

**First English Lutheran Church
Butler, Pennsylvania**

**Service of Holy Communion
First Sunday of Christmas
December 29, 2024
10:00 a.m.**

GATHERING

PRELUDE

“From Heaven Above to Earth I Come” - Paul Kickstat
“How Silently, How Silently” - Wilbur Held
“Of the Father’s Love Begotten” - Ludwig Lenel

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sins against God and one another.

The congregation may kneel or adopt another posture appropriate for confession. A moment of silence is kept.

Most merciful God,
we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

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

“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

Red Book #288

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

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.
Chris - te e - lei - son. Christ, have mer - cy.
Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.

HYMN OF PRAISE

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

Red Book #289

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray: Shine into our hearts the light of your wisdom, O God, and open our minds to the knowledge of your word, that in all things we may think and act according to your good will and may live continually in the light of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The congregation may sit.

THE WORD

CHILDREN’S SERMON

FIRST READING

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26

Having dedicated her son Samuel to God's service, Hannah visits him every year when she and her husband Elkanah come to the temple to offer sacrifices. God grants Hannah more children, and Samuel himself gains favor in the sight of all.

¹⁸ Samuel was ministering before the Lord, a boy wearing a linen ephod. ¹⁹ His mother used to make for him a little robe and take it to him each year, when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. ²⁰ Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, "May the Lord repay you with children by this woman for the gift that she made to the Lord"; and then they would return to their home.

²⁶ Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favor with the Lord and with the people.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 148

¹ Hallelujah! 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.**

³ Praise the Lord, sun and moon;
sing praise, all you shining stars.

⁴ **Praise the Lord, heaven of heavens,
and you waters above the heavens.**

⁵ Let 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.**

⁷ Praise the Lord from the earth,
you sea monsters and all deeps;

⁸ **fire and hail, snow and fog,
tempestuous wind, doing God's will;**

⁹ mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars;

¹⁰ **wild beasts and all cattle,
creeping things and flying birds;**

¹¹ sovereigns of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the world;

¹² **young men and maidens,
old and young together.**

¹³ Let 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 Colossians 3:12-17

Just as newly baptized Christians in the early church were clothed with new garments upon arising from the baptismal waters, so all who have received God's gift of life in Jesus Christ are covered with the character of Christ.

¹² As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. ¹³ Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

The congregation may stand.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

"Let All Together Praise Our God" *sts. 1, 5, and 6* Red Book #787

GOSPEL Luke 2:41-52

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

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus grew up in a family that went to the Passover festival each year. It was in this environment of faithful adherence to the law that Jesus grew into spiritual maturity and

an understanding of his identity and mission.

⁴¹ Now every year [Jesus'] parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. ⁴² And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. ⁴³ When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. ⁴⁴ Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵ When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. ⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸ When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety." ⁴⁹ He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" ⁵⁰ But they did not understand what he said to them. ⁵¹ Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

The congregation may sit.

SERMON

The congregation may stand.

HYMN OF THE DAY

"In the Bleak Midwinter"

Red Book #294

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

Filled with good news of great joy, let us offer our prayers for the church, the earth, and all people.

A brief silence.

For those who teach and those who learn, we pray. Bless the education ministries of your church. Guide Sunday school teachers, college and seminary professors, and Bible study leaders in our ongoing faith formation and curiosity. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

For the thriving of creation, we pray. Increase our knowledge of the natural world and the care of its inhabitants. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

For the nations of the world, we pray. Raise up rulers who lead with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Let your peace rule in their hearts and in all lands. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

For the well-being of your people, we pray. Keep watch over all who travel this holiday season. Accompany those who are alone or ill, especially those whom we name now before you...Console parents and children whose relationships are strained or severed. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

For the ministry of this congregation, we pray. Let the word of Christ dwell among us. In times of conflict, clothe us in love and move us to forgiveness. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

For your holy, beloved, and chosen ones of every time and place, we give thanks. Draw us all into everlasting praise and joy. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

We commend these prayers to you, O God, trusting your grace made known to all, through the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

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

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Gesu Bambino”

- Pietro A. Yon

Linda Mathias, *soprano*

The congregation may stand.

OFFERING PRAYER

led by the assisting minister

Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

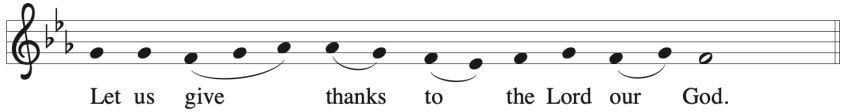
GREAT THANKSGIVING



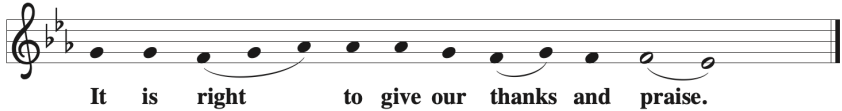
The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.



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....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.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation...

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

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

“Love Has Come”

Red Book #292

“Away in a Manger”

Red Book #277

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

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

Amen.

SONG AFTER COMMUNION



A - ho - ra, Se - ñor, se - gún tu pro - me - sa, pue - des de -
At last, Lord, your word of prom - ise ful - fill - ing, you let your



jar a tu sier - vo ir - se en paz. Por - que mis
ser - vant go forth in free - dom and peace. With my own



o - jos han vis - to a tu Sal - va - dor, a quien has
eyes I have seen the sal - va - tion you have pre -



pre - sen - ta - do an - te to - dos los pue - blos: . . .
pared . . . in the sight of all of the peo - ples: a



luz pa - ra a - lum - brar a las na - cio - nes, y
light that will re - veal you to the na - tions, and the



glo - ria de tu pue - blo Is - ra - el.
glo - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

led by the assisting minister

Merciful God,
we thank you for Jesus, who is our heavenly food.
Strengthened by this goodness,
send us forth to announce your peace,
comfort the afflicted,
and share the good news of great joy.
Amen.

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

“Cold December Flies Away”

Red Book #299

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. The Lord is with you!

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

“There’s a Star in the East”

- African American Spiritual

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

The Rev. Gene Hollingsworth	Presiding Minister
Sue Morrow	Assisting Minister
Maggie Babinka-Repic	Communion Assistant
Tracy Gullickson	Reader
Amelia O’Rourke	Crucifer
Alex Kamerer	Acolyte
Kevin Mathias	Organist
Marlin Boltz	AV Assisting Minister
Karen Boltz	PowerPoint Minister
Stan Graff, Dan Morrow, Andrew O’Rourke	Ushers
Jack and Amy Beiler	Counters
Roxanne Glagola	Altar Guild

*Altar flowers are given to the glory of God by the Glagola family,
in loving memory of Ryan.*

All are welcome to join us for social hour following the worship service.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST ENGLISH

Mon., 12/30	5:00 PM	Community Dinner
	8:00 PM	NA Meeting (Social Hall)
Wed., 1/1		<i>Church Office Closed</i>
Thurs., 1/2	7:00 PM	Choir Rehearsal
	7:30 PM	NA Meeting (Downstairs)

Sat., 1/4	10:30 AM	ACA Meeting (Downstairs)
	12:00 PM	NA Meeting (Downstairs)
Sun., 1/5	9:00 AM	Bible Study (Pastor's Office)
	10:00 AM	Worship
	5:30 PM	AA Meeting (Downstairs)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Kimberly will be on vacation until January 4.

The church office will be closed on Wednesday, January 1.

PRAYERS

Tim Reamer; Shirley Mould; Tom Lasky; Nelson Ng; Jack Goetz; Debbie & family; family of Alice Miller; Mackenzie Hunt; Tatum Scilia; Fred Miller; Kathy and Tom Frank; Karen Boltz's sister & her family; Jaime Rickert; family of Dorothy Croupe; family of Amy; Cindy Regis & all those who are affected by the hurricanes; Laura Warmbrod's mother; Rob; Jamie Maluk & family; David Fisher & family; Tommy, Jenny, & Aspen Zarnick; family of Richard Daller (brother of Betty Turner); Scott Tammaro; George Schaney; Stephen Wright; Steve; family of Beth Chambers; Don Eckels; Valerie Kurth; family of John Mileski; Cindy Halin; Mike Gibson; Dennis; Debra Williamson; Amy Waldron; Evelyn Shaulis; Bill Brown; Ben & the Keeler family; Tracy Tucci; Iman; Aryl Bashline; Julie, Greg & family; family of Kenneth Mathias; Pr. Jim Dollhopf & family; Bruce Solomon; family & friends of Walter Szczurek; Paul Eicholtz; Frank Miller; Tad Sellers

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

Jeremiah 31:7-14

Joy at the gathering of God's scattered flock

Psalms 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

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