

December 20, 2015

Fourth Sunday in Advent

FIRST LESSON. Micah 5:2-5a

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.

SECOND LESSON. Hebrews 10:5-10

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God' (in the scroll of the book it is written of me)." When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

GOSPEL. Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]

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 lowliness 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. 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 thoughts 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 helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."]

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8:30 a.m.

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8:30 am

First Lutheran Church
Fergus Falls, Minnesota
(218) 739-3348

Online
Giving
(QR Code)



According to scripture, when Mary learns that she is carrying the son of God, she isn't angry. She isn't mad. She's calm, cool, and collected. How can she be so peaceful with this news? Today we join with Mary in thanksgiving and gratitude for the gift of Jesus, who is coming soon.

Prelude
Announcements

*** Confession of Sin**

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who shapes the whole creation, who comes with might and mercy, who fills the hungry with good things. Amen.

L: Let us approach the throne of grace with repentant hearts.

(Silence is kept for reflection.)

C: Faithful God, we confess that we have been unfaithful to you. Like dry leaves and withered grass, our lives are blown about by our sins and the powers of evil around us. Restore us, O God; let the light of your face shine on us, and we shall be saved. Amen.

L: God is patient, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. In the name of + Jesus Christ, I bring you this good news: You are free from all that imprisons you; your sins are forgiven; God heals your broken hearts. Live in peace and harmony as you wait for the day of God. **Amen.**

Entrance Hymn

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn

ELW 242

***Apostolic Greeting**

ELW Page 138

***Kyrie**

ELW Page 138

*** Hymn of Praise**

Glory to God

ELW Page 139

***Prayer of the Day**

ELW Page 142

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Prepare the Royal Highway

ELW 264 (v. 2)

God's people, see him coming: your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before him! Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you! Bi more shall doubt assail you!

Refrain

Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's word!

Prayer

This Week at First Lutheran:

Today: 8:30 am Worship
9:45 am Sunday School
10:00 am Adult Bible Study
11:00 am Worship/Sunday School Christmas Program

Mon.: **NO LOVE DAYS UNTIL JAN. 4th**
5:00 p.m. AI-Anon

Tues.: 9:00 a.m. Staff Meeting

Wed. **NO FLY or CHILDREN'S CHOIR**
9:30 a.m. AI-Anon
10 a.m. AA

Thurs.: **CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED**
8:45 a.m. Morning Watch – Pr. Jennifer– KBRF AM 1250
3 & 5 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Services/Family Blessings
11 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service/Holy Communion

Friday : **CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED**
10:00 a.m. Christmas Day Worship/Holy Communion

Next Sunday, December 27th:

10:00 am Worship (NOTE ONLY ONE SERVICE)
No Sunday School
No Adult Bible Study

Senior Pastor: Saul Stensvaag
Associate Pastor: Jennifer Rose
Visitation Pastor: Stan Satre
Sunday School Superintendent: Cindy Larson
Council President: Lisa Wolfe
Lector: Kevyn Heck
Cantor: Brooke Kollman
Acolyte: Aaron Shelstad
Greeter: Bonnie Bartsch
Ushers: Bob & Mary Gaabo, Bob & Karla Wynn
Organist: Keith Melberg
Lighting of Wreath: Kristi, Logan & Cole Wentworth
PA Operators: Margaret Ness-Ludwig

Fellowship and Refreshments will be served in the narthex following worship. Serving today are the families of Isaac Pederson and Riley, Brandon, & Madisen Hinsverk.

Altar Flowers & Radio Broadcast this morning is given by the First Lutheran WELCA Board. Christmas Blessings to all the Women of the ELCA who have faithfully served and continue to serve our church.

Sympathy to the family of Hazel Kronemann who passed away last Sunday, her funeral was held here yesterday.

Known Hospitalized: Julie Jimmerson at Lake Region Hospital

Large Print Bulletins are available. **If you would like a copy for worship, please ask an usher.**

TIME and TALENT Sheets: If you haven't done so already, please turn in your Gifts for Living the Mission sheets (Time and Talent) into the office or the offering plate. (You'll find blank forms at the end of each pew)

2015 Donations: In order to claim a charitable contribution deduction for 2015, **checks must be mailed to the church by no later than December 31.** Checks must be **written, postmarked, and mailed in 2015** to qualify for a 2015 deduction. All other contributions will not qualify for this year, even if the check was actually written in 2015. Please keep this in mind when making your year-end donations.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Christmas Giving Trees! Your generosity truly made an impact on the lives of those receiving the gifts. Thank you!

Winter Weather Information: If Fergus Falls school close due to bad weather, the activities at the church that day will be cancelled and the church office will be closed. (If a leader of an evening activity, such as the adult choir, decides they WILL HOLD THEIR EVENT, they should contact the members. Sunday morning worship will never be cancelled, but please use your good judgment when deciding if you should come to worship or not, REMEMBER, you can always listen at home to the 8:30 a.m. worship on KJJK AM 1020.

Christmas Books & DVDs will be on the table in the library for easy check-out! Come see our big selection for all ages on display for you.

The Christmas and Advent offering will be divided among the Mama Naomi Clinic in Tanzania and one of our local benevolences. Our Advent Coin Folders are available to be picked up at the info counter or in the rear of the sanctuary.

