coming of Christ

John 1:6-8, 19-28

A witness to the light