



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE 2020

**FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
PO Box 228 Blakeslee, PA 18610
570-646-0309**

faithoffice@faithlutheranblakeslee.org

Website: faithlutheranblakeslee.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Faith-Lutheran-Church-Blakeslee-PA-1721550018126312>

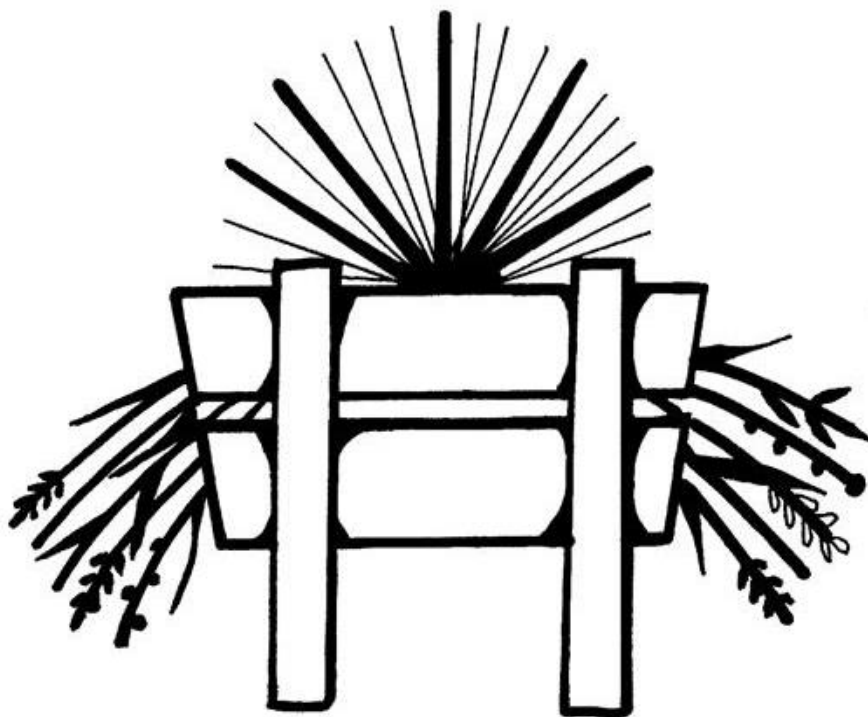
**Rev. Debra North, Pastor
Ms. Molly Finkbiner, Director of Music
Ms. Maritza Oquendo, Parish Secretary**

The people of God at Faith Lutheran Church welcome you on this most holy night. If you are a visitor, please sign the guest book in the narthex. If you are seeking a church home, we joyfully invite you to worship with us; please speak to Pastor. Holy Communion is open to all who believe that the Lord is present for them in His Supper. Please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices in order to fully enter into this time of worship.

Christmas Eve Worship Assistants

Usher: Ed North and Ben Mroz III

Lector: Mike Gillis



PRAYER LIST

Eddie, Cheryl, Carol and Craig, Bruce, Denis, Megan, Gertrude, George, Mike, Jennifer, Sue, Tina, Alex, Donna, Andrea, Ginger, Karen, Janet, Jacquie, Rachel, Jenn, Andrea, Ginger, R.C., Richard, Forrest, Roy, Jeanine, Leslie, Cory, the family of Vanessa Cocuzza, and Members of the armed services, the congregation of St. John of Honesdale.

In Hospital: Bruce Kulp

Prelude

Announcements/Welcome

Call to Worship

Who are these angels who come to earth,
bearing the news of the Christ child's birth?

Who are these shepherds who run to see,
and worship the babe on bended knee?

Who is this child, so small, so slight,
of whom the angels sang that night?

Who is this king, a manger his throne,
who humbles himself to make us his own?

Who is this God who sends a Son
into our midst, the promised one?

Christmas Carol: Angels We Have Heard on High (Video)

Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heav'nly song?
Refrain

Refrain

Gloria in excelsis Deo;
gloria in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn king.
Refrain

Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864

Performed by members of the Association of Lutheran Musicians. Anne Krentz Organ, arranger.

(please rise as you are able)

Greeting:

The Lord be with you! **And also with you!**

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen** *(please be seated)*

Wreath Candle Lighting: The Light of Christ

For anyone who has walked in darkness, a new light has dawned!

O come, let us adore him!

For anyone who has ever felt forgotten, a new light has dawned!

O come, let us adore him!

For anyone whose patience has been put to the test, a new light has dawned!

O come, let us adore him!

For anyone in search of the way, the truth, and the life, a new day has dawned!

O come, let us adore him!

For each of the last four Sundays, we've lit candles on the Advent wreath. Each light was a step into the darkness, towards the turning of the year, leaning in expectation into all that is being born in us at this Holy time of the year, when the Unknown lies before us, rich with possibility.

Tonight we light the Advent candles for the last time this year. We light the candle of hope: for that which is best in us to rise, and enliven our souls and our relationships.

The second candle we light for peace: for the courage to soften what is rigid in our hearts, to find the soft spot and stay with it.

We light the third candle in the name of joy: joy in the shape of gratitude for all that is our life, and joy in expectation of the world that we are building and creating with one another.

The last candle is lit in the name of love as the creating force in our lives.

And finally, we light the Christ candle: the light that shines in the darkness with the full power of our faith. We know how real the brokenness of the world is, but we will not give brokenness the last word.

