

**First English Lutheran Church
Butler, Pennsylvania**

**Service of Holy Communion
First Sunday of Advent
December 3, 2023
10:00 a.m.**

GATHERING

PRELUDE

“Nun Komm Der Heiden Heiland” - J.S. Bach; Johann Pachelbel;
Marcel Dupré
“Hark, the Glad Sound” - Raymond Haan

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

LIGHTING OF ADVENT WREATH

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.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

The congregation may kneel. A moment of silence is kept.

Most merciful God,

We confess to you our sin in thought, word, and deed, the things we have done, and the things we have failed to do. We have hurt our neighbors and ourselves. We have wounded your creation. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, forgive us. Heal what we have broken and reconcile us to you, to one another, and to the earth and its creatures. 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. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The congregation may stand.

GATHERING HYMN

“Wake, Awake, For Night is Flying”

Red Book #436

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

page 193 in the front of the red book

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The congregation may sit.

THE WORD

CHILDREN’S SERMON

FIRST READING

Isaiah 64:1-9

This lament comes from a people who have had their hopes shattered. The visions of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a renewed people of God, spoken of in Isaiah 40–55, have not been realized. Instead, the people experience ruin, conflict, and famine. This lament calls God to account—to be the God who has brought deliverance in the past.

¹O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—
²as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!
³When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.
⁴From ages past no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.
⁵You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.
But you were angry, and we sinned;
because you hid yourself we transgressed.
⁶We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.
We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
⁷There is no one who calls on your name,
or attempts to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.
⁸Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
⁹Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,
and do not remember iniquity forever.
Now consider, we are all your people.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 80:1-7, 17-19 *read responsively*

¹Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
²**In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and come to help us.**

³Restore us, O God;

let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

⁴**O LORD God of hosts,**

how long will your anger fume when your people pray?

⁵You have fed them with the bread of tears;

you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

⁶**You have made us the derision of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**

⁷Restore us, O God of hosts;

let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

¹⁷**Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one you have made so strong for yourself.**

¹⁸And so will we never turn away from you;

give us life, that we may call upon your name.

¹⁹**Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;**

let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

SECOND READING 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

As the Christians in Corinth await the advent of Jesus, Paul reminds them how the Lord has already enriched them through spiritual gifts and will continue to strengthen them until the coming day of the Lord.

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind — ⁶just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you — ⁷so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Word of God, Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

The congregation may stand.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

“Hallelujah”

Red Book #171

GOSPEL**Mark 13:24-37**

The holy gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark, the thirteenth chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus encourages his followers to look forward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.

[Jesus said:] ²⁴“In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

²⁶Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. ²⁷Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

²⁸“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁰Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³²“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, ³⁶or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The congregation may sit.

SERMON

The congregation may stand.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Come, Now, O God



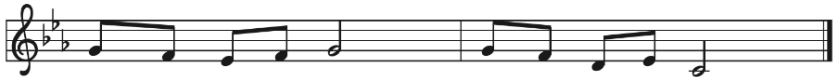
1 Come now, O God, when our love is for - sak - en.
2 Come, when we squan - der the free - dom you gave us.
3 Come, put an end to our self - serv - ing mad - ness.



Come, when our bed - rock of faith has been shak - en.
Come, break the sys - tems of sin that en - slave us.
Come, while the world is en - shroud - ed in sad - ness.



Come, when our deep - est of hopes are mis - tak - en.
Come, though we won - der if you can still save us.
Come, turn the tears of our mourn - ing to glad - ness.



Come, Em - man - u - el.

Come, Em - man - u - el.

Text: David Bjorlin, b. 1984

Music: LOST IN THE NIGHT, Finnish folk tune

Text © 2018 GIA Publications, Inc., giamusic.com. All rights reserved.

Duplication in any form prohibited without securing permission from copyright administrator or reporting usage under valid license.

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

The congregation remains standing or takes another posture that is comfortable for prayer.

The cantor will lead through the refrain one time, then the congregation is invited to repeat. After each portion of the prayers, the assisting minister will bid, "We pray to you, O God." The congregation responds with the sung refrain.

In Silence We Wait

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'In Silence We Wait'. It consists of two staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like. The lyrics are written below the notes.

In si - lence we wait, in dark - ness you
come to us; bring us your light.

