

**First English Lutheran Church
Butler, Pennsylvania**

**The Nativity of our Lord
Christmas Eve
December 24, 2022**

Welcome to First English Lutheran Church as we celebrate Jesus' birth! First English's mission is to be a welcoming, worshiping community rooted in the city of Butler and making Christ known in words and deeds. Through worship and learning, prayer and feeding hungry people, we seek to honor the image of God in every person. If you have questions about our congregation or about who Lutheran Christians are and what we believe, please know that our pastors would love to talk with you!

The order for tonight's worship service is found in this worship folder. The congregation is invited to participate by praying the parts in bold print and by joining in the hymns, which are found in the red book in your pew.

8:30 p.m.

PRELUDE

"Gloria"	- Robin Dinda
"A la Venue de Noël"	- Claude-Bénigne Balbastre
"Prelude on 'O Jesulein süß, O Jesulein mild' "	- Michael G. Fischer
"O Little Town of Bethlehem"	- Dennis Janzer
"From Heaven Above to Earth I Come"	- J.S. Bach
"Gloria Patri"	- J.S. Bach
"The Shepherds"	- R.E. Gahringer / S.E. Saxton
"Noël: 'Une Vierge Pucelle' "	- Nicolas Le Bègue
"Watchman, Tell Us of the Night"	- Peter P. Stearns

9:00 p.m.

Festival Service of Holy Communion

GATHERING

PROCESSIONAL GOSPEL John 1:1-4; 14

The congregation may stand.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

Red Book #283

OPENING SENTENCES *spoken responsively*

Sing to the Lord a new song;

Sing to the Lord, all the earth.

Tell it out among the nations:

“The Lord reigns! The Lord will judge us with equity!”

Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;

Let the sea thunder and all that is in it;

Let fields be joyful and the trees of the forest shout for joy.

For you come, O Lord, to judge the earth.

You will make the world right;

You will judge all people with truth.

HYMN OF PRAISE

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

Red Book #289

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

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.**

The congregation may sit.

WORD

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 the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

CHOIR ANTHEM “Joyful Is the Dark” - Carlton R. Young, b.1926

SECOND LESSON **Titus 2:11-14**

The 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 it 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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The congregation may stand.

HYMN FOR THE GOSPEL PROCESSION

“On Christmas Night”

sts. 1 & 2

Red Book #274

GOSPEL Luke 2:1-20

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

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!”

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 the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN FOR GOSPEL PROCESSION

“On Christmas Night” sts. 3 & 4 Red Book #274

The congregation may sit.

SERMON

Silence for reflection.

The congregation may stand.

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming” Red Book #272

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

Having heard the message of peace brought by the angels, let us bring before God our prayers for the needs of the world.

The congregation may kneel or sit.

God of love and grace, the birth of Jesus brings your love into the world.
By his coming, bring a new birth of hope into our lives as your people.
God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Your authority is over the nations. Break the rod of oppression in every land and free all people from fear. Bring peace where there is war, compassion where there is suffering, and healing where there is disease. We remember especially the people of Yemen, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Congo, and others not in our awareness, but known to you. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

You cherish those who are most vulnerable. Protect infants and children and bless those who care for them. Watch over women giving birth, attend the dying, and relieve any who are in pain. Shelter refugee families and those who have no home. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

You chose shepherds watching their flocks as the first to hear the angels' song. Bring good news to those who work and watch this night for our security and safety. Give them strength for their duties and rest when morning comes. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Your lovingkindness embraces everyone in need. Help any for whom this season is lonely or joyless. Comfort those who are grieving or missing loved ones, and befriend those with broken hearts. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

You welcome those who have died into the joyous light of glory. We give thanks for the saints of every time and place who have praised you with lives of faith and humility. Inspire us by their example to love you by serving others. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Pondering the mystery of eternal love made flesh in Christ Jesus, we commend all for whom we pray to the mercy of God.
Amen.

The congregation may stand.

PEACE

The peace of the Christ child be with you always.
And also with you.

After sharing a sign of peace, the congregation may sit.

CHOIR ANTHEM "All on a Silent Night" - Becki Slagle-Mayo

The congregation may stand.

MEAL

OFFERTORY PRAYER *led by the assisting minister*

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And al - so 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.

