



Faith Lutheran Church & School

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Vaunda Noerenberg, Traditional Worship

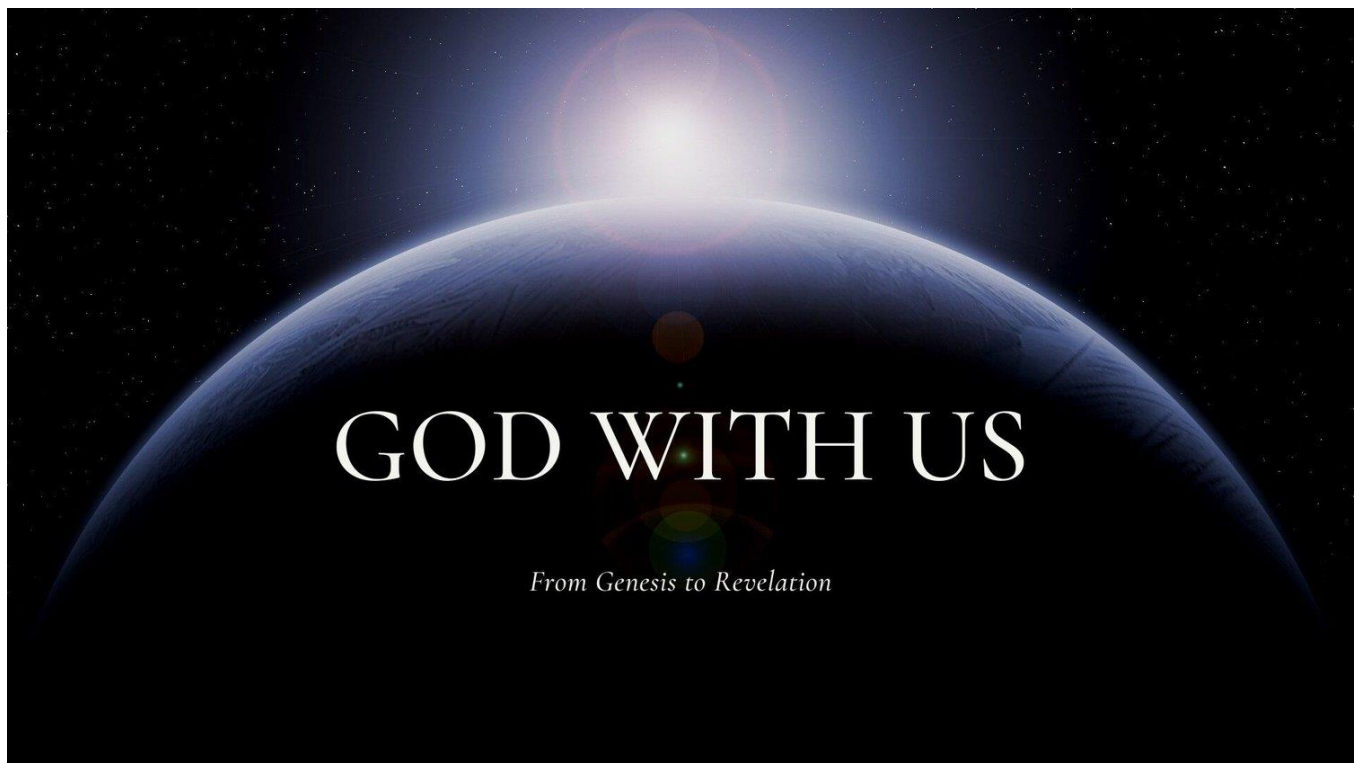
Reid Stevens, Contemporary Worship

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

DECEMBER 8, 2024

8:15 AM

“Exalted... God with Us.”



The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.... that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, for “In him we live and move and have our being.”

-- Acts 17

ALTAR FLOWERS TODAY ARE GIVEN TODAY TO THE GLORY OF GOD

At the beginning of the service all are asked to sign the attendance card located in the pew racks and place them in the offering plate during the collection. So that we may better serve you and send you more information, guests, please print your address and telephone number on this card.

Acknowledgments

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THIS WEEK AT FAITH

Why does the church year begin at Advent, and what is the meaning of Advent?

The word "advent" is from the Latin word for "coming," and as such, describes the "coming" of our Lord Jesus Christ into the flesh. Advent begins the church year because the church year begins where Jesus' earthly life began — in the Old Testament prophecies of his incarnation. After Advent comes Christmas, which is about his birth; then Epiphany, about his miracles and ministry; then Lent, about his Calvary-bound mission; then Easter, about his resurrection and the sending of the apostles; and then Ascension (40 days after Easter) and Pentecost, with the sending of the Holy Spirit.