Lenten Planning Task Force for 2016: Yes, believe it or not, it's time again to ask for volunteers to serve on the Lent/Easter Worship Planning Task Force. This group will work with Pastor Saul to come up with a theme and ideas for visuals and decorations to help the congregation have a meaningful worship experience during the seasons of Lent and Easter. No special artistic ability required. Everyone is welcome. Please talk to Pastor Saul or call the church office. (739-3348) We will begin meeting in December.

First Lesson

(Congregational response after reading: **Thanks be to God**)

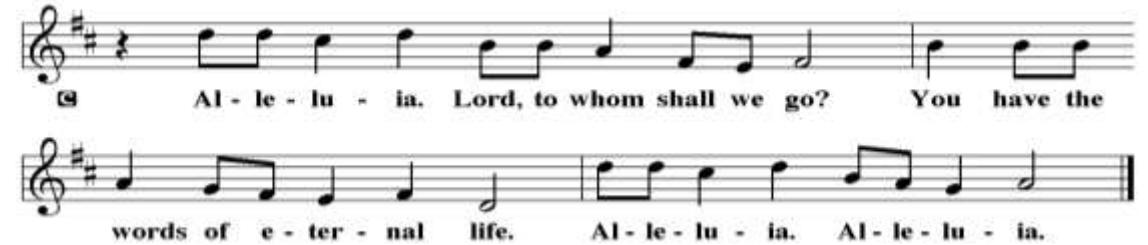
Micah 5:2-5a

Second Lesson

(Congregational response after reading: **Thanks be to God**)

Hebrews 10:5-10

*** Gospel Acclamation**



(Congregation responds after Gospel is announced: **Glory to you, O Lord.**)

*** Gospel**

(Congregation responds after Gospel is Read: **Praise to you, O Christ.**)

Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]

Sermon

Calm, Cool, and Collected

Pastor Jennifer

Hymn of the Day

My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness

ELW 251

*** The PEACE is shared**

C And also with you.

Offering

***Offertory Response**



***The Prayers**

P ...Lord, in your mercy,
C hear our prayer.

OR

P ...Let us pray to the Lord,
C Lord, have mercy.

ELW Page 145

***The Lord's Prayer**

***Benediction**

***Threefold Amen**

Sending

***Closing Hymn**

Prepare the Royal Highway

ELW 264

* Indicates when to stand

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICES

3 & 5 p.m.	Blessing of the Family of God Everyone will receive a family blessing from the pastors. (If you are a family of one, we invite you to receive a blessing for yourself and your loved ones wherever they may be.)
11 p.m.	Holy Communion On this holy night we participate in the mystery of the incarnation as Christ comes to us in the bread and wine.

Christmas Day - One Service at 10 a.m.

A Festival of Lessons & Carols/Holy Communion
This worship tradition from King's College Chapel, Cambridge, England, brings Christmas Day to life with rich music. We hear the Christmas story in the regal language of the King James, sing some of our favorite carols, and break bread together.
(There is no sermon.)

SUNDAYS, DECEMBER 27 & JANUARY 3
THERE WILL BE ONLY ONE SERVICE AT 10 A.M.
NO SUNDAY SCHOOL, NO ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Our Christmas Cookies for Special Friends was a huge success! We delivered over 75 generous plates of Christmas cookies to shut-ins and members of our congregation who no longer bake. Our sincere thanks to the many members who donated their homemade cookies and candies for this special event. We are also grateful for the dedicated drivers who delivered these plates to our church members. The feedback the drivers have shared is that the recipients were delighted to receive this Christmas gift from First Lutheran. Thank you, thank you!

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Christmas Giving Trees! Your generosity truly made an impact on the lives of those receiving the gifts. Thank you!

The Pastors would like to ask for your help is making sure that everyone who needs a visit from our Visitation Pastor, Stan Satre, is on our visitation list. We do not want anyone to be missed. Please let one of the Pastors know if you, or anyone you know that would like a visit. Thank you for your help.

This month, Our Sunday School families will be collecting coats, jackets, mittens, etc. for The United Way Coats for Kids program. If you come across some items that are in good shape, but no longer fit, please bring it to church to help someone else keep warm! **Please drop them off in Cindy's office next to the Library. Thank you!**

One of our members, Arlene Grage, has moved from her home into an assisted living facility. Her new address is 1403 Nicole Court, Fergus Falls and her phone number is 218-998-5961. Arlene would love to hear from her church family with a Christmas card or a short phone call.



Makes a Difference

Electronic Giving!



First Lutheran Church now has a more convenient way to give your offering!

You can now give your offering whenever, wherever you want. To give, visit the First Lutheran Church website-www.firstlutheranchurchff.org. Click on the "Donate" tab at the top of the page. Once you create an online profile, you can give by credit card or bank account (checking or savings account). You can make a one-time donation or you can schedule automatic weekly or monthly donations. Once you make a donation, you will receive a confirmation email and will be able to print out a donation summary at your convenience. You can also access the online giving site by using a Quick Response (QR) decoder on your Apple or Android device. Simply scan the QR code above or on the first page of your bulletin and you will be directed to the giving website.