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...*(the presiding minister continues giving thanks)*...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and
God of might, heav - en and earth are full of your
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of the
Lord. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.
Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

You are holy, O God of majesty...*(the presiding minister continues giving thanks, concluding)*... Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

And so, gracious Father, as we celebrate his incarnation among us,

We remember his life lived for others:

His words of healing and forgiveness,

His meals with those declared outcasts and sinners.

We remember his passion and death,

and his birth from a grave to a new and unending life in you.

We await that day when he comes again, when

Everyone shall know the power of your love and the wealth of your grace.

Amen. Come Lord Jesus.

Send, we pray, your Holy Spirit,

upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine,

that by sharing the body and blood of Christ,

we might be filled with faith, hope, and love,

made part of his body in this world,

that with hands and feet, and words and deeds,

we might show others your love.

Amen, Come Holy Spirit.

Through him, with him and in him,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

all glory and honor are yours, almighty God,

now and forever.

United as members of Christ's family, we pray as he taught us with one heart and voice:

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

Here with bread and wine is the Word made flesh. Taste and see that the Lord is good.

LAMB OF GOD



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

The congregation may sit.

SHARING OF THE SACRAMENT

You are invited to receive Holy Communion tonight. Lutherans believe that the body and blood of Christ are present with the bread and wine. Gluten-free wafers are available for those who cannot consume wheat; please let the pastor know. If you do not wish to receive communion, you may still come forward and kneel for a blessing from the pastor.

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

Red Book #279

“Holy Child within the Manger”

Blue Book #638

The congregation may stand at the invitation of the presiding minister.

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

See what love the Father has given us:

That we should be called children of God.

As many as received him, to them he gave power to become the children

of God.

See what love the Father has given us.

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

Amen.

HYMN

“Silent Night”

Red Book #281

PRAYER

led by the assisting minister

SENDING

BLESSING

May the God of the angels, who heralded Christ's birth, bring joy to your hearts this day and always. **Amen.**

May the God of love, who gave his only Son to be born for you, fill your life with love and peace. **Amen.**

May Emmanuel, God with us, be with you in all your doings and all your celebrations, until he brings you into his eternal kingdom. **Amen.**

And may almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

RECESSIONAL HYMN

“Go Tell It on the Mountain”

Red Book #290

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

“Vater unser im Himmelreich”

- Dietrich Buxtehude

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

The Rev. Ryan Fitch	Presiding Minister
The Rev. Kimberly van Driel	Preacher
Linda Mathias	Assisting Minister
Jeanne Graff	Reader
Emily Stein and Claudia van Driel	Torchbearers
Evan Stein	Crucifer
Emily Stein	Acolyte
Signe Mitchell	Organist
Harry Cunningham	Sr. Choir Director
Sue Morrow	AV Assisting Minister
Joan Giese	PowerPoint Minister
Stan Graff, Dan Morrow, Andrew O'Rourke, and Amelia O'Rourke	Ushers
Roxanne Glagola	Altar Guild

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALTAR FLOWERS and POINSETTIAS are given to the glory of God by: Dorothy Croupe, in loving memory of her husband, Clyde Croupe; Susan Farrell; Joan & Ted Giese; Tracy Gullickson; Larry Hamil; Myrna Hamil; Mollie & Larry Hibbs; Jessie & Josh Kamerer; Sandy & Norm Lefebvre; Signe Mitchell; Zema & George Schaney; Brandi & Brandon Stein; Pr. Kimberly & Edwin van Driel; Judy & Bill Vilcheck

CHRISTMAS TREE contributions made by: Susan Badger; Jack & Amy Beiler; Thelma Cross; Merab Drennen; Bob & Karen Domanski; Danna Drescher; Susan Farrell; Tracy Gullickson; Larry Hamil; Myrna Hamil; Ron & Linda Huey; Brenda Ihlenfeld; Norm & Sandy Lefebvre; Jack & Sue Lehew; Frank & Carol Miller; Signe Mitchell; Grace Shields; Marilyn Shoup; John & Yvonne Thickey; Bill & Judy Vilcheck; Brent & Laura Warmbrod; Joseph and Patricia Zupancic

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS to support First English's ministry may be made at the offering plates at the back of the sanctuary or online at www.firstenglishbutler.org.

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