Messiah is coming... Messiah Jesus has come... Messiah Jesus is coming again

Advent specifically focuses on Christ's "coming," but Christ's coming manifests itself among us in three ways — past, present, and future. Advent reminds us that Jesus is coming soon... Lord, prepare us!

WE BELIEVE GOD'S WORD... ON THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that in the Sacrament of Holy Communion Christ gives His true body and blood under the form of bread and wine for the assurance of the forgiveness of sins. We believe Jesus is truly present in the Sacrament, and as we come in faith to receive it, we receive Him. The Bible teaches that those who eat without recognizing the Lord's body, eat and drink judgment on themselves (*1 Corinthians 11:27-29*). Those baptized and believing Christians who share our confession of faith are welcome guests at the Altar. The Pastor would be glad to answer any questions relating to our faith or practice. Anyone not confirmed or communing is welcome to come and receive a blessing.

Also Happening This Week (Dec 9 to 14, 2024)

Tuesday, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Create in Me - Ladies' Crafts

Wednesday, 6:30 p.m., Advent Worship K – 8 Children's

Our Discipleship the Past Weeks:

Worship	11/24/24	12/1/24	12/8/24	12/15/24	12/22/24
8:15 Traditional	85(80)	67 (59)			
11:00 Contemporary	46 (40)	54 (50)			
Sunday School		30			
Monthly Budget	\$44,200	\$44,200	\$44,200	\$44,200	
Giving MTD	\$57,747	\$6763			
Weekly Giving	\$31,129.84	\$6763			

ORDER OF WORSHIP

As We Gather In this month of December, we find ourselves getting ready and preparing for many things, such as gatherings with family and friends, gifts to get and give to others, traditional treats to be made, and decorations for the season. The foremost preparation, of course, is for our Savior's birth. Today we are reminded of another time of preparation that would be after Jesus' birth and prior to His earthly ministry—that of John the Baptist, who would prepare for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. In our busy times of preparing to celebrate this season, today we draw our focus on and give thanks for the one who would raise valleys, level mountains, and make straight the paths for Him.

OPENING HYMN **"ON JORDAN'S BANK THE BAPTIST CRY"** *LSB 344*

- 1. On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake and hearken, for he brings Glad tidings of the King of kings!**
- 2. Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin; Make straight the way for God within,
And let us all our hearts prepare For Christ to come and enter there.**
- 3. We hail Thee as our Savior, Lord, Our refuge and our great reward;
Without Thy grace we waste away Like flow'rs that wither and decay.**
- 4. Lay on the sick Thy healing hand And make the fallen strong to stand;
Show us the glory of Thy face Till beauty springs in ev'ry place.**
- 5. All praise, eternal Son, to Thee Whose advent sets Thy people free.
Whom with the Father we adore And Holy Spirit evermore.**

INVOCATION

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

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

We light our second Advent candle as we prepare for the arrival of the Savior, who would come to His people in human flesh and who promises to come again. In a world of darkness, a light shines. Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

The second Advent candle has been known by a few different names, including the Bethlehem candle, the preparation candle, and the candle of peace. As we await the angelic proclamation of "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased," we rejoice in the present reality of the peace Christ has assured in and through Him until perfect and eternal peace is ushered in upon His return. In this season, and until that day, we find comfort in His assurance: "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

Guided by the light of peace, we respond with the psalmist: “There are many who say,
‘Who will show us some good? Lift up the light of Your face upon us, O Lord!’
You have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and wine abound.

Two Advent candles are lit.

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL (LSB 357 STS. 3 – 4)

**♩ 3. O come, O come, Thou Lord of might,
Who to Thy tribes on Sinai’s height
In ancient times didst give the Law In cloud and majesty and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

**4. O come, Thou Branch of Jesse’s tree, Free them from Satan’s tyranny
That trust Thy mighty pow’r to save,
And give them vict’ry o’er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Malachi prophesies about and John the Baptist fulfills the call of the one who would prepare the way for the Lord. John the Baptist would preach a Baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. We, too, seek the forgiveness our Lord has promised, and our Savior gives us assurance as we come before Him in humble repentance.

Our help is in the name of the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.

If You, O LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?
But with You there is forgiveness, that You may be feared.

Since we are gathered to hear God’s Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and prepare again to receive Him who came in our flesh, comes through His Word and in His body and blood given and shed for us, and promises to come again, let us stand before Him in humble and contrite confession.

