



Third Sunday of Advent

December 11, 2016

Emanuel Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

324 College Avenue, Modesto, California 95350 • (209) 523-4531

www.emanuellutheran.org

Welcome to Emanuel

Communion Service 9:30 a.m..... Page 3
Announcements and Prayer Concerns Page 15

Staff

Presiding Minister

Rev. Dr. Lyn Crase

Organist & Choir Director

Barbara Vukich

Secretary

Paula Braxton

Day Care Director

Laura Marquez

Bookkeeper

Maria Ojeda

Council Officers

President

Jim Barton

Vice President

Bob Dailey

Treasurer

Bob Reuter

Secretary

Susan Hall

WELCOME GUESTS AND VISITORS!

Welcome in the name of Jesus Christ. We are glad that you have come to worship with us. Please help us to know you by filling out a worship attendance form (located in your bulletin) and placing it in the offering plate.

- **LARGE PRINT BULLETINS** are available. •

(Please ask an usher)

Children/Youth & Family:

Council member – Pat Smith and Hailey Rios

Spiritual Life:

Council member – Lois Owen

Worship:

Council member – Dianne Santana

Outreach:

Council members — Karl Williams and Bob Dailey

Resource:

Bob Reuter, Treasurer

Stewardship — Jim Barton and Janice Watkins

Property — Dick Norquist and Tom Hardin

Fellowship:

Council member – Susan Hall

Social Media:

Council member – Mike Epting and Rick Unruh

Endowment Team

Bob Reuter, Chairman

Team members: Dick Norquist, Rob Shank, Bill Reinheimer

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 11, 2016

9:30 AM

PRELUDE

Six Variants on "Lo! How a Rose"

Michael Burkhardt

Please use your "soft" voice during and following the Prelude, as others may be in prayer and meditation. Thank you.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Chior

WELCOME

Pastor Lyn Crase

OPENING HYMN

People Look East

ELW #248

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING (Congregation sings after the reading)

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah

Light one candle to watch for Messiah:

let the light banish darkness.

He shall bring salvation to Israel,

God fulfills the promise.

Light two candles to watch for Messiah:

let the light banish darkness.

He shall feed the flock like a shepherd,

gently lead them homeward.

Light three candles to watch for Messiah:

let the light banish darkness.

Lift your heads and lift high the gateway

for the King of glory.

BAPTISM of Abraham Martin Cox

ELW pg. 227

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
who comes to wake us from sleep,
who leads us into the light of grace.

C Amen

P Let us prepare the way of the Lord
by confessing our sin against God and neighbor.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P God of all time,

**C we confess that we have not prepared
for your merciful reign among us.
We ignore our neighbors in need
and fail in the labor of justice and peace.
In your mercy forgive us.
Grant us wisdom to welcome your light
and to seek the things that will endure
until Christ comes again in glory.**

C Amen

P Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

In ✝ Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven
and all things are made new.
Rejoice in this good news!

C Amen

GREETING

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be
with you all.

C And also with you.



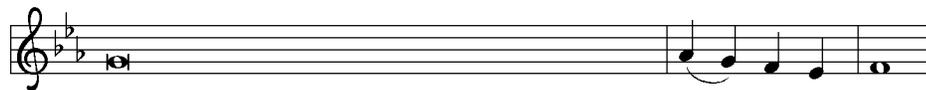
KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



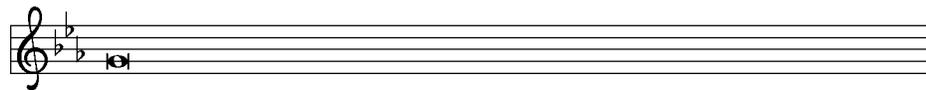
Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



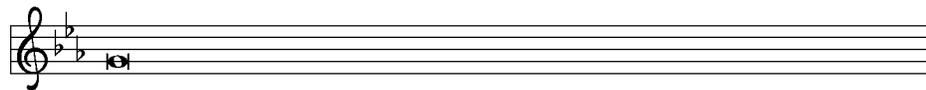
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men, a - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray together....

C Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 35:1-10

The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus ²it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.

³Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
"Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you."

⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
⁶then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
⁷the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,

SECOND READING: JAMES 5:7-10

In anticipation of the Lord's coming, Christians are called upon to cultivate patience rather than discontent.

⁷Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains.

⁸You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.

⁹Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

L The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.
Repeat alleluia
Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

P The Gospel according to Matthew Chapter 11

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 3:1-12

John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth. From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this.

²When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them.

⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.’

¹¹Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist;
yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (REPEATED)

CHILDREN’S TIME

SERMON

Pastor Lyn Crase

SERMON HYMN

From Heaven Above
v. 8-11

ELW #268

APOSTLE’S CREED

A With the whole church, let us confess our faith using the words of the Apostle’s Creed:

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

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.

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. Amen

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A As we anticipate the fullness of the presence of Christ, we join with the church throughout
the world, praying for all who are in need.

Response: ... Let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

TITHES & OFFERINGS

The offering is an act of worship; a response of gratitude and thankfulness.

OFFERTORY

Lost in the Night
Choir

Kyle S. Haugen

OFFERING PRAYER

A Savior of the nations, come.
Make your home here in us.
Feed us with your love,
that our faith shine ever new
and our lives reveal your light.

SHARING THE PEACE

The sharing of peace is an individual and communal act of forgiveness.

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

Please return to your seats at the signal from the organ and remain standing after the Peace.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

A In recognition of God's forgiveness, mercy and grace let us continue with the Great Thanksgiving.

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

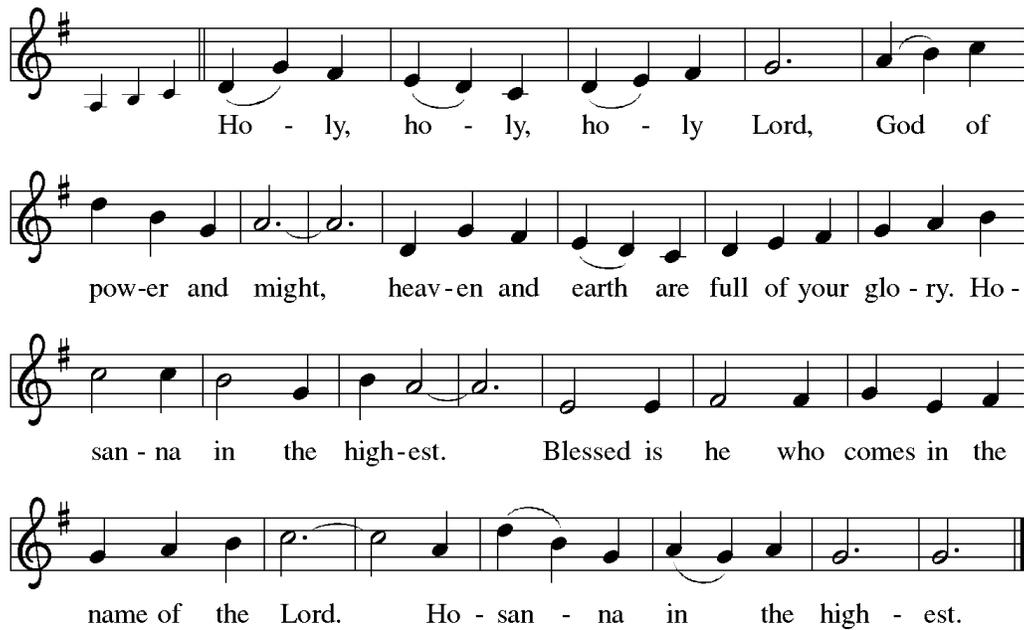
C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

P 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; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

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-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P 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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

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

P To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.

C Amen

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

**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

P Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you.

Share in the feast of salvation.

We offer continuous communion at the altar rail. All are welcome.

HEALING PRAYER

Healing prayer and anointing are available during communion at the side kneeler.

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.

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

Lost in the Night

ELW #243

He Came Down

ELW #253

Wait for the Lord

ELW #262

COMMUNION BLESSING

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

C Amen

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A God for whom we wait,
you come to us
in the broken bread and the cup we share.
Make us ready always
to welcome Christ into our hearts,
and send us forth to be your people in the world,
announcing your coming among us
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen

SENDING OF COMMUNION MINISTERS

Home Communion Minister(s) come(s) forward.