Text: Susan Masters, b. 1957
Music: IN SILENCE WE WAIT, Susan Masters
Text and music © 2009 Augsburg Fortress

Gracious God, in this season we light a small candle to mark your advent. Kindle within us a great flame of love. Make us fiercely kind and generous, even when we do not receive kindness in return. That our daily life as Christians may reflect your unconditional love, we pray to you, O God:

By your advent, O God, move mountains: mountains of hatred and violence; mountains of arrogance and pride; mountains of resentment and revenge. Let those who wage war or unleash terror tremble at your presence, that their victims may see peace. For all those who suffer throughout our world today because of human sin, we pray to you, O God:

By your advent, O God, bring healing to those whose hearts are heavy with disappointment: for those who worked to be sober but who now reach for drugs and alcohol; for those who sought a cure but still live with illness and pain; for those who extended a hand in friendship but received rejection. For those also who are most on our minds and hearts...*(pause)*... We pray to you, O God:

By your advent, O God, you do not promise wealth, but so many depend on this season's activity for life and livelihood. For those who are therefore especially busy this season, for retail workers and caterers, for musicians and event planners, for fundraisers and for their families and loved ones, we pray to you, O God:

In the name of Jesus Christ, who at his first Advent told us to watch for his second, and who dwells with all the saints even now in a greater light, we commend these our prayers to you, O God.

Amen.

The congregation may stand.

THE MEAL

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The congregation may sit.

OFFERING

ORGAN OFFERTORY

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

- Flor Peeters

The ushers present the offerings and gifts of bread and wine for communion.

CHOIR ANTHEM

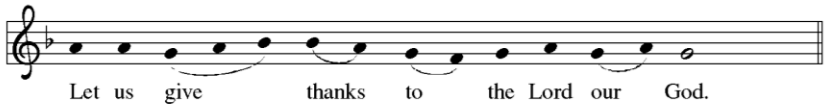
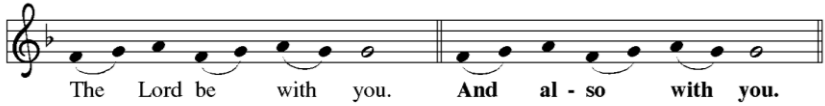
“Clap Your Hands, the Starlight Glows”

- Eugene Butler

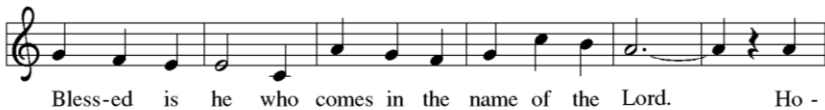
The congregation may stand.

OFFERING PRAYER *led by the assisting minister*

GREAT THANKSGIVING



It is indeed right, our duty and our joy....we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life....Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

With this bread and cup

we remember your Word dwelling among us,

full of grace and truth.

We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.

We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.

Come among us.

Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us.

Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light.

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours,

Holy One of Israel,

Word of God incarnate,

Power of the Most High,

one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

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,

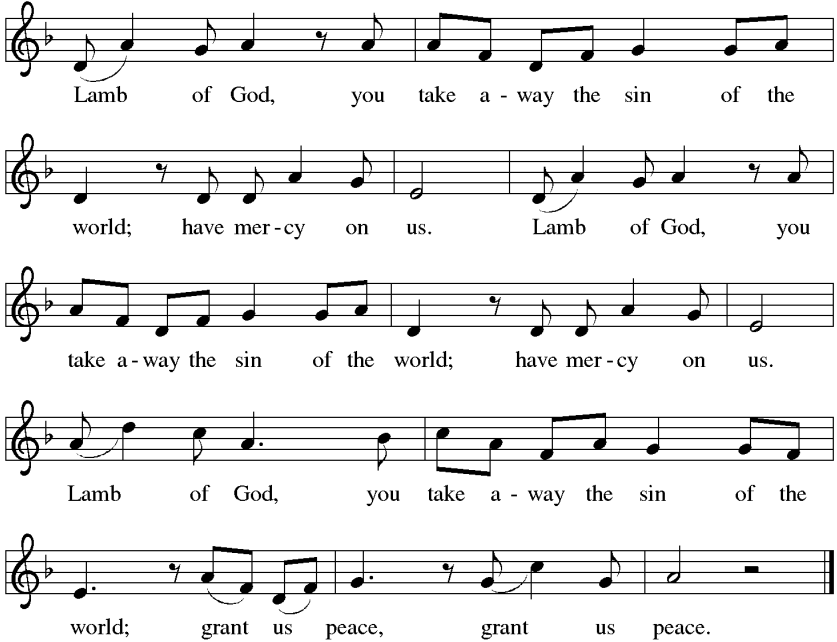
and the power, and the glory,

forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Jesus said: I am the bread of life. I am the vine, you are the branches.
Come to me and never be hungry; believe in me and never thirst.

