

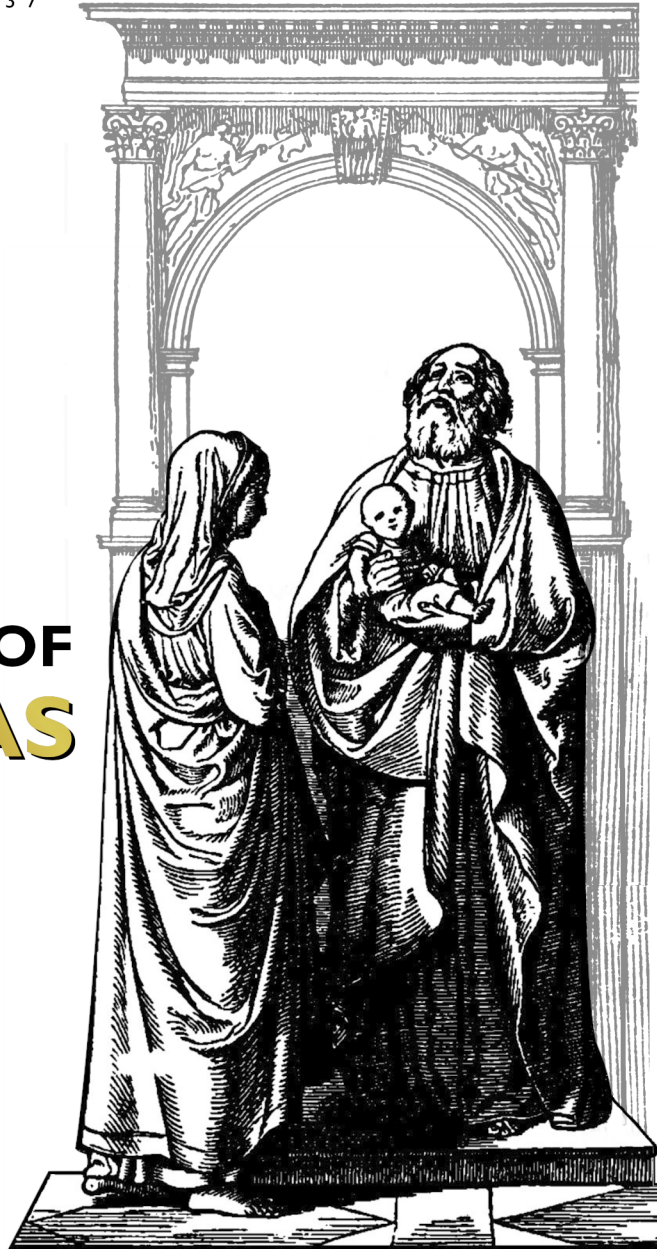
FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

FOUNDED 15 JANUARY 1837

SUNDAY, THE SEVENTH DAY OF CHRISTMAS

December 31, 2023

10:00 AM



615 Grant Street, Pittsburgh Pennsylvania, 15219

Ph: 412.471.8125 ✕ Fax: 412.471.9521 ✕ flc@flcpittsburgh.org ✕ www.flcpittsburgh.org



PARDON OUR DUST

Reconstruction of our front sidewalks and courtyard is now underway. The courtyard is closed. Entry to the church is now limited to the bell tower and basement doors. The doors at the bell tower, at Grant Street and Strawberry Way, have very steep steps. Please use these with caution. Our temporary handicapped entrance is located at the basement door at the corner of Strawberry and Garland Ways. All are welcome to use this entrance. This Sunday, our financial secretary Suanne O'Dell, will be staffing this door. If you are parking at the U.S. Steel Tower, please cross Grant at Strawberry Way. We will update you when the courtyard entrances will be available and keep you informed through the Parish News and bulletin as work progresses.

PARKING

Please be aware that the police have been more diligent in enforcing no-parking zones on Sundays, especially when there are sporting or other events downtown. Parking on our side of Grant Street is posted as permitted until 1:00 PM, but they sometimes ticket or even tow vehicles across the street. Though past efforts have failed, we are once again exploring if parking can be permitted there in the future.

We encourage parking in the U.S. Steel Tower Garage, which we have made free on Sundays, though contributions toward our \$2.00 cost are welcome. Please bring your ticket to the staff member on duty, who will attach a sticker to your parking ticket. When exiting the garage, do not go to the pay station; simply insert your validated ticket at the exit gate. There are two entrances to the garage: one is off of the Veterans Bridge/Bigelow Blvd ramp just before Sixth Ave; the other is on Bigelow Square, just off of Sixth Ave and in front of the DoubleTree Hotel's main entrance.



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH WELCOMES YOU!

We extend a warm welcome to all who are visiting with us today and hope you will return to worship with our community of faith again. If you would like to know more about our ministry in downtown and metropolitan Pittsburgh, please speak to a pastor, any of our members, or visit www.flcpittsburgh.org.

Our liturgy incorporates historic practices of the Western Christian tradition, aspects of which may be unfamiliar to some. We hope this bulletin will serve to welcome our visitors and be an aid to those who seek to participate in our worship of God.

ACCESSIBILITY Accessible entrances to the nave are available using either door from the courtyard. An elevator is available in the Parish House to access other levels of the building. The parking spaces directly in front of the building have been designated for those with handicapped plates or placards for their vehicles.

ASSISTED LISTENING DEVICES are available at the ushers' table in the rear of the nave. Easy-to-use receivers with either an earpiece or a neck loop are available. Antiseptic wipes are available to clean assisted listening equipment before use.