P Let us pray,

C **O God of tender compassion, as you healed the sick and welcomed the stranger, bless those who leave this assembly to share the gifts of this table with our sisters and brothers who are homebound. May they be sustained by the love and prayers of this community, and by the Bread of life that satisfies all hunger, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

BLESSING

P May Christ, the Sun of righteousness, shine upon you
and scatter the darkness from before your path.
Almighty God, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.

C Amen

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SENDING HYMN

Joy to the World

ELW #267

DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Organ Flourish on "Joy to the World"

Michael G. Dell

THOSE WHO SERVED US TODAY

Presiding Minister Pastor Lyn Crase
Assisting Minister Paula Barton
Acolyte..... Kailyn Knoll
Ministers of the Word Bill Reinheimer, Beth Rokaitis
Communion Assistant(s)..... Beth Rokaitis, Chris Schmidt
Usher/Greeter Smith/Knoll
Altar Care..... Van Diepen/Kroeze

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Announcements

Please use your “soft” voice during and following the Prelude, as others may be in prayer and meditation. Thank you.



The flowers on the altar today are given, to the glory of God, by Marsha Waggoner for all the many blessings God has shown to us all, especially the blessings of his son, Jesus.

Choir Rehearsal after the service at about 11:00.

Advent Soup Suppers Please see the sign-up sheet in the Narthex if you'd like to bring a soup! Everyone is welcome.

On-Going Adult Education Sunday evenings twice a month from 5:30—7:00 pm (meets in Katie's room). **We will be on break until January 8 at which time we will begin study of the book “Together By Grace” a conversation about what it means to be Lutheran today.**

Biblical Art Journaling is on break until January 15.

Text Study meets Tuesdays at noon in Katie's Room. All are welcome. Bring along your lunch.

Thursday Morning Bible Study on Martin Luther. Regularly meets in Katie's Room from 9:30-11:00 am. *First Thursdays only*, meets at Casa de Modesto with our members who are residents there. Everyone is welcome! **There will be no meetings on December 22 & 29.**

2nd Sunday of each month Healing Prayer during communion.

If you are bringing treats on Sunday, Please check the treat calendar for upcoming openings.

Please join us on Sunday, December 18 for Emanuel's annual Caroling Party! Carolers will gather at the church at 6:00 pm, then stroll through the streets serenading our neighbors with songs of the season. (Don't forget to bring a flashlight!) We'll enjoy hot chocolate and cookies (please bring some to share) when we return to the church.

Call for young Christmas singers:

Emanuel would like to have children sing two songs during the 5:30 Christmas eve service. Those songs will be familiar Christmas songs. To be comfortable with singing them we will practice for 10-15 minutes each Sunday of advent immediately following the regular worship service. To do this well, it would be most desirable to have a very

large group of young singers. Please let David Holtz know that you will have your children, or grandchildren, or neighbor children or ... participate on Christmas eve (regardless of their ability to attend the short rehearsals).

Emanuel's "Story Corps"

In 2003 **Story Corps** (storycorps.org) was launched in NYC and quickly spread across the country in an effort to build an oral portrait of America and Americans. Audio recordings are stored in the Library of Congress for anyone to use. Their stated objective is, "... to remind one another of our shared humanity, to strengthen and build the connections between people, to teach the value of listening, and to weave into the fabric of our culture the understanding that everyone's story matters. At the same time, we are creating an invaluable archive for future generations."

With the support of our own Social Media Ministry Team, Emanuel is developing a compilation of members' 10-minute oral reflection on their faith journey through life, including what it means to you to be Lutheran. Recordings will be stored and accessible on the ELC website (emanuellutheran.org). We would like every member to be a part of this valuable collection. These conversations could take place at Emanuel, or in your or my home, or in a coffee shop – your choice. You may be asked in the near future to participate or you may sign up in the Narthex.

