

December 29, 2019
First Sunday Of Christmas
10:00 AM



First Lutheran Church
BOTHELL

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

STATEMENT OF WELCOME

We, the community of First Lutheran Church of Bothell, proclaim the message that the grace of our Lord is infinitely inclusive and that everyone is welcome. We believe that Christ calls us to reconciliation and wholeness in a world of alienation and brokenness.

As a Reconciling in Christ congregation and as disciples of Christ seeking justice and reconciliation among all peoples, we at First Lutheran Church welcome all into the fullness of God's love. **We welcome everyone, without exception and regardless of sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical and mental ability, age, or station in life.** We recognize that each person is a unique creation of God, and through grace, a child of God.

All are welcome at First Lutheran.

All are welcome to worship, to hear the Good News, to receive the sacraments, and to share in fellowship and service. As members of First Lutheran Church, we pledge ourselves and our congregation to exercise our faith in Christ, treasuring one another's similarities while embracing our God-given differences. We pledge that we will strive to live as a reconciling people, in our life together and in our outreach to the world.

Pastor

Rev. Tor Kristian Berg
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Director of Music Organist

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WORSHIP

- + Please sign the white card in the pew rack and hand it to an usher on your way forward for Holy Communion.
- + The service is printed in this bulletin. Some hymns are located in the red hymn book.
- + Hearing enhancement receivers, large print bulletins are available. Feel free to ask an usher for assistance.
- + Our expectation is that children will be in worship. We understand that there are times when your wiggly ones need a distraction. There is a “Pray Space” under the stairs in the inner narthex with soft toys and books. If you desire the nursery ask an usher for directions.
- + Public Wi-Fi password: MartyLuther.
- + If you would like to have a digital copy of the bulletin, go to our website and download the PDF. www.flcbothell.org

Assisting With Today's Service:

Presiding Minister: Rev. Tor K. Berg

Music Director	Lucy Kay Osborne	Ushers	Todd Mass & Ryan Stute
Ensemble Director	Richard Edmonds	Lector	Susan Berg
		Greeter	Jerry Bannister
Percussion	Joe Siebert	Sound Tech	Andrew Phelps
Acolyte	Ryan Mass	Communion Assistants	Jeffrey Kosman, Kris Linderoth & Julie Mass
Ensemble	June Condra, Doug Peterson, Beth & Gordy Phelps, Randall Wampler	Pew Angel	Joanne Bjornsen

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE: *In Dulci Jubilo* (P. Manz)

WELCOME

GATHERING SONG: *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice* (ELW 288)



- 1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
- 2 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
- 3 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;



give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;
now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!
now ye need not fear the grave; Je - sus Christ was born to save!



ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.
He has o - pened heav - en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.



Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Heavenly God, when Jesus was baptized by John in the wilderness, you claimed him as your son. Claim us as your children, inheritors of your glorious kingdom. Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE: *What Child Is This* (ELW 296)



- 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar - y's lap is sleep - ing?
- 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?
- 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas - ant, king, to own him.



Whom an - gels greet with an-thems sweet while shep-herds watch are keep - ing?
Good Chris-tian, fear; for sin-ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.
The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en-throne him.



This, this is Christ the king, whom shep-herds guard and an - gels sing;
Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

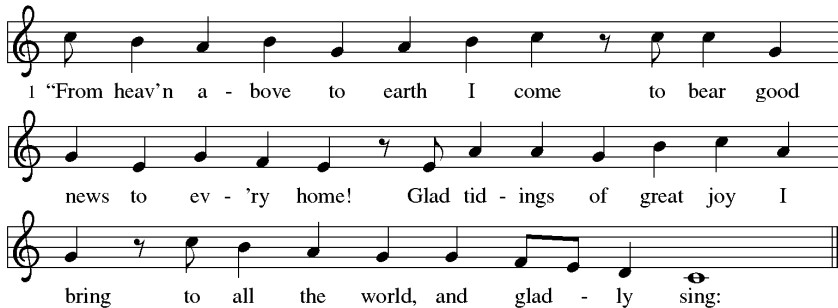
ANTHEM: *Bring a Torch Jeanette, Isabella* (Fettke/Grassi)

Richard Edmonds, Tenor

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

WELCOMING THE WORD: *From Heaven Above* (ELW 268) v. 1



GOSPEL: Mark 1:1-20

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."

⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

¹²And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

¹⁴Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near, repent, and believe in the good news."

¹⁶As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea — for they were fishermen. ¹⁷And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." ¹⁸And immediately they left their nets and followed him. ¹⁹As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. ²⁰Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

Word of God.

