

The Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit

An ELCA Reconciling in Christ, Rejoicing Spirits, and handicap friendly Congregation

3461 Cedar Crest Blvd.
Emmaus, PA 18049-1599
PHONE 610.967.2220
FAX 610.966.3021

email info@holyspirit-emmaus.org
www.lchsemmaus.org
www.facebook.com/lchsemmaus



Fourth Sunday of Advent
Sunday, December 22, 2024
8:30 am

The Holy Spirit Empowers Us for Ministry in Daily Life

Gathered by God's grace and empowered by the Holy Spirit,
we invite and welcome all people to join us on our journey
to become more faithful ministers of Jesus Christ
in our homes, our communities, and the world.

We welcome all who worship with us today.

Visitors are invited to sign the guest register located in the lobby.

If you are interested in joining our family of faith,
please talk with one of our Pastors or call the church office.

Children are welcome and celebrated!

The “Children’s Ministry” table and basket in the lobby
contains a variety of items for children’s use during worship.
Stop by to borrow a book or pick up some coloring sheets and crayons.

Please silence all communication devices.

Our services are live streamed and recorded. In-person attendance implies consent
to be included in the live streamed and recorded worship service.

HOLY COMMUNION

All who believe in the presence of Jesus Christ in Holy Communion are welcome to receive the Sacrament. To facilitate flow, the ushers invite people to come forward starting with the back rows and working forward. You should come forward using the center aisle to receive the elements in a continuous style from pastor and worship assistant. Afterward you may choose to kneel or stand at the altar rail for a brief moment of prayer or return to your seat up the side aisle, depositing your empty cup in the receptacle on your way. Gluten free wafers are available. Our wine is grape juice so that all may freely receive.

Children may receive the sacrament if they have completed instruction with a pastor.

Children who do not commune may come forward for a blessing. Communion kits are available at the usher stands for those who prefer to remain in their seats, and they will be communed along with our Zoom worshippers at the beginning of distribution.

GATHERING

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

Gathering Music

Mary's Song
Lisa Walton, soloist
Megan McCormick, flute

Reith

Welcome and Announcements

We rise in body or spirit.

Lighting of the Advent Candles

The fourth candle calls us to love.
When we feel invisible, ineffective,
too small to make a difference, the Holy invites us to be God-Bearers.
And we find love.

(Love candle is lit)

Where in the world do we find LOVE these days?

Let us pray.

The cattle are lowing; creatures are sharing their songs of parenting to welcome new birth. May we also welcome love's birth with our own sounds of support.

Amen

Song of LOVE

O come, you source of Love un-to us all. En - ligh-ten us and
help us hear your call, to bear your Love out in - to the wild and
cel-e - brate God's won-drous ho-ly Child! Re - joice, re - joice! Em-
- man-u - el shall come to us and all things shall be well.

The image shows a musical score for a song in G major (one sharp). It consists of four staves of music. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff contains the lyrics 'O come, you source of Love un-to us all. En - ligh-ten us and'. The second staff contains 'help us hear your call, to bear your Love out in - to the wild and'. The third staff contains 'cel-e - brate God's won-drous ho-ly Child! Re - joice, re - joice! Em-'. The fourth staff contains '- man-u - el shall come to us and all things shall be well.' The music is written in a simple, accessible style with a clear melody line.

Greeting and Prayer of the Day

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.

Let us pray.

Mighty and merciful God, we rejoice and give thanks
that you look upon us with favor and bless us with grace.
Transform this weary world according to your promise –
giving power to the weak, justice to the oppressed, and food to the hungry –
so that all may sing your praise; through Jesus Christ our Lord

Amen

The assembly is seated.

WORD

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

Reading – Micah 5:2-5a

Translation: NRSV-UE

A reading from Micah.

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth, and he shall be the one of peace.

Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God!

We rise in body or spirit to welcome the gospel.

Gospel – Luke 1:1-55

Translation: NRSV-UE

The Good News from Luke, the 1st chapter.