YOUNG CHILDREN

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me." The presence of children in worship, even when they are wiggly and noisy, is a gift to the Church and a reminder that our parish is growing. Children's worship boxes, with items to help engage our youngsters in worship, are available in the back of the nave. Please return them to an usher after worship. A family restroom with a changing table is available downstairs.



HOLY COMMUNION

Holy Communion is offered by invitation of the Lord himself. All baptized believers who trust that Christ is truly present in the Eucharist, regardless of denomination, are invited to receive the Blessed Sacrament. To receive the Sacrament, come to the altar rail by way of the center aisle. The pastor will place a wafer into your hand. Please indicate to the pastor if you need a gluten-free wafer. The wine may be received by drinking directly from the common cup or with an individual glass filled from a pouring chalice. Please pick up a glass from the tables at the head of the center aisle, and return your empty glass to the tables at the head of the side aisles. If you need to have communion brought to you in your seat, please let an usher know.

If you choose to receive the Sacrament under the form of bread alone for any reason, you may be assured that in so doing, you receive the whole Christ. If you choose not to receive communion, you may request a blessing instead. After receiving communion (or a blessing), you may return to your seat by the side aisles.

✠ ALTAR FLOWERS & LAMPS ✠

THE CENTERPIECE

FLOWERS

A full listing of Christmas poinsettia dedications and special music ministry gifts is printed in a separate booklet, available on the table in the rear of the nave,

SANCTUARY

VOTIVE

LAMPS

December 19-31

*is given in celebration of the
birth of Oliver Hoffman by
Christine Hoffman*

*is given in memory of
Joseph H. Sharer, Jr.*

SUNDAY, THE SEVENTH DAY OF CHRISTMAS

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

December 31, 2023—10:00 AM

*Thank you for silencing your electronic devices before worship.
The people prepare to worship by silently praying the following prayer:*

(✠) Almighty God and Father of light, a child is born for us and a Son is given to us.
Your eternal Word came down from heaven in the silent watches of the night,
and now your Church is filled with wonder at the nearness of her God.
Open our hearts to receive his life and increase our vision with the rising
of the dawn, that our lives may be filled with his glory and his peace,
who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen *Read Psalm 96, p. 261*

THE PRELUDE

Selected Carol Settings

Wilbur Held

The people stand. The people may turn in place to follow and bow as the cross passes.

THE ENTRANCE HYMN

Joy to the World

LBW 39

Printed on the following page.

THE ENTRANCE HYMN

Joy to the World

LBW 39



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

THE APOSTOLIC 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.**

THE CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Angels We Have Heard on High

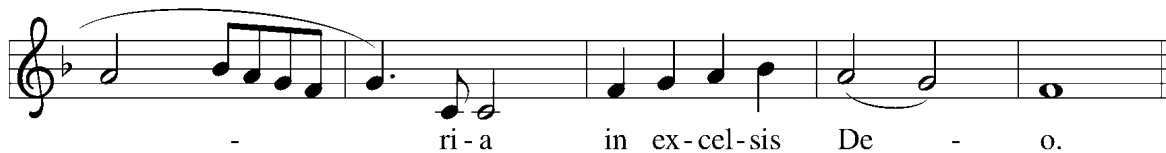
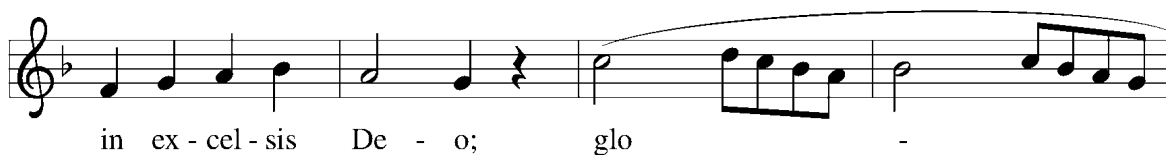
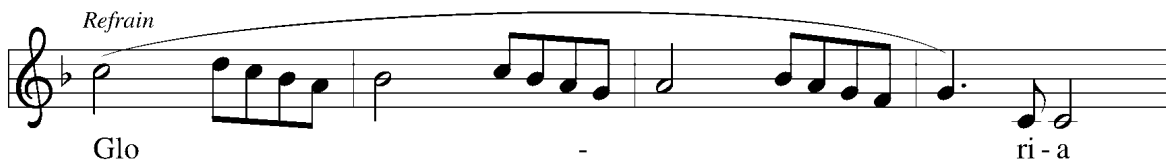
LBW 71



- 1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi-lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;

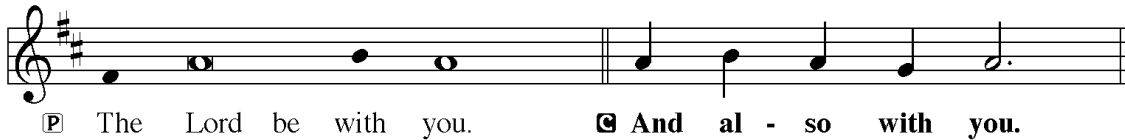


and the moun-tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad-some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.



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

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY



P Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have made yourself known in your Son, Jesus, redeemer of the world. We pray that his birth as a human child will set us free from the old slavery of our sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen** *Sung on one tone*

The people are seated.

THE FIRST LESSON—Isaiah 61:10—62:3

L A reading from Isaiah.