Word of life.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: *'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime* (ELW 284)



1 'Twas in the moon of win - ter - time when all the birds had fled, that
 2 With - in a lodge of bro - ken bark the ten - der babe was found; a
 3 The ear - liest moon of win - ter - time is not so round and fair as
 4 O chil - dren of the for - est free, the an - gel - song is true; the



*God the Lord of all the earth sent an - gel choirs in - stead; be -
 rag - ged robe of rab - bit skin en - wrapped his beau - ty round; but
 was the ring of glo - ry on the help - less in - fant there. The
 ho - ly child of earth and heav'n is born to - day for you. Come,



fore their light the stars grew dim, and wan - d'ring hunt - ers heard the hymn:
 as the hunt - er braves drew nigh, the an - gel song rang loud and high:
 chiefs from far be - fore him knelt with gifts of fox and bea - ver pelt.
 kneel be - fore the ra - diant boy, who brings you beau - ty, peace, and joy.



Refrain
 Je - sus your king is born! Je - sus is born, in ex - cel - sis glo - ri - a!

HOLY BAPTISM: *Frances Marie Knox, daughter of Kesley & Chris Knox*

PRESENTATION

God, who is rich in mercy and love, gives us a new birth into a living hope through the sacrament of baptism. By water and the Word God delivers us from sin and death and raises us to new life in Jesus Christ. We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God's mission for the life of the world. Who is presented for baptism?

Sponsors: I present Frances for baptism.

Called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, do you desire to have Frances baptized into Christ?

Parents: I do.

As you bring Frances to receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities:

to live with her among God's faithful people,
bring her to the word of God and the holy supper,
teach her the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments,
place in her hands the holy scriptures,
and nurture her in faith and prayer,
so that Frances may learn to trust God,
proclaim Christ through word and deed,
care for others and the world God made,
and work for justice and peace.

Do you promise to help Frances grow in the Christian faith and life?

Parents: I do.

Sponsors, do you promise to nurture Frances in the Christian faith as you are empowered by God's Spirit, and to help her live in the covenant of baptism and in communion with the church?

Sponsors: I do.

People of God, do you promise to support Frances and pray for her in her new life in Christ?

We do.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church.

Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God, the powers of this world that rebel against God, and the ways of sin that draw you from God?

I renounce them.

Do you believe in God the Father?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE FONT

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight. Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family, and through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you set us free from the power of sin and death and raise us up to live in you.

Pour out your Holy Spirit, the power of your living Word, that those who are washed in the waters of baptism may be given new life. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

BAPTISM

Frances, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen. Blessed be God, the source of all life, the word of salvation, the spirit of mercy.

Let us pray.

We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give your daughters and sons new birth, cleanse them from sin, and raise them to eternal life.

Sustain Frances with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

Amen.

Frances, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever.

Amen.

WELCOME

Jesus said, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will have the light of life. Let us welcome the newly baptized.

We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share: join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's creative and redeeming word to all the world.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Gathered with all who seek the Christ child, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

Praise is on our lips and in our hearts, Holy One, for the gracious deeds and acts that you have bestowed upon your church. Give to your whole church open hearts that we might work together to share your good news in Christ Jesus. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Praise to you, Creator of all, for you have created a rich diversity of nature and creatures: sun, moon, stars, the Cascade mountains and all hills, Pacific ocean, Puget Sound, Lake Washington and the Sammamish river. Sustain all that you made and keep us faithful in our care for creation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We bless you, Ruler of all, for the communities and nations of which we are a part. Gather into your arms the many peoples of the world and grant humility to all leaders, so that all may find blessing and peace. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

O Holy One, you overcame death and freed us from all fear. Give courage to all who are afraid and comfort to all who suffer in any way, especially Erika. Give patience and compassion to those who provide care. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Nurturing God, you care for your children in any danger. Grant courage to our congregation, that we are present with children who need our love and protection, with parents who grieve the loss of children, and with those who seek safety from hurtful situations. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

For whom do the people pray?

Light of life, you claim us as your children forever. We praise you for those who have gone before us in the faith, serving as witnesses to your presence (*especially*). Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Into your gracious hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your steadfast mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

PEACE

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

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM: A Stable Lamp is Lighted (R. Wilbur/P. Tollefson)

1 A stable lamp is lighted whose glow
shall wake the sky;
The stars shall bend their voices, and
ev'ry stone shall cry.
And ev'ry stone shall cry and straw like
gold shall shine;
A barn shall harbor heaven, a stall
become a shrine.