Open our hearts, Lord.

Since many have undertaken to compile a narrative about the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, I, too, decided, as one having a grasp of everything from the start, to write a well-ordered account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may have a firm grasp of the words in which you have been instructed.

In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was descended from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

Once when he was serving as priest before God during his section's turn of duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord to offer incense. Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified, and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Zechariah said to the angel, "How can I know that this will happen? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years." The angel replied, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur."

Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering at his delay in the sanctuary. When he did come out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. When his time of service was ended, he returned to his home.

After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, "This is what the Lord has done for me in this time, when he looked favorably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people."

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"

The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.” Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.”

And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.

Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name; indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty. He has come to the aid of his child Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

This is the Good News!

Thanks be to God!

The assembly is seated.

Sermon

Pastor Cindy Camp

We rise in body or spirit.



My Lord, what a morn-ing; my Lord, what a morn-ing; oh,



my Lord, what a morn-ing, when the stars be-gin to fall.



- 1 You will hear the trum-pet sound,
- 2 You will hear the sin-ner cry, to wake the na-tions un-der - ground,
- 3 You will hear the Chris-tian shout,



Refrain

look-ing to my God's right hand, when the stars be-gin to fall.

Advent Affirmation

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

**The one who is full of patience, who is not afraid of silence,
who does not need to fill each moment with activity and noise.**

**The one who is beyond bluster and flurry,
and who does not push for attention.**

We believe in God the Son, Savior of creation,

**who slipped into Bethlehem one night, mostly unnoticed,
who lived thirty years without headlines or haste,
who frequently took time alone with his patient Father,
who waited for the right time to become the suffering servant,
who stood quietly before the noise of his accusers,
whose silence overpowered their words,
who died, then rose again on a quiet Sunday morning.**

We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens, empowers, renews and refreshes,
sometimes arriving with obvious power,
sometimes with the quiet breath of a whisper.

We believe in one God
who patiently waits for us,
and who longs for us to do the same.
Amen

Prayers of the People

Invitation to prayer:

As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us,
let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

After each petition:

We are waiting, Jesus;
come and be with us soon.

Pastor's closing prayer:

Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers
and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen

Peace

As Mary greeted Elizabeth, may we greet one another with love.

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

*The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace by saying,
"Peace be with you."*

The assembly is seated.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

During the Offering Song, the gifts will be brought forward. You may remain seated. If you wish you may leave your offering in the additional offering plates located on the tables in the back of the sanctuary as you leave.

Offering Song

Advent Doxology

Em G C D⁷ G D G C G
Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow. Praise God, all crea - tures

5 Am Bm⁷ Em Am Em B⁷ Em A⁷ D Em
here ____ be - low. Praise God a - bove, ye heaven - ly host. Praise

10 D Bm G C Am D⁷ G D Em Bm G
Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -

15 C D⁷ Em D G C G Am Em Bm Em
man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

Offering Prayer

Let us pray.

May these gifts glorify your name, Holy One. May the ministries we support bring justice and peace to your world. May they offer faith and hope to your people. In grateful joy we pray. **Amen**

We rise in body or spirit.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Advent people, God looks in love upon you.

Our hearts overflow with the love God has poured into us.

Rejoice this day in the One who comes to save.

We join the chorus of the blessed who sing God's praises.

Words of Institution

Word in Meal

As we prepare to celebrate Jesus' birth, as we remember the gift of his resurrection, we would tell of that mystery we call faith:

Christ was born, so that we might see hope in the flesh;

Christ lived, so that we might hear grace spoken aloud;

Christ died, so that we might feel the breaking of God's heart;

Christ is risen, so that we might know promises are true;

Christ will come again, so that we might be blessed as God's children.

Pour out your Spirit upon the gifts of this table and upon your children who gather for your feast. In this place, we are filled with the strength of hope, so we may serve those who hunger for goodness and grace. Restored by the cup of life, we can dare to go out to empty ourselves for those who wander the streets of life, unnoticed by the rest of the world.