We are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by the things we have done and left undone, and we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition.

We have not loved the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength,
and we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.

We justly deserve present and eternal punishment, but for the sake of Jesus Christ, we pray:

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.

Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough places shall become level ways, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of the Word, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit. May He who began a good work in you bring it to completion on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

“Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.”

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

“Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.”

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT READING

MALACHI 3:1–7

¹“Behold, I send my messenger and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. ²But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap. ³He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the LORD. ⁴Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

⁵“Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

⁶“For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed.

⁷From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them.”

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

PSALM 66

¹Shout for joy to God, all the earth;²sing the glory of his name;

give to him glorious praise!

³Say to God, "How awesome are your deeds!

So great is your power that your enemies come cringing to you.

⁴All the earth worships you and sings praises to you;

they sing praises to your name."

⁵Come and see what God has done:

he is awesome in his deeds toward the children of man.

⁸Bless our God, O peoples;

let the sound of his praise be heard,

⁹who has kept our soul among the living

and has not let our feet slip.

EPISTLE

PHILIPPIANS 1:2–11

²Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, ⁴always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, ⁵because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. ⁹And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

VERSE

LUKE 3:4, 6

Alleluia. Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight;

all flesh shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia.

HOLY GOSPEL

LUKE 3:1–20

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the third chapter.

Glory to You, O Lord.

¹In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

³And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁴As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

⁵Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough places shall become level ways,

⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

⁷He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. ⁹Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰And the crowds asked him, “What then shall we do?” ¹¹And he answered them, “Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise.” ¹²Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, “Teacher, what shall we do?” ¹³And he said to them, “Collect no more than you are authorized to do.”

¹⁴Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what shall we do?” And he said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages.”

¹⁵As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, ¹⁶John answered them all, saying, “I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

¹⁸So with many other exhortations he preached good news to the people. ¹⁹But Herod the tetrarch, who had been reproved by him for Herodias, his brother’s wife, and for all the evil things that Herod had done, ²⁰added this to them all, that he locked up John in prison.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

SERMON HYMN

“PREPARE THE ROYAL HIGHWAY”

LSB 343

**♪ 1. Prepare the royal highway, the King of kings is near;
let every hill and valley a level road appear.**

Then greet the king of glory foretold in sacred story:

***Refrain:* O blest is he that came in God the Father's name!**

2. God’s people, see him coming: your own eternal king!

Palm branches strew before him; spread garments; shout and sing.

God’s promise will not fail you; no more shall doubt assail you [*Refrain*]

**3. Then fling the gates wide open to greet your promised king;
your king, yet every nation its tribute too should bring.**

All lands, bow down before him; all voices, thus adore him: [Refrain]

**4. His is no earthly kingdom; it comes from heaven above.
His rule is peace and freedom, and justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding for kindness so abounding:**

Refrain: O blest is he that came in God the Father's name!

SERMON

“EXALTED, GOD WITH US”

**The LORD lives, and blessed be my rock,
and exalted be the God of my salvation— (Psalm 18)**

**¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to preach, saying,
“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matthew 4)**

Exalted: To be high, lifted up, holy, above and beyond anything else in the universe, and beyond our understanding.

God with Us (Immanuel): It is used in the Hebrew Bible to signify the presence of God among His people. The name is a prophetic sign of hope and divine intervention, indicating that God is actively involved in the lives of His people, providing guidance, protection, and deliverance.

NICENE CREED

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.**

And in one Lord Jesus Christ the only-begotten Son of God,

begotten of His Father before all worlds,

God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God,

**begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;**

who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven

and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary

and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.

**He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the
Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father.**

**And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.**

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life,

**who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son
together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.**

And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,

I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,

and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Let us pray for the church, for the people of God, and for all people according to their needs.

Heavenly Father, we thank You for the gathering of us together around Word and Sacrament, as You call, gather, and enlighten us through Your Spirit. Keep Your church united in truth, as Christ has completed His work for the sake of humanity as we await His return. As You continue to work in us and through us Your grace and mercy, empower us by Your Spirit to live holy lives according to Your will and to live as Your witnesses among our neighbors, coworkers, and community. As we pray to You now, we also pray with Paul upon ourselves and all believers who call upon Your name:

“I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. And I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.”

Be with all who bear Your Word, including those who serve as missionaries both near and far. Grant open ears and eager hearts to receive the good news of a Savior given, and forgiveness assured. For all who face trials, persecution, and even death for confessing Your name, grant a steadfastness of faith even in the most dire times.