2 This child through David's city shall
ride in triumph by;
The palm shall strew its branches, and
every stone shall cry.
And every stone shall cry, though
heavy, dull, and dumb,
And lie within the roadway to pave his
kingdom come.

3 Yet he shall be forsaken and yielded up
to die;
The sky shall groan and darken, and
ev'ry stone shall cry.
And ev'ry stone shall cry for stony
hearts of men;
God's blood upon the spearhead, God's
love refused again.

4 But, now, as at the ending, the low is
lifted high;
The stars shall bend their voices, and
ev'ry stone shall cry.
And ev'ry stone shall cry in praises of
the child
By whose descent among us the worlds
are reconciled.

PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS: : *In the Bleak Midwinter* (ELW 294)



1 In the bleak mid - win - ter, frost - y wind made moan,
 2 Heav - en can - not hold him, nor . . . earth sus - tain;
 3 What . . . can I give him, poor . . . as I am?



earth stood hard as i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;
 heav'n and earth shall flee a - way when he comes to reign;
 If I were a shep - herd I would bring a lamb;



snow had fall - en, snow on snow, snow on snow,
 in the bleak mid - win - ter a sta - ble place suf - ficed
 if I were a wise . . . man I would do my part;



in the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go.
 the Lord . . . God al - might - y, Je - sus Christ.
 yet what I can I give him— give my heart.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Generous God, you have given us life, this community, and these gifts of the earth that become the meal of your grace. Move in our hearts, that we might use your gifts to bring hope and blessing wherever we go, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

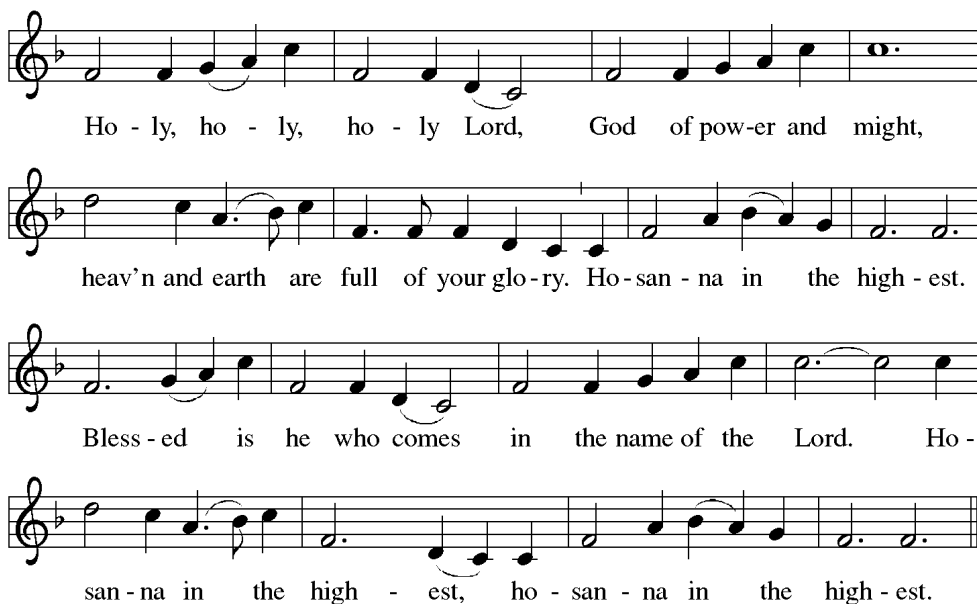
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

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, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



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

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God, Creator of all and Source of life, at the birth of time your word brought light into the world.

In the fullness of time, you sent your Word, born of Mary, to shine in our darkness and to make us your daughters and sons.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his birth and life among us, his death and resurrection, we await his coming again when all things will be restored in him.

By your Spirit bless us and this bread and cup, that, held and nourished by you, we may live as your children, shining with the light of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

Amen

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,

and the glory are yours,

now and forever. **Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Love has come: God's love for all people. Come and eat, for Christ invites you.

