



December 4, 2022

Welcome!

We are glad to have you join us in the worship of Our Lord. **Please sign the guest book at the back of the sanctuary.**

Mask wearing is optional if you are fully vaccinated.

Today's Altar Servers

Leader:Rev. Dan Finkbiner
Greeters/Ushers..... Bob Ray
Lector: Carol Ray
Music: Molly Finkbiner

Faith Lutheran Church
550 Rt. 940 PO Box 228
Blakeslee, PA 18610
Office 570-646-0309

Email:

faithoffice@faithlutheranblakeslee.org

Website:

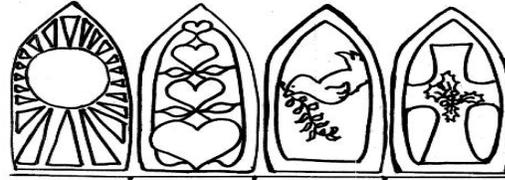
www.faithlutheranblakeslee.org

Facebook:

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



SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Hope | Peace | Joy | Love

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Flowers & Bulletin: sponsored by Peggy Rapp in loving memory of her husband, Robert. A. Roesch.

Christmas Concert: St. Paul Lutheran Church in Tannersville invites you to enjoy a Christmas concert by Bach & Handel Chorale of Jim Thorpe, December 10 at 3p.m. (158 Fish Hill Rd, Tannersville, PA)

Christmas Cookie Sale: The congregation is strongly encouraged to bake cookies!

Friday, December 16: Bring cookies and package cookies

Sunday, December 18: Sell cookies, \$5/box

MEETINGS

AA Meeting: Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday at 12 p.m.

American Red Cross Blood Drive: Wednesday, December 28, 2022, 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. Please call 1-800-733-2767 to pre-register.

Bible Study: Each Sunday, 7:30 a.m. in the Community Room.

Choir rehearsals: Sunday mornings, 8:30 a.m.

Christmas Eve Chime Choir Rehearsal: Wednesdays, 6:00 p.m., December 7, 14th, & 21st.

Instrument rehearsal and Sunday School: Wednesdays, 5 p.m.

Faithful Community Quilters: Second Monday of the month, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Soup Supper Advent Study: Began Wednesday, November 30, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Room.

Sunday School Advent Program/Congregational Dinner: December 11, 2022, at 5 p.m. A sign-up sheet is in the back of the church.

Pastor Kuritz has weekly office hours: hours are posted on the white boards at the back of the church or to contact him, use his private email: pastor@faithlutheranblakeslee.org

Bulletin Sponsors and Flower Donations: A new sign-up sheet for 2023 is located on the table in the foyer entrance of the church. In-house bulletin for \$10 and \$20 towards silk flowers or you may bring your own fresh flowers.

Usher and Lector Volunteers needed, contact Jacquie Halko. Please call (570) 646-3922 or email at jacquie5444@yahoo.com.

At the heart of our Advent preparation stands John the Baptist, who calls us to repent and make a new beginning. As the darkness increases, we turn toward the approaching light of Christ. For Christians he is the root of Jesse, the righteous judge who welcomes all, especially the poor and meek of the earth. We wait with hope for that day when the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and there will be no more hurt or destruction. From the Lord's table we are sent in the spirit of John the Baptist to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of God has come near.

PRELUDES: “Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence,” “My Lord, What a Morning,” “O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright”

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things. **Blessed be God's name forever. Amen.**

Beloved, now is the time to wake from sleep. Let us confront our sins and confess them to the one who is merciful and just.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of new beginnings, **we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign. We have strayed from your paths. We prepare for war instead of peace. We dishonor one another and your creation. Purify us with your refining fire and set us again on your way of love, that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance, and welcome your coming among us. Amen.**

People of God, a new thing is growing in our midst, a tender branch, a living sign. By water and the Spirit you are joined to this wonder. You have put on ✠ Christ, and your sins have been washed away. Rejoice in the way of the Lord. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN: “On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry” LBW 36

GREETING

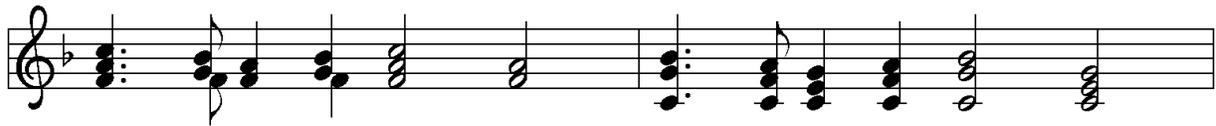
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.