Lord's Prayer

God in Community, Holy in One,
for you we wait, even as we pray:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen**

Invitation to the table

God feeds us with tender mercy.
Come to the table.

The assembly is seated.

Distribution of communion



Täs - sä pöy - däs - sä, *täs - sä*
 1 In this feast of love, in this
 2 In this bread and wine, in this
 3 Grant us peace, O Lord, grant us



pöy - däs - sä *syn - ti - sil - le*
 feast of love, Lord, you share your
 bread and wine, you have prom - ised,
 peace, O Lord; fill us with the



it - se - si an - nat, *Ju - ma - lan Ka - rit - sa!*
 blood and your bod - y, Je - sus, Lamb of God.
 Lord, to be with us, Lamb . . of God div - ine.
 joy of your Spir - it, ev - er - liv - ing Word.

Communion Song

God Is Love
Repeat as needed

ACS 1041

God is love. God is love; let us love one an -

The first system of musical notation consists of a treble and bass staff in B-flat major. The treble staff contains the melody with lyrics underneath. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

oth-er as God first loved us. God is love.

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The treble staff melody includes a phrase with a slur over the notes for 'oth-er as God first loved us.' The bass staff accompaniment continues with chords and moving lines.

God is love. God is love.

The third system concludes the piece. The treble staff melody features a final phrase with a slur over the notes for 'God is love.' The bass staff accompaniment ends with a final chord and a double bar line.

We rise in body or spirit.

Prayer after communion

Let us pray.

Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation.

We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace.

We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world.

Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name.

Amen

SENDING

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

Blessing

We have peeked at the light under the stable door.
Do you have the courage to unwrap the gift the Christmas Christ brings?

Go forth now and open the door to let love break forth.
Open the gift and give love to one another.
Open your heart and let hope, peace, joy and love enter in.
Amen

Sending Song *Please see next page.*

Dismissal

Be alert. Be faithful.
The day of the Lord is coming.
The kingdom of God is near.
Thanks be to God.



My Je - sus, my Sav - ior, Lord, there is none like you.



All of my days I want to praise the won-ders of your might-y love.



My com - fort, my shel - ter, tow - er of ref - uge and strength;



let ev-'ry breath, all that I am nev - er cease to wor - ship you.



Shout to the Lord, all the earth; let us sing pow - er and maj - es - ty, praise



to the King. Moun - tains bow down and the seas will roar at the



sound of your name. I sing for joy at the work of your hands;



for - ev - er I'll love you, for - ev - er I'll stand.



Noth - ing com - pares to the prom - ise I have in you.

Please join in supporting our church's ministries using your preferred method of giving:



- Enroll in our on-line giving program, Simply Giving (recommended);
- Mail your offering check to the church;
- Text your offering to 610-981-1312;
- Download our mobile app for recurring or one-time gifts;
- Establish automatic contributions to the church using your bank's bill pay service.

Additional information is located in the Stewardship section of the church's website at: lchsemmaus.org.

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Frank Mattes, percussion



WORSHIP LEADERS

Pastor Shari Duminy, Senior Pastor
Pastor Tami K. Reichley, Associate Pastor
Pastor Cindy Camp, Associate Pastor
Deacon Melanie Werley, Director of Liturgy
Karin Kahler, Director, Faith Formation for Children
Nancy Pfeffer, Interim Choir Director

WORSHIP HELPERS

Advent Wreath Lighters

Rob and Susan Smith

Assisting Minister

JoEllen Rooney

Reader

Charlotte Gross

Communion Assistants

Eric Kahler, Angie Niland

Greeter

Jayne Moxey

Usher

Angie Niland

Production/Technology Team

Al Bauernschmidt, Chuck Coe, Glenn Hinderliter, Jeff Gross, Eric Kahler,
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Lynda Swartz, Julie Timmcke, Jennifer Wetzell