COMMUNION: *We will receive the body of Christ as gluten-free bread with these or similar words: The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ will be received as either red wine or white grape juice with these or similar words: The blood of Christ, shed for you.*

WHO MAY COMMUNE? *All are welcome at the Lord's Table. It is a free gift given to all for the forgiveness of sins. The words "for you" really mean FOR YOU! Children may commune at the discretion of their parents. If you wish to receive a blessing: cross your arms over your chest as a sign for the communion assistants.*

DIRECTIONS FOR COMMUNION: *Please come forward by the center aisle at the direction of the ushers to receive the sacrament and return to your seat down the side aisle. Please register each person taking communion on a pew card.*

COMMUNION HYMNS:

Angels We Have Heard on High (ELW 289)

The First Noel (ELW 300)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Emmanuel, God with us, you grace us with life and breath and give us bread for the journey. Send us out in service to this world that you love, telling the amazing news of your coming to be Savior and Lord of all.
Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

Grace from God's own heart,
peace from the Child in the manger,
and strength from the Spirit of life
be blessings for you today and forever.
Amen.

SENDING SONG: *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (ELW 290)

Refrain



Go tell it on the moun - tain, o-ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;



go tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!



- 1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
- 2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when, lo, a - bove the earth
- 3 Down in a lone - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born;



Refrain

be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless-ed Christ-mas morn.

DISMISSAL

Christ is born! Go tell it on the mountain and everywhere.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: *From Heaven Above to Earth I Come* (J. Walther)

IN OUR PRAYERS

Our Ministry Partners:

Lutheran Disaster Response, Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Services, Lutheran Counseling Network, Lutheran World Relief, Northwest Washington Synod

Those living with cancer:

Juanita (Bonnie & Bob Ahlstedt's sister-in-law), **Charlie** (Jeff Almeida's father), **Del Benson** (member), **Alan** (Joan & Carl Christian's son), **Russel** (Karey Coble's cousin), **Erika** (Kristin Smith's cousin), **Edith Holbrook** (member), **Heather** (Kevin & Vicki Kastning's niece), **Richard** (Ruth Neitzel's brother), **Pam** (Marlis Pehling's niece), **Don** (Doug Peterson's brother), **Janette** (Beth Phelps' cousin), (member), **Teresa** (Michelle Tuck's friend), **Roger** (Michelle Tuck's brother-in-law), **Ted** (Sue Toyoda's friend), **Kip** (Paul Desilet's uncle), **Jim** (Hendricks' family friend), **Joanne** (Carolyn Becker's sister-in-law) & **Clara** (Pat Daane's cousin).

Those who are ill, have an injury or who are recovering from surgery:

Keely Adjorlolo (member), **Marilyn Anderson** (member), **Paul Anderson** (member), **Jack Becker** (member), **Lillian** (Bob Berg's mother), **Lou** (Cathy Edwards' friend), **Nancy Davis** (member), **Roy King** (member), **Barb** (Stacy Souriall's friend), **Ryan** (Cathy Edwards' grandson), **Betty Magee** (member), **Anne Marie** (Hildur O'Conner's daughter), **Katie** (Hildur O'Conner's daughter), **Eileen Payne** (Tom Payne's mother), **Eric** (Sally Adams' cousin), **Ron** (Krista Daniel's father), **Lorretta Rapp** (member), **Dennis Shogren** (Dave Shogren's brother), **Helen** (Renee Baker's mother), **Lola** (Bob Berg's aunt), **Mona Shogren** (member), **Loretta** (Nora Srothman's sister-in-law), **Sadako** (Sue Toyoda's mother-in-law), **Dandy** (Julie Selmikeit-Weyn's husband), **Darlene** (Andrea Faubion's mother),

Those who are homebound or in extended care facilities:

Phyllis Enger (member), **Lillian & Lawrence** (Leon Romaniuk's parents), **Harriet** (Eleanor Walters' mother), **Jacquie Stoll** (member), **Sigrid** (Carsten Thode's mother) & **Phyllis Watters** (member).

Please remember to pray for peace in these war torn areas:

Israel/Palestine, Syria, Afghanistan, North Korea, Somalia and Iraq.

Those Serving Our Country:

AIR FORCE: **Tyler Ripley** (Jeanne Koruga's nephew) and **Erin Siebert** (Linda & Joe Siebert's daughter)
Mason Land (Debbie & Darryl Lageson's nephew)

ARMY: **Shaun Cunningham** (Cris Sherman's son-in-law), **Lucas Peters** (Jim & Vernita Steege's grandson), **Asis Montalvo** (Adjorlolo family friend), **Ben Souriall** (Stacy & Mike Souriall's son)

MARINES: **James Bacon** (Jeanne Koruga's friend) and **Olav Wampler** (Elizabeth & Randall Wampler's son)

NAVY: **Karl Krueger** (Karin Ulvin's husband), **Kelsey Schunk** (Jack Schunk's granddaughter), & **Christopher Whipple** (Carolyn & Richard Whipple's son)

We are honored to be able to pray for your family members and close friends in need. Our policy is to publish immediate concerns for 2 weeks, unless we hear from you that an illness or situation is ongoing.