KYRIE

Lord, Have Mercy



1, 3 Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.
2 Chris - te e - lei - son. Chris - te e - lei - son.
1, 3 Lord, . . . have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.
2 Christ, . . . have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy.



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

Music: Russian Orthodox traditional

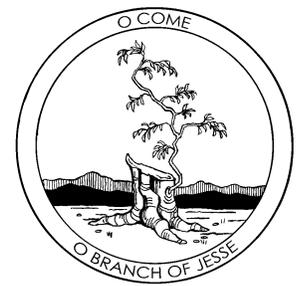
PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 2:1-5

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge



the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM/LITURGY A Candle-Lighting Liturgy

We light one candle of **PEACE**

Praise to you, O God, who gives us courage to start again. You fasten righteousness around your waist and baptize with the Holy Spirit's fire. Bless us as we mirror your mighty fire in these simple flames, and teach us to mirror your justice in the paths we prepare. We ask that peace abound, until none hurt or destroy over all the earth. **Amen.**



THESE ARE THE DAYS OF ELIJAH

These are the days of Elijah,
Declaring the word of the Lord
And these are the days of your servant Moses,
Righteousness being restored
And though these are days of great trial
Of famine and darkness and sword,
Still, we are the voice in the desert crying
'Prepare ye the way of the Lord!' **Refrain**

Refrain. *Behold He comes riding on the clouds,
Shining like the sun at the trumpet call;
Lift your voice, it's the year of jubilee,
And out of Zion's hill salvation comes.*

These are the days of Ezekiel,
The dry bones becoming as flesh;
And these are the days of your servant David,
Rebuilding a temple of praise.
These are the days of the harvest,
The fields are as white in your world,
And we are the labourers in Your vineyard,
Declaring the word of the lord! **Refrain.**

There's no God like Jehovah. There's no God like Jehovah.
There's no God like Jehovah. There's not God like Jehovah! (2x) **Refrain.**

SECOND LESSON: Romans 15:4-13

Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, "Therefore I will



confess you among the Gentiles, and sing praises to your name”; and again he says, “Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people”; and again, “Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him”; and again Isaiah says, “The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope.” May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God!**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: “Alleluia” (*Please stand as you are able*)

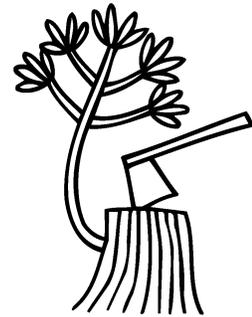
Gospel Acclamation
Celtic Alleluia



GOSPEL READING

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 3:1-12
Glory to you, O Lord.

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, “The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.””



Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham

as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. "I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON

(Please stand as you are able.)

HYMN OF THE DAY: "Lo, How a Rose is Growing" LBW 58

NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

**he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

As we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope.

A brief silence.

God, you renew the church in every age. We give thanks for hymn writers and theologians. Inspire teachers, writers, and musicians to delight and instruct your people. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You give us a vision of creation in harmony, when hurting and destruction will be no more. Teach us to be stewards of the earth and companions to its creatures. Restore to balance and wholeness what human greed has harmed. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You defend the cause of all who are poor and oppressed. Raise up leaders who will govern with equity and serve the common good. Guide judges, lawmakers, and public officials to protect the rights of those who cannot advocate for themselves. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You deliver those in need from suffering and fear. Come to the aid of any who are exploited or abused, especially children, elders, and victims of human trafficking. Provide safety and help to our neighbors without shelter, refugees, and those fleeing violence. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You urge your people to welcome one another as you have welcomed us. Nurture ministries of hospitality and care in this and every congregation. We pray for people who are homebound, hospitalized, or separated from loved ones. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

PRAYER LIST

Megan; Jim; Jeanine; Tom and Valerie M.; Daniel; Marge M.; Jenn; Lorraine; Rachel; Jeffery H.; Mya; Matthew B.; Carol K.; Joe M.; Roberta and Tony R.; Eric L.; Cleo; Deb H.; Joseph F.; John K.; Rev. Rick Chavez, Larissa, Drew D., Peter S., Jeannette M.