Focus on Prevention



Focus on Prevention's Faith Sector group (a county-wide initiative working on homelessness and other community issues) will be participating in a county-wide census of the homeless on January 27th. If you are interested in accompanying Pastor Lyn to be trained to help with this project, please let Pastor Lyn know. The initial informational meeting will be December 15th, 3-5 pm at the County Learning Center, 917 Oakdale Rd. Modesto. Another way you can help is to donate knit caps/hats for all ages. The hats can be used but need to be washed, they can be handmade, or simple dollar store purchases. A collection box is in the youth rooms. Emanuel is the collection drop off site for this county-wide project. The goal is to collect 1500 "beanies."



Advent Schedule

Emanuel Lutheran Church

324 College Avenue, Modesto

(209) 523-4531

From Heaven Above

Sundays: December 11 and 18

World Hunger

Wednesdays: December 14 and 21

~Soup/Craft at 6:00 pm

~Service at 7:00 pm

Neighborhood Caroling: December 18 at 6:00 pm

Holiday Services:

Christmas Eve - Family Service at 5:30

Candlelight & Communion at 9:00 pm

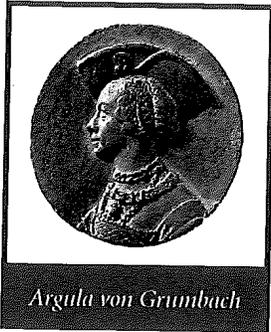
Christmas Day - Celebrate the Lord's birth 9:30 am

New Year's Day: Service of Lessons & Carols at 9:30 am

***Emanuel – God With Us
God's People in Community***

ABOUT THE LUTHERANS

Women and the Reformation



"I am prepared to lose everything, even life or limb. May God stand by me." So wrote Argula von Grumbach (1492–1563/68?) from Bavaria, who found Martin Luther's message of Christian freedom and equality empowering. This noble woman challenged an entire Catholic university in Ingolstadt in defense of Lutheran faith and a student persecuted for "Lutheran heresy." This best-selling lay author with her letter-treatises eventually disappeared under pressure from male authorities. Luther considered her a valiant hero of faith.

The Protestant principles "scripture alone," "grace alone," and "priesthood of all believers" inspired women just like men to reengage Christian faith and find renewed spiritual meaning in their daily vocations. With the newly written catechisms and hymns, women were equipped to teach the revived faith to their households, where they exercised significant leadership in matters of religious practice. Women lost the monastic option as convents were closed in Protestant areas, but they benefited significantly from the education provided even for peasant girls.

Whereas the Reformation theology proclaimed equality in Christian love and freedom from human-made bonds, women were forbidden to preach or teach in public. Motherhood was presented to women as the holiest of callings, on a par with that of apostles and bishops. So women used creativity in embracing their domestic calling and the authority it brought along.

Katharine Schütz Zell (1498–1562), a widely published lay author who had no children of her own, identified herself with a calling of a “church mother.” In this role she exercised pastoral authority by the side of her pastor-husband in Strasbourg, even daring to preach at funerals. Her scintillating writings in defense of marriage may have caused an uproar, yet her pastoral texts and a hymnbook demonstrate her desire to promote ecumenical unity and to empower Christians to sing the gospel with new voices. Like von Grumbach, she also corresponded with Luther.

Another associate of Luther was Duchess Elisabeth von Braunschweig (1485–1555), who used her authority as the “mother of the people in her land” to implement Lutheran faith through legislation. Like her own mother earlier, Elisabeth had suffered exile from her Catholic husband and children once she confessed her faith in public by receiving the sacrament in a Lutheran rite. Her advice to her son, whom she groomed as a Lutheran ruler, was that he should obey God, the emperor—and his mother.

Of all the Reformation mothers, the most famous is Luther’s beloved Katharina von Bora (1499–1552). She won the heart and admiration of Luther, who had orchestrated the escape of Katharina and eleven other nuns from their convent. As his equal “partner in calamity,” Katharina mothered their six children and managed the intricate finances and other affairs of their bustling household. Luther admitted that next to the Holy Spirit, he obeyed his wife-“lord,” Katharina.



These and other mothers of faith took significant risks and endured criticism if not even persecution for their choices. Their involvement was crucial for the new faith to take root.

Kirsi Stjerna

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WEEKLY CALENDAR

MON 12	TUE 13	WED 14	THUR 15	FRI 16	SAT 17	SUN 18
		7:00 am Men's Bible Study @ Mimi's	9:30 am Adult Bible Study	OFFICE CLOSED		9:30 am Worship Service
	12:00 pm Lectionary Study	10:00 am 2-hr Staff Mtg/ Planning				BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS
6:30 pm Leah Circle Potluck @ M. Rowland's		6:00 pm Advent Soup Supper ----- 7:00 pm Advent Worship & Holden Prayer	5:00 pm Girl Scout Leader Mtg. — Luther Hall	6:30 pm ELDC Christmas Program		5:30 pm Youth Group 6:30 pm Neighborhood Caroling

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Date	Assisting Minister	Ministers of the Word	Cantor	Communion Assist	Acolyte	Usher Greeter	Altar Care
Dec 18 Advent 4	Garry Hayes	M Dieterich M Rowland		Marilyn Rowland	Chris Schmidt	Reuter/ Dieterich	Van Diepen/ Kroeze
Dec 24 Christmas Eve	TBD						
Dec 25 Christmas Day	Mike Epting	K Reuter P Kroeze	Kathleen Reuter	Paula Kroeze	Alora Skustad	Clarke/Hall	Lois Silva

WEEKLY BIBLE READINGS

December 18 Advent 4	December 24 Christmas Eve	December 25 Christmas Day II
Isaiah 7:10-16 Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 Romans 1:1-7 Matthew 1:18-25	Isaiah 9:2-7 Psalm 96 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]	Isaiah 62:6-12 Psalm 97 Titus 3:4-7 Luke 2:[1-7] 8-20



New Prayer Requests: Roxie Parker—recovery and healing (Wilke); Adriana Johnson (aunt of Laura Marquez)—health & healing

Our Members: Drew Shank; Ben Knoll; Lori Knoll; Carolyn Crenwelge; Bob Dailey; Kelly Dailey; Gary Knoll; Bill Fox; Virginia Dall; Keith Thurston; Anthony Pino & Aaron Daubenspeck; Lena Shirley; Marj Sample; Teri Scott; Pat Smith; Jill Klenz; Alice Hine, Larry Decker (Dieterich)

Our Homebound Members: Florence Broden, Shelda Fritts

Our Family: Ian McKenzie (Schmidt); Sheila Barton (Barton); Joy Morgan (Scott); Suzanne Stiver Lie (Reinheimer); Evelyn Thurston (Thurston); Cindy Johnson (Salonen); Helen Opitz (Smith); Robert Schlipman; Sherry Orsetti; Laurie Spinuzzi (Silva); Linda Luis-Thompson (Strand); Bobby Horton (Crawford); Joyce & Manuel (Scott); Gay McCready (McCready); Richard Epting (Epting); Sue and George Reinheimer; Ali Moraitis (Watkins); Gregory & Alley (Scott); Donald Murray (Murray); Christine Williams (Dieterich); Alexander Smith (Pino); Adeline Otterness (Hoaglund); Dan Porter (Ixcot); Sean Pascoe (Waggoner)

Our Friends: Mark, Matthew & Amanda (Scott); Roger Warner (Schmidt); Adrienne (Nelson); Pastor Stan Niemi; Tom Aja (Crawford); Jennifer Turner (Dieterich); John Pienado (Knoll); Dawn Wagner; Leila Afshin (Skustad); Donna Thayer (Petersen); Mary Martin (Martin); Cheryle Pickel (Crawford); Sydney (Silva); Jerry Larson (Clarke); David and Jeffrey Hudson (Reinheimer); Stephen Washer (Norquist)

We Pray for Peace in the Middle East, and for all those serving in our armed forces.

T/Sgt. Ryan Dangerfield, USAF in Ramstein AB, Germany and **SSgt. Joey Sabel, USMC** in Kaneohe Marine Corps Base, Hawaii (Marilyn & Chuck Rowland's grandson & grandson-in-law); **Capt. Tim Kramer** (Megan Armes' brother) will be in Kuwait through June of 2016; **Ryan Powell** (grandson of Yvonne Troedson) USN, Connecticut; **Chad Vander Veen** (friend of Susan Hall), US Army in Iraq.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

As we anticipate the fullness of the presence of Christ, we join with the church throughout the world, praying for all who are in need.