INFORMATION For the Week!

Sunday, December 29 First Sunday of Christmas

9:45 am

NO Education Hour

10:00 am

Worship with Holy Baptism of Francis Marie Knox

Monday, December 30

Limited Church Office Hours—Call before you come in! 425-486-2314

Tuesday, December 31

Limited Church Office Hours—Call before you come in! 425-486-2314

Wednesday, January 1

Happy New Year!

Church Office Closed

Thursday, January 2

Limited Church Office Hours—Call before you come in! 425-486-2314

No Sanctuary Choir rehearsal!

Friday, December January 3

Church Office Closed

Saturday, January 4

9:00 am

Altar Guild

Garden Guild

Sunday, January 5 Second Sunday of Christmas

8:30 am

Worship

9:45 am

Education Hour for all ages!

11:00 am

Worship

January 5, 2019 Second Sunday of Christmas

Mark 1:21-45

Jesus Heals Three People

Weekly Financial Report

December 22, 2019,

Attendance: n/a

General Offerings: n/a

Mortgage Fund: n/a

Amount needed per Sunday:

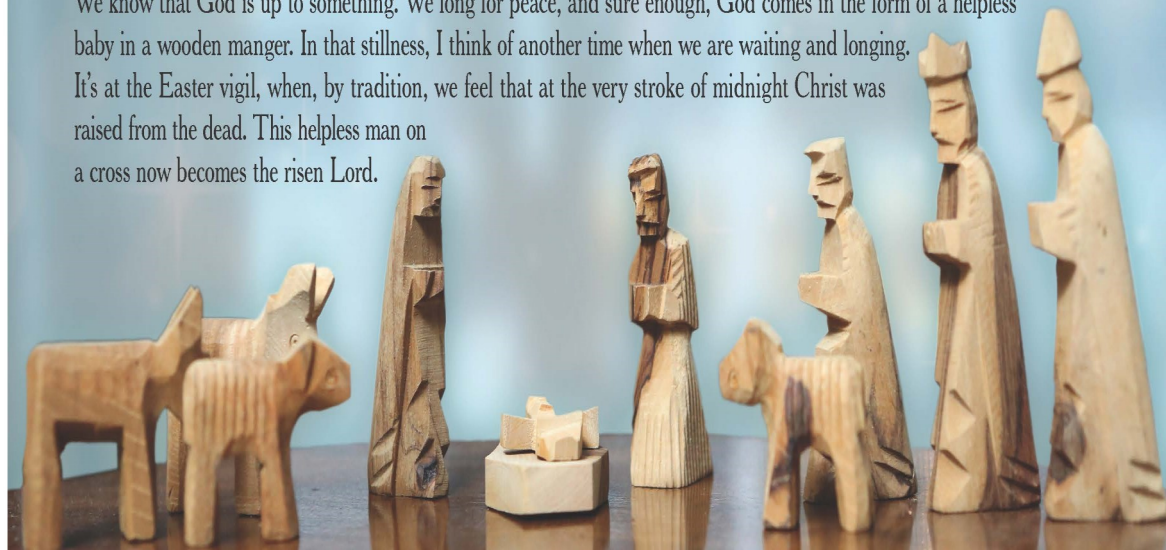
General Offerings: \$9,907

Mortgage Fund: \$1,098

On Christmas Eve there always comes a time when everything is finally still. After all the preparations and Christmas pageants, after all of the rushing, it's wonderful just to settle into that stillness and have a chance to think about the *miracle of Advent and Christmas*.

For me that came after the 11 o'clock candlelight service and after going home. With my husband and children in bed, I could think and settle into that stillness and marvel at the miracle that had happened.

We know that God is up to something. We long for peace, and sure enough, God comes in the form of a helpless baby in a wooden manger. In that stillness, I think of another time when we are waiting and longing. It's at the Easter vigil, when, by tradition, we feel that at the very stroke of midnight Christ was raised from the dead. This helpless man on a cross now becomes the risen Lord.



I hope and pray, dear church, that in this season of Advent and Christmas you will find time for stillness, find time to sense the expectation and the longing, but also to celebrate the *miracle of God's love* that has come to us in the form of a tiny baby who grows to be a human being who gives his life for us, that we might have life.

Merry Christmas, dear church.

Elizabeth A. Eaton

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Sermon Notes

What one word stuck out for me?

What phrase or sentence was especially memorable?

What did I hear that I am eager to share with another person?

I think the title of the sermon is: