

**First English Lutheran Church
Butler, Pennsylvania**

**The Nativity of our Lord
Christmas Eve
December 24, 2024**

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 pastor 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.

PRELUDE

- "Triptych on an English Noel-
Cantilena - Franklin Ashdown
- "Pastorale" - George F. Handel
- "This Is Christmas" - Alfred Burt
- "Vom Himmel hoch da komm' ich her" - Johann Pachelbel
- " 'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime" - Mark Lochstampfor
- "What Child Is This" - Robert A. Hobby, *arr.*
- "On This Day Earth Shall Ring" - David Johnson / Robert Powell, *arrs.*
- Organ and Choir Members

GATHERING

The congregation may stand.

WELCOME

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

Red Book #283

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.

HYMN OF PRAISE

“Angels, from the Realm of Glory” sts. 1, 2, 4 Red Book #275

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.

PSALM 96 *read responsively*

¹ Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.

² **Sing to the Lord, bless the name of the Lord;
proclaim God's salvation from day to day.**

³ Declare God's glory among the nations
and God's wonders among all peoples.

⁴ **For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised,
more to be feared than all gods.**

⁵ As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols;
but you, O Lord, have made the heavens.

⁶ **Majesty and magnificence are in your presence;
power and splendor are in your sanctuary.**

⁷ Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples,
ascribe to the Lord honor and power.

⁸ **Ascribe to the Lord the honor due the holy name;
bring offerings and enter the courts of the Lord.**

⁹ Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
tremble before the Lord, all the earth.

¹⁰ **Tell it out among the nations: "The Lord is king!**

**The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will
judge the peoples with equity."**

¹¹ Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all
that ¹ is therein.

¹² **Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming,
O Lord,
for you come to judge the earth.**

¹³ You will judge the world with righteousness
and the peoples with your truth.

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

“I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve” sts. 1-2 Red Book #271

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

"I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve" sts. 3-4

Red Book #271

The congregation may sit.

SERMON

Silence for reflection.

The congregation may stand.

HYMN OF THE DAY

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

Red Book #279

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 light, on this holy night your Son was born into our tired and broken world and brings the wonder of your love. Help us lay down all jealousy, bitterness, and hostility at his manger and receive from him friendship and love. That we may live at peace with you and with one another, we pray, O God: **Have mercy and hear us.**

Into the night skies you sent angels, O God, to sing good news to watching shepherds. This night, protect all women in childbirth. Guard those who tend children, who care for those who are sick or infirm, who protect public safety and national security, or who bring relief where there is war or disaster. That those who labor tonight may glimpse your glory, we pray, O God: **Have mercy and hear us.**

After Jesus' birth, O God, Mary and Joseph fled oppression and sought refuge in Egypt. Hurry to help those who flee danger and poverty. Accompany them on their journey, meet them with protection and kindness, and guard them from exploitation. That vulnerable people may have you as their defender, we pray, O God: **Have mercy and hear us.**

Your Son took on our human nature so that you could come close to all that you have made. Be near to those who are in special need of your love. Heal all who are sick. Befriend those who are in prison or isolated from others. Bless those who are hungry with food. Comfort those who are sad. That your presence may restore hope to the hurting, we pray, O God: **Have mercy and hear us.**

In Jesus, O God, your life breaks in upon the reign of death. Help us see in the manger the promise of an empty tomb, and so in each moment of our daily living to trust your will for resurrection. We remember before you those whom we love who have died and whom we especially miss. That all who walk through the shadow of death may see a great light, we pray, O God: **Have mercy and hear us.**

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.

OFFERING

ORGAN OFFERTORY

“On Christmas Night”

- Gilbert M. Martin

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

CHOIR ANTHEM

“Noel We Sing”

- Louis Claude Daquin, 1694-1772

(from X Noel “Grand Jeu et Duo”) Robert De Cormier & E. Power Biggs, arrs.

The congregation may stand.

MEAL

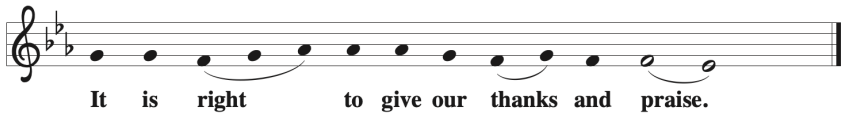
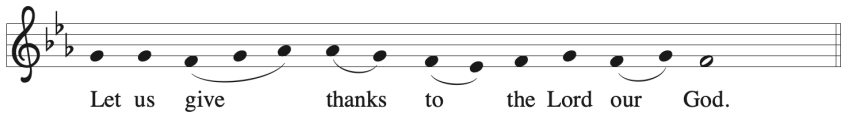
OFFERTORY PRAYER *led by the assisting minister*

Gracious God, your Word-made-flesh brings harmony to the earth.

As we offer ourselves and these your gifts, prepare us to receive the grace and truth you offer at this table and renew in us the song of your salvation, in Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING



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



LORD'S PRAYER

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

“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming”

Red Book #272

“Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”

Red Book #276

CANDLE-LIGHTING AT THE MANGER

CHOIR ANTHEM

“Still, Still, Still”

- German Folk Song
Robert Wetzler, *arr.*

HYMN

“Silent Night”

Red Book #281

PRAYER *led by the assisting minister*

The congregation may stand.

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

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

Red Book #270

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

“A Christmas Postlude”

- Charles Callahan

“A Trumpet Tune”

- Franklin Ashdown

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

The Rev. Kimberly van Driel	Presiding Minister
Maggie Babinka-Repic	Assisting Minister
Larry Hamil	Reader
Andrew O'Rourke and Amelia O'Rourke	Torchbearers
Evan Stein	Crucifer
Emily Stein	Acolyte
Signe Mitchell	Organist
Harry Cunningham	Sr. Choir Director
Marlin Boltz	AV Assisting Minister
Karen Boltz	PowerPoint Minister
Bill and Judy Vilcheck	Ushers
Roxanne Glagola	Altar Guild

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FLOWERS and POINSETTIAS are given to the glory of God by: Joan Giese, Jessie Kamerer, George Schaney, Larry Hamil, Myrna Hamil, Marilyn Shoup, Brandi Stein, Merry Miller, Signe Mitchell, Debbie Gallagher, Sandy Lefebvre, and Tracy Gullickson

CHRISTMAS TREE contributions made by:

Pat & Joe Zupancic, Bob & Karen Domanski, Ted & Joan Giese, Stan & Jeanne Graff, Sandy Lefebvre, Josh & Jessie Kamerer, Marilyn Shoup, Signe Mitchell, Larry Hamil, Merab Drennan, Ben Hosler, Laura & Brent Warmbrod, Brenda Ihlenfeld, Danna Drescher, Dylan Szezurek, Elaine Cavanaugh, Barb Wiefeling, Jack & Jolene Pelgrin, Jim & Jeanette

Cunningham, Larry & Helen Christy, Grace Shields, Myrna Hamil, Rose Cooper, Dennis & Heidi Herritt, Marj Rogner, Kevin & Linda Mathias

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

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