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

^{62:1}For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. ²The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. ³You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

L The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

*Sung antiphonally, Men / **Women***

- ¹ Hallelujah! Praise the LORD | from the heavens;*
praise him | in the heights.
- ² **Praise him, all you an- | gels of his;***
praise him, | all his host.
- ³ Praise him, | sun and moon;*
praise him, all you | shining stars.
- ⁴ **Praise him, heav- | en of heavens,***
and you waters a- | bove the heavens.
- ⁵ Let them praise the name | of the LORD;*
for he commanded, and they | were created.
- ⁶ **He made them stand fast forev- | er and ever;***
he gave them a law which shall not | pass away.
- ⁷ Praise the LORD | from the earth,*
you sea monsters | and all deeps;
- ⁸ **fire and hail, | snow and fog,***
tempestuous wind, do- | ing his will;
- ⁹ mountains | and all hills,*
fruit trees | and all cedars;
- ¹⁰ **wild beasts | and all cattle,***
creeping things and | winged birds;
- ¹¹ kings of the earth | and all peoples,*
princes and all rulers | of the world;
- ¹² **young | men and maidens,***
old and | young together.
- ¹³ Let them praise the name | of the LORD,*
for his name only is exalted,
his splendor is over | earth and heaven.
- ¹⁴ **He has raised up strength for his people**
and praise for all his | loyal servants,*
the children of Israel,
a people who are near him. | Hallelujah!

THE SECOND LESSON—Galatians 4:4-7

L A reading from Galatians.

⁴When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. ⁶And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” ⁷So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

L The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

The people stand.

THE HYMN AT THE GRADUAL

Let Our Gladness have No End

LBW 57

St. 1 & 2



1 Let our glad - ness have no end, Hal - le - lu - jah!
2 Proph-e - sied in days of old, Hal - le - lu - jah!



for to earth did Christ de - scend. Hal - le - lu - jah!
God has sent the one fore - told. Hal - le - lu - jah!



On this day God gave us Christ, the Son, to



save us; Christ, the Son, to save us.

THE HOLY GOSPEL — Saint Luke 2:22-40

P The Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke, the second chapter.



²²When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, Joseph and Mary brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), ²⁴and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. ²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; ³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

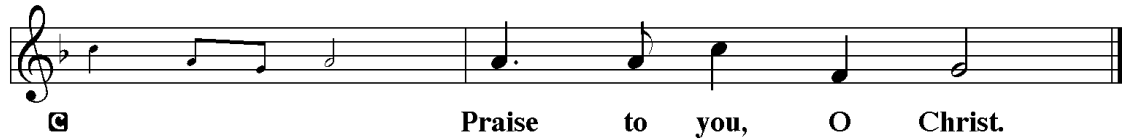
³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”

³³And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

P The Gospel of the Lord.



THE HYMN AT THE GRADUAL

Let Our Gladness have No End

LBW 57

St. 3 & 4



3 See the love - liest bloom - ing rose, Hal - le - lu - jah!
4 In - to flesh is made the Word, Hal - le - lu - jah!



from the branch of Jes - se grows. Hal - le - lu - jah!
our true ref - uge and our Lord. Hal - le - lu - jah!



On this day God gave us Christ, the Son, to



save us; Christ, the Son, to save us.

Text: Bohemian carol, 15th cent.; tr, unknown
Music: NARODIL SE KRISTUS PÁN, Bohemian carol, 15th cent.

The people are seated.

THE SERMON

The Rev. Brian A. Evans

Following the Sermon, the people stand for the Hymn of the Day.

THE HYMN OF THE DAY

In His Temple Now Behold Him

ELW 417

Printed on the following pages.

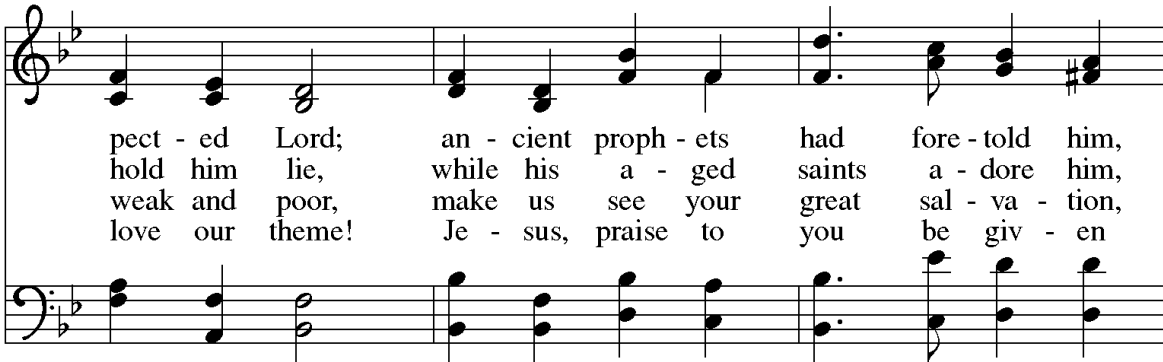
THE HYMN OF THE DAY

In His Temple Now Behold Him


ELW 417



1 In his tem - ple now be - hold him, see the long - ex -
 2 In the arms of her who bore him, vir - gin pure, be -
 3 Je - sus, by your pre - sen - ta - tion, when they blessed you,
 4 Prince and au - thor of sal - va - tion, be your bound - less



pect - ed Lord; an - cient proph - ets had fore - told him,
 hold him lie, while his a - ged saints a - dore him,
 weak and poor, make us see your great sal - va - tion,
 love our theme! Je - sus, praise to you be giv - en



God has sent the prom - ised Word. Now to praise him,
 ere in per - fect faith they die. Al - le - lu - ia!
 seal us with your prom - ise sure; and pre - sent us,
 by the world you did re - deem, with the Fa - ther

his re-deem-ed shall break forth with one ac-cord.
 Al-le-lu-ia! Lo, the in-car-nate God Most High!
 in your glo-ry, to your Fa-ther, cleansed and pure.
 and the Spir-it God of maj-es-ty su-preme!