“It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.”

For all who are sick, lonely, and in need of comfort, we lift them up to You, [*including . . .* _____]. According to Your will, grant healing. According to Your promises, remain with them with the comfort and peace of Your presence in times of affliction. Be with doctors, nurses, and medical staff as they use the gifts and abilities given to them. Help us and others to serve as Your instruments that we may show compassion in times of need, speak words of hope in times of hopelessness, and serve according to needs had in times of helplessness. For all people, as we prepare to receive and rejoice in the Savior given and born for us, keep us prepared for the day of His coming again.

“And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”

Additional petitions may follow.

Into Your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

COLLECTION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS



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For your convenience, we now accept gifts via Venmo or PayPal.

OFFERTORY

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 Him thanks and praise.

It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory.

Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross. We thank You for all the work of Your hands and for all the words You have spoken and kept, as You come to us still now with Your healing grace through Christ's body and blood given and shed for us.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

Please take a moment and share the Peace of the Lord with those around you.

ARISE, O CHRISTIAN PEOPLE LSB 354

- ♪ 1. Arise, O Christian people! Prepare yourselves today;
Prepare to greet the Savior, Who takes your sins away.
To us by grace alone The truth and light were given;
The promised Lord from heaven To all the world is shown.
2. Prepare the way before Him; Prepare for Him the best.
Cast out what would offend Him, This great, this heav'nly guest.
Make straight, make plain the way: The lowly valleys raising,
The heights of pride abasing, His path all even lay.
3. The humble heart and lowly God raises up on high;
Beneath His feet in terror The haughty soul shall lie.
The heart sincere and right, That heeds God's invitation
And makes true preparation—It is the Lord's delight.
- 4 Prepare my heart, Lord Jesus; Turn not from me aside,
And help me to receive You This blessed Adventtide.
From stall and manger low Come now to dwell within me;
I'll sing Your praises gladly And forth Your glory show.

HARK THE GLAD SOUND LSB 349

- ♪ 1. Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes, The Savior promised long;
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne And ev'ry voice a song.
2. He comes the pris'ners to release, In Satan's bondage held.
The gates of brass before Him burst, The iron fetters yield.
3. He comes the broken heart to bind, The bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of His grace To enrich the humble poor.
4. Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace, Thy welcome shall proclaim,
And heav'n's eternal arches ring With Thy beloved name.

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Let us pray. We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

CLOSING SENTENCES

JOHN 1:5, 9

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN **“MY SOUL GIVES GLORY TO MY GOD”** (TUNE: *LSB 349*)

- ♩ 1. My soul gives glory to my God, My heart pours out His praise.
God lifts us up in wondrous ways And blesses all our days.
2. The Lord has done great things for me: Yes, holy is His name.
His grace abounds, His love surrounds, In Christ His gifts we claim.
3. All praise to God the Father bring, to Christ His only Son,
And Holy Spirit, ever blest, Eternal Three-in-One!

SENDING

Pastor: Go in peace to serve the Lord!

People: Thanks be to God.

Bible Studies at Faith, Sundays, 9:45 a.m.

- ▶ Exalted, God With Us: Praying to Our Savior God (Choir Room)
- ▶ *The Wired Word*: What does the Bible say about? (Board Room)
- ▶ Sunday School: Ages 4 through 6th Grade (Gathers in Sanctuary)
- ▶ Youth Confirmation: 7th and 8th Graders (Confirmation Room)
 - ▶ High School/College Age Bible Study (Youth Room)

* Advent Midweek 2, Dec 11 School K-8 Worship (Dinner 5:30 p.m., worship 6:30 p.m.)

* Advent Midweek 3, Dec 18 ECE Worship (Dinner 5:30 p.m., worship 6:30 p.m.)

Principal Amy Kurtz's last day will be Friday, December 20, 2024. We are planning a "Farewell and Godspeed" for Sunday, December 15, in-between services and at noon.

Voters' Meeting, December 15, 2024, at 9:30 a.m., Sanctuary

Dec 22 (Advent 4) Regular Worship Schedule: Reception of New Members

School Break 12/23 - 1/6/2025

(Staff In-Service, Mon 1/6/2025 // Students Return, Tue 1/7/2025)

Dec 24 (Tuesday, Christmas Eve)

5 p.m. Family Worship with Communion

7 p.m. Traditional Candlelight with Communion

Dec 25 (Wednesday, Christmas Day) 10 a.m. Festival Worship with Communion