For the church and all messengers of the gospel, for all who call upon the name of the Lord, and for congregations throughout the world; that God work through us to bring harmony and reconciliation, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For rain forests and deserts, for wilderness and developed land, and for plants blossoming and dormant; that the splendor and diversity of creation proclaim the glory of the Lord, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For our government, for the military and international relief workers, and for those who care for the stranger, widow, and orphan; that God raise up leaders who work for the protection of all, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For the hungry and homeless, for those in captivity, for the fearful and sorrowful, for those living with HIV/AIDS, and for the sick; that those who help others serve with patience and grace, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For all who call this community home, for those visiting from near and far, and for those preparing for the holiday season, that the advent of Christ make our hearts and minds rejoice, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

We pray for your healing touch on those we name before you now, aloud or in silence (*pause for silence*). Let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

God of hope, today we pray for the pastors & churches of our newly named conference, Sierra Central Valley. This morning we lift up Rev. Bill Ruth, retired ELCA clergy. Sustain Rev. Ruth and energize him for ministry in his community, and enable bold witness for the sake of the Gospel. Let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

In thanksgiving for the departed who were faithful to God's word; that their words and actions direct us to the one who prepares a way for us, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, those spoken aloud and those known only to you, and grant us peace through Jesus Christ, our coming Savior.

Amen

ENTRANCE HYMN #248

People, Look East



1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing
2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is
3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the
4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new



of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,
plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,
bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,
life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming



trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look
that in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look
bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look
with the word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look



east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881–1965

Music: BESANÇON, French carol

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SERMON
HYMN #268

From Heaven Above



1 "From heav'n a - bove to earth I come to bear good
2 "To you this night is born a child of Mar - y,
3 "This is the Christ, God's Son most high, who hears your

Insert additional stanzas as desired.

12 Ah, dear - est Je - sus, ho - ly child, pre - pare a
13 My heart for ve - ry joy now leaps; my voice no
14 "Glo - ry to God in high - est heav'n, who un - to



news to ev - 'ry home! Glad tid - ings of great joy I
cho - sen vir - gin mild; this new - born child of low - ly
sad and bit - ter cry, who will him - self your Sav - ior

bed, soft, un - de - filed, a qui - et cham - ber in my
long - er si - lence keeps; I too must sing with joy - ful
us the Son has giv'n." With an - gels sing in pi - ous



bring to all the world, and glad - ly sing:
birth shall be the joy of all the earth.
be and from all sin will set you free."

heart, that you and I may nev - er part.
tongue the sweet - est an - cient cra - dle - song:
mirth a glad new year to all the earth!

4 "The blessing that the Father planned
the Son holds in his infant hand,
that in his kingdom, bright and fair,
you may with us his glory share."

5 "These are the signs that you will see
to let you know that it is he:
in manger-bed, in swaddling clothes
the child who all the earth upholds."

6 Now let us all with joyful cheer
go with the shepherds and draw near
to see this wondrous gift of God,
the blessed child to us bestowed.

7 Look, look, dear friends, look over there!
What lies within that manger bare?
Who is that lovely little one?
The baby Jesus, God's dear Son.

8 Welcome to earth, O noble Guest,
through whom this sinful world is blest!
You turned not from our needs away;
how can our thanks such live repay?

9 O Lord, you have created all!
How did you come to be so small,
to sweetly sleep in manger-bed
where lowing cattle lately fed?

10 Were earth a thousand times as fair
and set with gold and jewels rare,
still such a cradle would not do
to rock a prince so great as you.

11 For velvets soft and silken stuff
you have but hay and straw so rough
on which as king so rich and great
to be enthroned in humble state.

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Music: VOM HIMMEL HOCH, attr. Martin Luther; V. Schumann, *Geistliche Lieder*, 1539
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SENDING HYMN #267

Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
plains re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, far as, far as the curse is found.
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872