Text: Henry J. Pye, 1825–1903, alt.
 Music: REGENT SQUARE, Henry T. Smart, 1813–1879

THE NICENE CREED

C 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;

The people kneel or bow.
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary,
and was made man.

The people stand.
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

THE PRAYERS

- A Let us kneel to pray for the whole people of God
in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

The people kneel.

Lord, in your mercy...

- C Hear our prayer.**

- P Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray,
trusting in your mercy, through your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

- C Amen**

The people stand.

THE EXCHANGE OF PEACE

- P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

- C And also with you.**

The people offer each other the sign of peace, saying "Peace be with you."

The people are seated as the gifts are brought forward.

THE OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS

HYMN AT THE OFFERING

Of the Father's Love Begotten

LBW 42

St. 1 & 2

1 Of the Fa - ther's love be - got - ten ere the worlds be -
2 Oh, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed, when the vir - gin,
gan to be, he is Al - pha and O - me - ga, he the source, the
full of grace, by the Ho - ly Ghost con - ciev - ing, bore the Sav - ior
end - ing he, of the things that are that have been,
of our race, and the babe, the world's re - dee - mer,
and that fu - ture year shall see, ev - er more and ev - er more.
first re - vealed his sa - cred face, ev - er more and ev - er more.

The people stand.

THE OFFERTORY PRAYER

- A Let us pray.
Merciful Father, accept our gifts on this joyful feast of our salvation.
Grant that, by our communion with God made man, we may become
more like him who joins our life to yours, Jesus Christ,
who is Lord for ever and ever.
- C **Amen**

SURSUM CORDA

P The Lord be with you. **C** And al - so 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 him thanks and praise.

THE PREFACE

P It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory; that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS

3 This is he whom seers in old time chant-ed of with
 4 Let the heights of heav'n a-dore him; an-gel hosts, his

one ac-cord, whom the voic-es of the pro-phets
 prais-es sing; pow'rs, do-min-ions, bow be fore him

pro-mised in their faith-ful word; now he shines, the
 and ex-tol our God and King; let no tongue on

long ex-pect - ted; let cre-a-tion praise its Lord
 earth be si - lent, ev'-ry voice in con-cert ring

ev - er more and ev - er more.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

P You are indeed holy, our Father and our God. By your Word and on the breath of your Spirit you called things into being. You set lights in the firmament of the heavens to be for signs and for seasons and for days and years. You made us in your image to care for your creation. When our disobedience brought death and decay into the world you did not abandon the work of your hands. You purged the world of evil through the Great Flood and made a covenant with Noah and his family that seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease as long as the earth remains.

- P Through Abraham and Sarah you formed for yourself a nation, a nation that you redeemed from slavery, a nation to possess the Promised Land, a nation to cherish your Law and your Promises, a nation that in the fullness of time brought forth a Savior, Jesus Christ our Lord, who by his death and resurrection set us free from sin, from death, from Satan, and from all the powers of darkness.

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.*

- P For as often as we eat this bread and drink this cup
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.
C Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

- P Therefore, heavenly Father, we gather around this bread and cup as your family,
sons and daughters born of breath and water. We gather in communion with all
your saints on earth, with baptized men and women of every race and tribe and
nation.

We gather in communion with all your saints in heaven, with Saint Mary the Virgin,
the Mother of God; Saint John the Baptizer, the herald of salvation; Saints Peter and
Paul and all the Apostles and Evangelists; Saint Mary Magdalene and the Holy
Women; with Martyrs, Confessors, Teachers, and Reformers, and all the saints of
every age.

We gather in communion with all who have fallen asleep in Christ to await the
resurrection of the just: keep us united with them in love until all your faithful
people meet again in the New Jerusalem on high, where there will be no more
weeping, pain, or grief, and where we will share with them the great and
promised feast.

- C Amen. Come, Lord, Jesus.**

P By the power of your Holy Spirit, bestow your blessing upon us and upon this bread and wine, that they may be for us the body and blood of Christ our Lord. Forgive us, heal us, strengthen and renew us, so that we may live in holiness and godliness to the praise of your glory and may receive our inheritance with all your saints in light.

C Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

P Join our prayers with those of your servants of every time and place and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest until he comes as victorious Lord of all.

5 Christ, to thee, with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho - ly

Ghost, to thee, hymn and chant and high thanks-giv - ing

and un-wear-ied prais-es be: hon-or, glo-ry, and do-min - ion,

and e - ter-nal vic-to-ry ev - er more and ev - er more.____

Text: Marcus Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, 348–413; tr. composite
Music: DIVINUM MYSTERIUM, plainsong mode V, 13th cent.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us:

**C 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 FRACTION

P When we eat this bread, we share the body of Christ.
When we drink this cup, we share the blood of Christ.

**C Reveal yourself to us, O Lord, in the breaking of bread,
as once you revealed yourself to your disciples.**

P The gifts of God for the people of God. Taste and see that the Lord is good.

The people are seated.

AGNUS DEI

♩ 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.

THE COMMUNION OF THE FAITHFUL

To receive the Sacrament, come to the altar rail by way of the center aisle. The pastor will place a wafer into your hand. Please indicate to the pastor if you need a gluten-free wafer. The wine may be received by drinking directly from the common cup or with an individual glass filled from a pouring chalice. Please pick up a glass from the tables at the head of the center aisle, and return your empty glass to the tables at the head of the side aisles. If you need to have communion brought to you in your seat, please let an usher know.

If you choose to receive the Sacrament under the form of bread alone for any reason, you may be assured that in so doing, you receive the whole Christ. If you choose not to receive communion, you may request a blessing instead. After receiving communion (or a blessing), you may return to your seat by the side aisles.

MUSIC AT THE DISTRIBUTION

HYMN

The Bells of Christmas

LBW 62



Det ki - mer nu til ju - le - fest, det ki - mer
 1 The bells of Christ - mas chime once more; the heav'n - ly
 2 This world, though wide and far out - spread, could scarce - ly
 3 Now let us go with qui - et mind, the swad - dled
 4 Oh, join with me, in glad - ness sing, to keep our



for den høj - e gæst, som steg til la - ve
 guest is at the door. He comes to earth - ly
 find for you a bed. Your cra - dle was a
 babe with shep - herds find, to gaze on him who
 Christ - mas with our king, un - til our song, from



hyt - ter ned med nyt - års - ga - ver: fryd og fred.
 dwell - ings still with new year gifts of peace, good will.
 man - ger stall, no pearl nor silk nor king - ly hall.
 glad - dens them, the love - liest flow'r of Jes - se's stem.
 lov - ing souls, like rush - ing might - y wa - ter rolls!

5 O patriarchs' Joy, O prophets' Song,
 O Dayspring bright, awaited long,
 O Son of Man, incarnate Word,
 great David's Son, great David's Lord:

6 Come, Jesus, glorious heav'nly guest,
 and keep your Christmas in our breast;
 then David's harpstrings, hushed so long,
 shall swell our jubilee of song.

Text: Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig, 1783–1872; tr. Charles Porterfield Krauth, 1823–1883, alt.
 Music: DET KIMER NU TIL JULEFEST, Carl C. N. Balle, 1806–1855

MUSIC AT THE DISTRIBUTION

HYMN

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

LBW 44



1 In - fant ho - ly, in - fant low - ly, for his bed a cat - tle stall;
2 Flocks were sleep - ing, shep - herds keep - ing vig - il till the morn - ing new



ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know - ing Christ the child is Lord of all.
saw the glo - ry, heard the sto - ry, tid - ings of a gos - pel true.



Swift - ly wing - ing, an - gels sing - ing, bells are ring - ing, tid - ings bring - ing:
Thus re - joic - ing, free from sor - row, prais - es voic - ing, greet the mor - row:



Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

Text: Polish carol; tr. Edith M. G. Reed, 1885–1933, alt.
Music: W ŻŁOBIE LEŻY, Polish carol

When all have communed, the people stand.

THE POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

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

C **Amen**

THE POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE *Rejoice, Rejoice This Happy Morn* **LBW 43**

Re-joyce, re - joyce this hap - py morn, a Sav - ior un - to us is
born, the Christ, the Lord of glo - ry! His low - ly birth at Beth - le -
hem the an - gels from on high pro - claim and sing re - demp - tion's sto - ry!
My soul, ex - tol God's great fa - vor; bless him ev - er
for sal - va - tion; give him praise and ad - o - ra - tion!

Text: Birgitte K. Boye, 1742–1824; tr. Carl Doving, 1867–1937
Music: WIE SCHÖN LEUCHTET, Philipp Nicolai, 1556–1608


THE POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

A Let us pray.

Almighty God, by the birth of your Son Jesus in the lowly stable you joined heaven to earth and earth to heaven: Grant that we who have been fed with this heavenly food, may grow in love of him who unites our lives to yours in this blessed Sacrament; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen**

THE BLESSING



Almighty God, Father, Son,
and Holy Spirit, bless you now . . . and for - ever. A - men

The people may turn in place to follow the cross and bow as we are sent forth to serve.

THE HYMN TO CLOSE

The First Noel

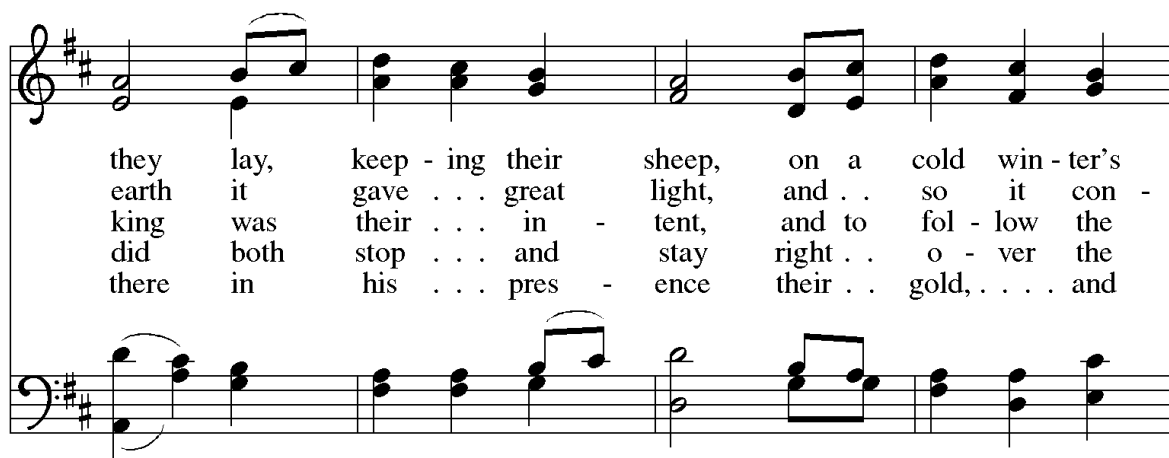
LBW 56

St. 1—All • 2—Men • 3—All • 4—Women • 5—All • Refrain—All



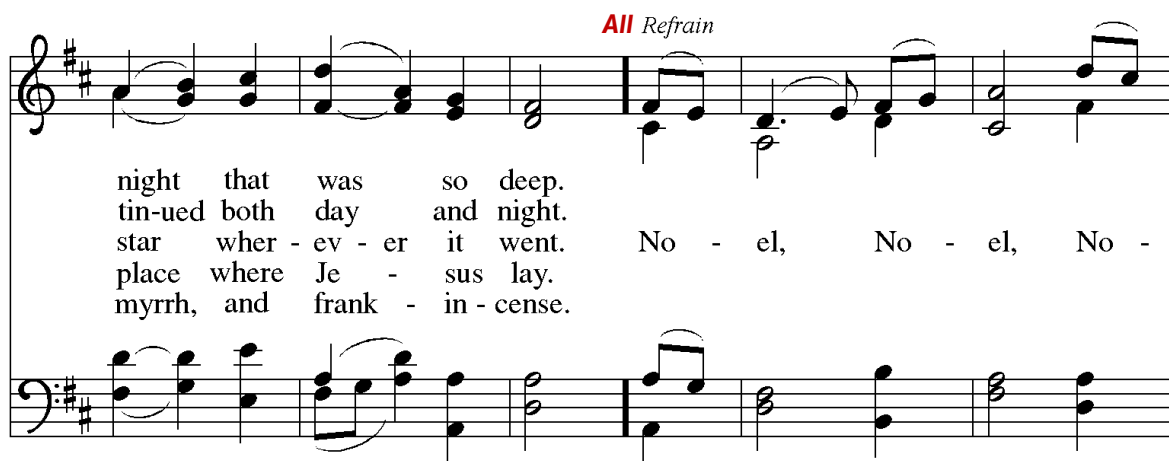
All 1 The first Noel the an - gel did say was to
M 2 They look - ed up and saw . . . a star shin - ing
All 3 And by the light of that . . . same star three . .
W 4 This star drew near in to the . . . north - west, o'er . .
All 5 Then en - tered in those wise . . . men three, full . .

cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where
in . . . the east . . . be - yond . . . them far; and to the
wise . . . men came . . . from coun - try far; to seek for a
Beth - le - hem . . . it took . . . its rest; and there it
rev - 'rent - ly . . . up - on . . . their knee, and of - fered

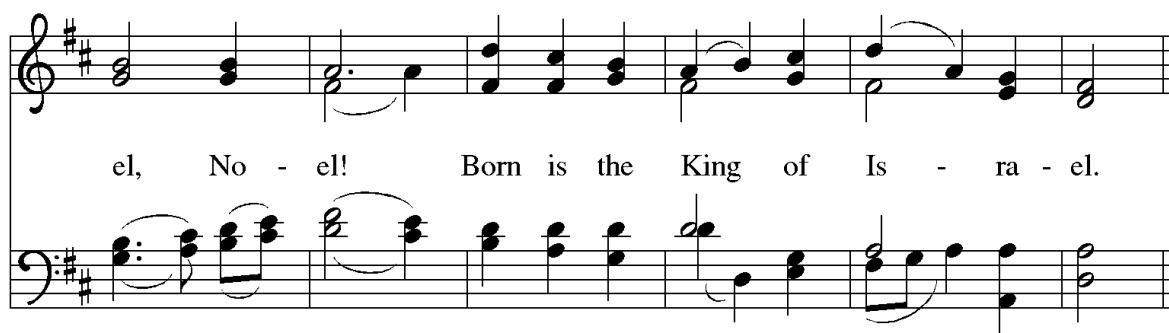


they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's
 earth it gave . . . great light, and . . so it con -
 king was their . . . in - tent, and to fol - low the
 did both stop . . . and stay right . . o - ver the
 there in his . . . pres - ence their . . gold, . . . and

All Refrain



night that was so deep.
 tin-ued both day and night.
 star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -
 place where Je - sus lay.
 myrrh, and frank - in - cense.



el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

Text: English traditional
 Music: THE FIRST NOWELL, English traditional; arr. John Stainer, 1840–1901

THE DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

THE POSTLUDE

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen

Wilbur Held

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ADULT EDUCATION

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

What is the Gospel? How do we make sense of the endlessly differing retellings of a singular story? How do we apply its meaning when millions of readers have reached varying conclusions? In his book, *What is the Gospel?*, Bishop Kurt F. Kusserow resists declaring one definitive answer and instead offers nine.

Join Pastors Evans and McCurry for this inspiring examination of the Gospel by Bp. Kusserow.

Visit swpasynod.org/download-gospel to download a copy from the Synod website. If you need a print copy, please contact the church office.

January 7

- 1 - Why Ask the Question?
- 2 - The Gospel Is the Story of Jesus

January 14

- 3 - The Gospel Is the Power of God for Salvation
- 4 - The Gospel Is Inherently Elusive

January 21

- 5 - The Gospel Is the Gift of Life
- 6 - The Gospel Is Being Forgiven

January 28

- 7 - The Gospel Is Welcome
- 8 - The Gospel Is for the Poor

February 4

- 9 - The Gospel Is Love
- 10 - What Makes the Gospel True?

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASTOR EVANS WILL BE AWAY from Wednesday, January 3, to Wednesday, January 10. If you have an urgent pastoral care need outside of office hours, please call the emergency line at 412-471-6507 and leave a message. Your call will be returned as soon as possible.

A VERY SINCERE “THANK YOU”: We are deeply grateful to all the members of our parish family who worked diligently to make our celebration of the Nativity of Our Lord especially glorious. We thank our choirs, instrumentalists, assisting ministers, lectors, acolytes, ushers, Altar Guild, many volunteers, and our staff for all the hours of labor and for the gifts of their talents and skills. Our family in faith appreciates the contribution made by our parish members and friends to our life together in Christ.

2024 LITURGICAL CALENDARS ARE NOW AVAILABLE for \$2.00 at the reception desk.

DESIGNATED OFFERINGS: THE SPECIAL OFFERING FOR CHRISTMAS has been designated for **Catapult Greater Pittsburgh**. Catapult Greater Pittsburgh serves individuals and families at or below poverty level, helping to provide economic justice opportunities for individuals seeking generational stability. Catapult strives to ensure that systematically disenfranchised communities can meaningfully achieve economic justice and that community members can lead dignified and equitable lives. Your donation helps families improve their economic and social well-being and helps to move our local community toward economic stability. Please use the Christmas envelopes in your offering envelope box, or, make your check payable to First Lutheran Church and mark Christmas on the memo line. Alternately, you may donate via PayPal, indicating “Christmas” in the transaction notes.

WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENT: Madison Petras and Zach Wells plan to be married at First Lutheran Church **this afternoon at 3:30 PM**. They request your prayers. The wedding is an occasion of public worship and any member is welcome to attend.

ESTIMATES OF GIVING RECEIVED FOR 2024: We are deeply grateful to those who have pledged financial support for the ministry of First Church in 2023. If you have not as yet done so, you may still send in your support for our ministry in the coming year. Estimate of Giving forms are available on the table at the rear of the nave in the Parish House or by contacting Suanne O'Dell at sso@flcpittsburgh.org.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

ICE FEST will take place **Saturday, February 3, 2024!** join us as we learn how we are “Clothed with the Spirit” and dressed in the armor of God. We will enjoy lunch together at FLC after our morning activities and then walk to PPG Place for an afternoon of ice skating. Cost is \$15/camper (grades K-6). There is no charge for youth counselors (grades 7-12). Drop off at the church at 9:00 AM and pick up at the ice rink at PPG at 3:00 PM. Register by Sunday, January 21 at flcpittsburgh.org/campdowntown

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS! The Walk-In Food Pantry is once again well-stocked thanks to your generosity! We can take a pause with donations, **except jars of peanut butter and jelly.**

ON DUTY THIS WEEK / PARTNER MINISTRY SERVICES: This week, First Presbyterian Church will be on duty Tuesday-Thursday, January 2-4. The Red Door at St. Mary of Mercy Roman Catholic Church offers bag lunches Monday - Saturday, 10:30 - 11:30 AM, and dinners Monday - Friday, 5:00 - 5:30 PM. Those seeking crisis counseling may be directed accordingly.

CAMPUS MINISTRY NEEDS YOUR INPUT! First Lutheran Church has a long history with campus ministry and has built lasting connections with nearby universities, and maintains connections with our members who are students. The Campus Ministry Team of the Evangelism Committee is interested to learn more about your college and school experiences, to continue to build connections between alumni in our congregation and current, prospective, or visiting students. We have created a questionnaire that can be accessed at flcpittsburgh.org/questionnaire. We look forward to receiving your responses!

PLEASANT VALLEY MEN'S SHELTER MEAL: Tuesday, January 2 To love our neighbors, First Lutheran Church prepares and serves a meal at Pleasant Valley Men's Shelter on the first Tuesday of every other month. Our next dinner will be Tuesday, January 2. We are in need of more volunteers to make food at home or buy prepared food at a store and to help serve the meal at 7 pm. If you are interested, or would like more information, please contact Jeff McCurry at mccurryj@gmail.com.

COLLEGE STUDENT LUNCHEON: JANUARY 7 Technical school, College, and University students from any school are invited to stay after church for lunch on **Sunday, January 7, 2024 at 12:00 PM**. RSVP to Pastor McCurry at jpm@flcpittsburgh.org so we have enough food and know about your dietary needs. Be sure to check out the FLC Student Group on Instagram! [@FLCstudents](https://www.instagram.com/FLCstudents)

DANIEL SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDY Beginning in February, adult small groups will be doing an 6-week study on the prophetic book, Daniel. In the past, small groups have met either on Zoom or in person on weekday evenings or Sunday afternoons about twice a month, scheduled according to the availability of the participants. These are a great opportunity to get to know and spend time with a group of adults from First Lutheran Church on a new level, sharing prayer requests, and learning about scripture. Express your interest and availability online at tinyurl.com/FLCsmallgroup by **Sunday, January 21**. If you have questions, contact Pr. McCurry (jpm@flcpittsburgh.org).

SAVE THE DATE: A Youth Group skiing trip is scheduled for **Saturday, January 27**, at Oglebay. Full details coming soon!

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS AND ASSISTING MINISTERS NEEDED:

Please consider serving as a communion assistant or assisting minister in the new year! Assisting ministers serve as assistant to the presiding minister, leading prayers, preparing the altar for communion, administering the cup. Communion assistants administer the wine with pouring chalices at communion, and other small tasks at the altar. **We especially need assisting ministers at the 11:00 AM service.** Please contact Christine Hoffman, who coordinates and trains the assistants by calling 412-471-8125 or email cgh@flcpittsburgh.org. Thank you!

PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE WHEN

A member of your family is admitted to the hospital, a member of your family is no longer physically able to attend worship, a member of your family leaves home for college, military service, or to establish a new residence, a member of your family changes their name and/or marital status.

A new baby arrives in your family.

Your address, phone number and/or email address has changed.

You feel the church can assist you in any way.

You would like to request a visit from the Pastor.

***Call 412-471-8125 or email
Christine at cgh@flcpittsburgh.org***

2024 ALTAR FLOWERS AND SANCTUARY/VOTIVE LAMPS

are available for those who wish to make a donation. Floral arrangements and candles can be donated in honor of a living person or in memory of someone who has died, in celebration of an anniversary or other milestone, or in thanksgiving for friends or family. Your name(s) and dedication are acknowledged in the bulletin.

The cost for flowers is \$25 per arrangement.

The cost for the 14-day candles used in the sanctuary/votive lamps is \$7.50.

Please sign-up in the notebooks on the reception desk in the Parish House, or contact Christine Hoffman at 412-471-8125 or cgh@flcpittsburgh.org.

SERVING TODAY

8:30 AM

Presiding Minister	Pr. McCurry
Preacher	Pr. Evans
Assisting Minister	Mimi Pasternak
Communion Assistant	Pr. Evans Sarah Maenner
Lectors	Maggie Wolfram

Acolyte(s)	Ethan Wilson	C
	Nate Wilson	T
	Abby Wilson	T
	Abby Wilson	A
	Sadie Navid	BB

Cantor	Sr. Cynthia A. Pock, OLF, AAGO
Vocalists	The Parish Choir

Head Usher	Kurt Herbst
Usher(s)	Kurt Hansmann
Altar Guild	Lorraine Beers Mary Preuss

CALENDAR

MONDAY, JANUARY 1

Church Closed in Observance of New Year holiday

TUESDAY, JANUARY 2 *Johann Konrad Wilhelm Loehe, Renewer of the Church*

Church Closed in Observance of New Year holiday

7:00 PM Pleasant Valley Men's Shelter Dinner NORTH SIDE

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3

8:00 AM Social Ministry Meal Prep KITCHEN

12:10 PM Noonday Holy Communion NAVE

1:00 PM Staff Meeting MEZZANINE

6:00 PM Social Ministry Committee Meeting ZOOM

THURSDAY, JANUARY 4

FRIDAY, JANUARY 5

12:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting HOLY CROSS HALL

THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD: SATURDAY, JANUARY 6

THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD: SUNDAY, JANUARY 7

8:30 AM Holy Communion NAVE

9:35 AM Bel Canto Youth Choir Rehearsal CHOIR ROOM

9:45 AM Sunday Church School Classes for All Ages VARIOUS

10:00 AM Parish Choir Rehearsal CHOIR LOFT

11:00 AM Holy Communion NAVE

12:10 PM Cantate Children's Choir Rehearsal CHOIR ROOM

12:10 PM College Student Luncheon HOLY CROSS HALL

THE FIRST ENGLISH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

has served downtown Pittsburgh since its founding in 1837 as the first English-speaking Lutheran Church west of the Alleghenies. Its members come from far and near to participate in its Christian witness in the heart of the city: a witness that is faithful to Holy Scripture and to the historic Lutheran Confessions. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is at the center of its life, providing direction, comfort, and hope. If you are seeking a church home in Pittsburgh, we invite you to become a part of our downtown ministry.

THE CHURCH IS OPEN DAILY FOR PRAYER

STAFF

The Rev. Brian A. Evans, *Senior Pastor*
The Rev. Jennifer Peters McCurry, *Associate Pastor*
The Rev. Daniel E. Hall, MD, *Assisting Episcopal Priest*
Sr. Cynthia A. Pock, n/OLF, AAGO, *Cantor*
Mrs. Suanne O'Dell, *Financial Secretary*
Ms. Christine G. Hoffman, *Admin. Assistant to Pastoral Staff*
Mr. Jeremy Caywood, *Building Manager*
Mr. Nicholas Scott Sharer, *Communications Coordinator*
Mr. Benjamin Sommer, *Organ & Sacred Music Scholar*

PASTORS-IN-RESIDENCE

The Rev. Brian O. Bennett, *Lutheran University Center*
The Rev. Erin E. Evans, *Christ Lutheran Church, Millvale*
The Rev. Canon Natalie G. Hall, *Church of the Redeemer*
The Rev. S. Cyril Hurnyak
The Rev. Leonard J. Larsen
The Rev. Caroline Mendis
The Rev. Christine Rotella, *Abiding Missions*
The Rev. Martin M. Roth
The Rev. Robert W. Strobel

MISSIONARIES

The Rev. Dr. Sarah Hinlicky Wilson
& Dr. Andrew L. Wilson, *Japan*

ORGAN ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

Dr. Ann Labounsky Steele



Assisted listening devices are available. Inquire with an usher.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday Worship

8:30 AM Holy Communion
9:45 AM Sunday Church School
(Classes for all ages during school year)

11:00 AM Holy Communion

Midweek Noonday Worship

12:10 PM Holy Communion, Wednesdays
(Holy Communion for Healing on the first Wednesday of each month)

SUNDAY PARKING

Accessible parking is available on Grant Street in front of the church. Free parking is available in the US Steel Tower garage. Reduced rate parking is available at the Mellon Square and Smithfield/Liberty garages for \$1.00. See an usher or the attendant at the reception desk for validation. Street parking is free on Sundays until 1:00 PM.

If you have a pastoral concern outside of normal office hours, please call our emergency line: **412-471-6507** and the pastoral staff member on duty will return your call as soon as possible.

Visit us online at
flcpittsburgh.org