May this light bear our hopes, as well as our faith in love, in goodness, in compassion, in justice. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness shall not overpower it. Amen

Christmas Carol: #60 "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" (video)

Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King
Peace on earth and mercy mild
God and sinners reconcile.
Joyful all you nations rise
Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim
'Christ is born in Bethlehem'
Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King.

Hail, the heaven-born Prince of peace!
Hail the Son of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing,
Glory to the newborn King.

First Reading: Isaiah 9:27

Isaiah promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth of a royal child with a name full of promise. While Judah's king will practice justice and righteousness, the real basis for faith lies in God's passion for the people: The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this!

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined. ³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Christmas Carol: "Away in a Manger" (spoken)

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet
head; the stars in the bright sky looked
down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus
asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he
makes. I love you, Lord Jesus; look
down from the sky and stay by my
cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to
stay
close by me forever and love me, I
pray.
Bless all the dear children in your
tender care
and fit us for heaven, to live with you
there.

Text: North American, 19th cent.

Second Reading: Titus 2:11-14

The appearance of God's grace in Jesus Christ brings salvation for all humanity. Consequently, in the present we live wisely and justly while also anticipating the hope of our Savior's final appearance.

¹¹The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.** (*rise as you are able*)

Christmas Carol: O Come All Ye Faithful (video)

O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.
Come and behold Him,
Born the King of Angels;
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be glory given!
Word of the Father, now in flesh
appearing;
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ, the Lord

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711-1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880, sts. 1, 3-4; tr. unknown, st. 2

Reading of the Christmas Narrative: Luke 2:1-20

God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.** (please be seated)

Childrens' Message: "Kids Tell The Christmas Story" (Video)
Hilltop Preschool and Kindergarten

Special Music: The First Noel The Faith Lutheran Boomwackers Choir

Message

Hymn of the Day: The Hills Are Bare at Bethlehem (spoken)

The hills are bare at Bethlehem,
no future for the world they show;
yet here new life begins to grow,
from earth's old dust a greenwood stem.

The stars are cold at Bethlehem,
no warmth for those beneath the sky;
yet here the radiant angels fly,
and joy burns new, a fiery gem.

The heart is tired at Bethlehem,
no human dream unbroken stands;
yet here God comes to mortal hands,
and hope renewed cries out: "Amen!"

Text: Royce J. Scherf, b. 1929, alt.

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Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you all. **And also with you.**

(please share the peace of Christ with others with a wave from your seat, then be seated.)

Special Music What Child is This *Judie Tim/Molly Finkbiner, piano*

Offering

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

Offering Prayer

Gracious God, you came to us as one unknown, bringing joy and salvation to the earth. Nourish us at your banquet table, that with all who welcome your birth we may proclaim your peace, revealed in Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

Great Thanksgiving *(spoken, while 'Good Christian Friends Rejoice' is played)*

Oh may the Lord be with you.

And may the Lord be with you too.

Lift your hearts to him in praise.

To the Lord our hearts we raise.

Let us offer praises true.

It is fitting so to do. Gratefully we sing...to the Lord our King.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

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. Then he 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 and he blessed it, 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.

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

Together we pray as Jesus taught: **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

The Word is revealed in a manger, in simple bread and wine.
Come meet Christ in this meal. *(please be seated)*

Hold your cups by the rim, lift up the thin film covering the wafer. "This is the body of Christ.... Given for you"

Still holding the cup by the rim, carefully peel back the second covering until you can drink the juice. "This is the blood of Christ... Shed for you"

Communion Blessing *(rise as you are able)*

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and fill you with His hope, peace, joy and love. **Amen.**

Prayer After Communion

We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us from your very self with the body and blood of Christ. Through this mystery, send us forth to proclaim your promise to a world in need, through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

Special Music O Jesulein Suss (Jesu, So Meek).....Bass by J.S. Bach.
Performed by Molly Finkbiner, Dan Finkbiner and Rick Halko.

Candle Lighting

The light of God has come into the world and the darkness cannot overcome it. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world." Jesus also said, "You are the light of the world. Let your light so shine that others may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

(Candles are lit. During the 3rd verse hold your candles high.)

Christmas Carol: Silent Night

Faith Lutheran Virtual choir

Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright,
Round yon Virgin Mother and Child!
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace!
Sleep in heavenly peace!

Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight!
Glories stream from Heaven afar,
Heavenly Hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ, the Saviour, is born!
Christ, the Saviour, is born.

Silent night! Holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy Holy Face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy Birth!
Jesus, Lord, at Thy Birth!

Blessing

Almighty God, who sent the Holy Spirit to Mary, proclaimed joy through the angels, sent the shepherds with good news, and led the magi by a star, bless you this day ☩ through the Word made flesh. **Amen.**

Christmas Carol: Joy to the World (video)

Mormon Tabernacle Choir

Joy to The world! the Lord is come
Let earth receive its King
Let ev'ry heart prepare him room
And heaven and nature sing
And heaven and nature sing
And heaven and heaven and nature sing

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns
Let all their songs employ
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy

No more let sin and sorrow grow
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make his blessings flow
Far as the curse is found
Far as the curse is found
Far as, far as the curse is found

He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love
And wonders of His love
And wonder wonders of His love

(Candles are turned off)

Dismissal

Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus. **Thanks be to God!**



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"The Christmas Story: As told by Hilltop Preschool and Kindergarten students", Portland Christian Center, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aK6Ef63YBFM>

Joy to the World: Mormon Tabernacle Choir, 2006.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DLT9dSt8cwq>

The prelude selections are played with permission of the composer, Josianne Merlino.

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