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

All are welcome to Holy Communion today. Lutherans believe that Christ is truly present in the bread and wine. The ushers will invite you forward to receive. Gluten free wafers are available; please let the pastor know if you wish to receive them. If you are able to receive either bread or wine (but not both), please know that you still receive the full communion.

After all have received, the congregation may stand.

HYMN DURING COMMUNION

“Wait for the Lord”

Red Book #262

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

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

Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

led by the assisting minister

THE SENDING

BLESSING

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, and the blessing of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be with you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

“Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending”

Red Book #435

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. The Lord is with you!

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

“Prepare the Royal Highway”

- Setting by John Behnke

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

The Rev. Kimberly van Driel	Presiding Minister
Sharon Heist Miller	Assisting Minister
Mollie Hibbs	Communion Assistant
Susan Farrell	Reader
Sharon Heist Miller	Crucifer
Reese Sequite	Acolyte
Signe Mitchell	Organist
Harry Cunningham	Sr. Choir Director
Marlin Boltz	AV Assisting Minister
Karen Boltz	PowerPoint Minister
Susan Farrell and Christiaan van Driel	Ushers
Karen and Bob Domanski	Counters
Roxanne Glagola	Altar Guild

Altar flowers are given to the glory of God by Sandy Lefebvre in memory of loved ones.

All are welcome to join us for an Advent lunch and intergenerational event following the worship service.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST ENGLISH

Mon., 12/4	5:00 PM	Community Dinner
	8:00 PM	NA Meeting (Social Hall)
Thurs., 12/7	10:30 AM	Bible Study
	7:00 PM	Choir Rehearsal
	7:30 PM	NA Meeting (Downstairs)
Sat., 12/9	12:00 PM	NA Meeting (Downstairs)
Sun., 12/10	9:00 AM	Bible Study (Pastor's Office)
	10:00 AM	Worship
	11:15 AM	Confirmation Class
	5:30 PM	AA Meeting (Downstairs)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today begins the season of Advent. “Advent” means “coming,” and during this season we prepare for Christ to come—at Bethlehem at Christmas, in our world and lives today, and again at the end of time.

The mood of the season alternates between joyful expectation and lament for our world's ongoing grief. Hymns and other changes to our Sunday liturgy reflect these two emphases.

Mark the Advent season by joining us for lunch after worship! We will meet in the social hall after worship for a potluck and Advent activities.

All are welcome!

Confirmation class will meet next Sunday, Dec. 10, following the 10 a.m. service.

Today we continue our annual Christmas Tree Drive for the Children and Youth Agency of Butler County. Stop by the Christmas Tree to offer your donation or indicate your donation on the special line of your offering envelope, payable to First English Lutheran Church. This will be happening Dec. 3 and Dec. 10. Thank you!

Support First English's ministry: In thanksgiving to God, financial contributions to the congregation can be placed in the offering plate at the rear of the worship space or made online at www.firstenglishbutler.org/giving.

PRAYERS

Vicki Shields Cannon; Jayden; Mairead Magee; Jan Nieto; Myrna Hamil; Linda; Kathy Schweikart Spingola and Charles Spingola; Marj Rogner; Pam Reeder; Greg Reeder; Carol Cunningham; family of Zema Schaney; Frank Miller; family of Tony Sequite; Mackenzie Perkins; Linda Mathias; Gus Keiser; Cory; Will; Carol Chamberlain; Carol Johnson; Mason Martin; family of Janet Warner; Eileen Herbeck; family of Linda Hibbeler; Thelma Hassler; continued healing for Graham Cannon; Aryl Bashline; Holly Schubert; Tad Sellers; Pam Patterson; Tom Olson

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

Isaiah 40:1-11

Good news of God's coming to a people in exile

Psalms 85:1-2, 8-13

Righteousness shall prepare a pathway for God. (Ps. 85:13)

2 Peter 3:8-15a

Waiting for and hastening the day of God

Mark 1:1-8

John appears from the wilderness

Liturgical portions of today's service are reprinted with permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS028762.