You embrace all who have died trusting in your promises, and we give thanks for their faithful witness. Sustain us in hope until we are united with them in the joy of your eternal presence. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

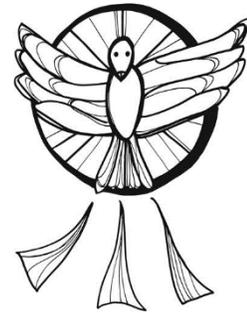
THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

(Please share Christ's peace in social and acceptable ways.)

(Please be seated)



OFFERING MUSIC: “Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel”

LBW 34

(Please stand as you are able)

OFFERING PRAYER

Eternal God, you make the desert bloom and send springs of water to thirsty ground. Receive these simple gifts and make us messengers of your mercy and love for all in need of your healing and justice. We ask this through Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

**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.**



BLESSING

God the eternal Word, who dwells with us in Jesus, and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit, ✠ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN: “Comfort, Comfort Now My People” LBW 29

DISMISSAL:

Go in peace. Christ is near.
Thanks be to God.



Copyright Acknowledgements
December 4th, 2022 – Second Sunday of Advent

Preludes:

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Gathering Song:

On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry, Text: Charles Coffin, 1676-1749; tr. Composite, Tune: adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571-1621. © Public Domain.

Hymn of the Day:

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Offering Music:

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Sending Hymn:

Comfort, Comfort Now My People, Text: Johann Olearius, 1611-1684; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1829-1878, alt., Tune: Trente quatre pesaumes de David, Geneva, 1551. © Public Domain.

Postlude:

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Service Music:

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FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

Peggy Rapp, President	drpeggy09@aol.com
John Lyman, Vice-President	jclyman@ptd.net
Barbara Laughlin, Secretary	mrs.emt4075@yahoo.com
Paul Frantz, Finance Committee	pfrantz61@yahoo.com
Phil Newlander, Finance Secretary	prnewlander@yahoo.com
Ben Mroz III, Treasurer	Treasurer@faithlutheranblakeslee.org
Jacque Halko, Worship Committee	jacque5444@yahoo.com
Tom Hutton, Christian Education	hutlamp@epix.net
Don Childers	loisj@ptd.net
Dick Merrill	dickym@aol.com
Phil Anderson	xtraham58@hotmail.com

Pointing to Jesus



John the Baptist is a fitting messenger for the season of Advent, a time for the church to prepare for both the nativity of the Christ and for his second coming. John's call to repentance in preparation of Jesus' arrival carries a challenge for us to rid ourselves of everything that obstructs our view. His proclamation is filled with images of cleansing: straightening paths, cutting down useless trees, and burning away chaff. John's baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins means cleansing as well as a changing of the mind, a turning toward Jesus, so that one's whole self is pointed toward the Lord of this world and of eternity.

Undistracted even by thoughts of our own worthiness, the church's focus year round is turned toward the coming of Christ. John points to Jesus, never to himself, and in so doing becomes a model for discipleship. Having heard John's cry, we join the chorus, becoming messengers in turn. All our efforts in worship and evangelism, education and social ministry point, not to ourselves, our programs, our skill or our saintliness, but only to Jesus. Preparing the way of the Lord is very much about pointing others to his real presence in and among us.

This Sunday's Isaiah reading ("the grass withers, the flower fades") and that of 2 Peter ("all things are to be dissolved") reinforce the church's teaching that amidst all that is transient in our lives, and creation, only God's word is eternal. John the Baptist's testimony points us to that Word made flesh, who brings with him a new heaven and a new earth after all else has passed away. John directs us in our faith journeys as individuals and communities toward a witness that is forever pointing to Jesus.