

## RENEWED HOPE

**THAILAND**  
**ELCA.org/**



When her parents passed away, 7-year old Mia was sent to live with a distant relative on the border between Thailand and Burma. Her “caretaker” forced Mia to work in an orchard rather than go to school, and her meager “salary” was stolen by her caretaker. When she was 13, Mia was forced to stay in a different home where she was sexually abused. Conservative estimates suggest nearly a quarter-million women and girls are victims of human trafficking in Southeast Asia every year, often abused and forced to work for little or no pay. But thanks to the work of New Life Center Foundation in Thailand, supported in part by your gifts to ELCA World Hunger, this isn’t the end of the story for victims like Mia. When she first arrived at the New Life Center Foundation, Mia had significant developmental delays stemming from years of abuse and neglect. The foundation’s staff arranged for her to study in their on-site adult education program, but Mia struggled, as basic tasks, like holding a pencil, were unfamiliar to her. After three years of hard work and hope, Mia began studying at the seventh-grade level. Therapeutic art classes and counseling also continue to help her process the abuse and exploitation she lived through as a young girl. Thanks to your gifts to ELCA World Hunger, through New Life Center Foundation’s comprehensive programs, Mia has the skills and confidence to share her story with others and a renewed hope for the future.



## Faith Lutheran Church

*Faithfully Growing, Welcoming, and Caring through Christ*  
Sunday, December 11, 2016  
Third Sunday of Advent ~ 9:30 am

### PRELUDE

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

- P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who comes to wake us from sleep, who leads us into the light of grace.
- C: **Amen.**
- P: Let us prepare the way of the Lord by confessing our sin against God and neighbor. (A brief silence.)  
God of all time,
- C: **We confess that we have not prepared for your merciful reign among us. We ignore our neighbors in need and fail in the labor of justice and peace. In your mercy forgive us. Grant us wisdom to welcome your light and to seek the things that will endure until Christ comes again in glory. Amen.**
- P: Comfort, o comfort my people, says your God. In + Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven and all things are made new. Rejoice in this good news!
- C: **Amen.**



~ OPENING HYMN ~

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for  
 2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -  
 3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when  
 4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing, Sing out your joy, for  
 man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is  
 all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so  
 dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.  
 qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;  
 qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.  
 crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -  
 mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -  
 Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in  
 Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and  
 kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to  
 won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and  
 sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.  
 shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.  
 weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.  
 bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

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.**

# Happy Birthday To You!

## DECEMBER

- 2 – Gail Krause
- 5 – Mary Ann Mueller
- 13 – Mike Murphy
- 16 – Rachel Schuller
- 18 – Sandy Johnson
- 24 – Nicole Blakeman
- 25 – Kathy Strasser

## JANUARY

- 10 - Hannah Guffey
- 12 - Betty Bonner
- 20 - Viola Thostenson
- 23 - Amy McCormick
- 27 - Samantha Guffey
- 27 - Victor Lipinski
- 30 - Craig Miller

If your birthday is not listed, please see Sue or leave a note!



***Special Guests Today!***  
 Thrivent representatives  
 will be with us to explain  
 how service projects can  
 be supported with  
**\$250 gift cards.**



Sunday, Dec. 18 ~ 9:30am  
 Children's Christmas program during  
 Worship Service

Saturday, Dec. 24 ~ 5pm  
 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Sunday, Dec. 25 ~ 9:30am  
 Christmas Carols and Communion

Sunday, January 1, 2017  
 Second Sunday of Christmas  
 9:30am Worship  
 Happy New Year!

## 'Cookies for Cops' Drive

We will be having a Baked Goods Collection next Sunday, December 18th. These home-made cookies, cakes, pies, candy, and bars will be given to the South Beloit Police Department to show our support & thanks.

Thank you for helping out,  
Karen Murr & Patti Dunaway  
Social Ministry Co-Chairs

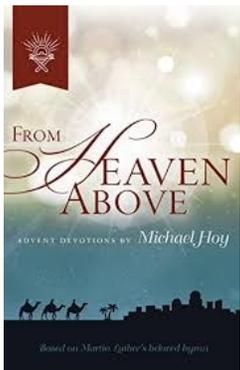


**PLEASE REMEMBER TO GET YOUR CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA ORDERS IN! TODAY IS THE DEADLINE! EACH PLANT IS \$12, AND CAN BE TAKEN AFTER CHRISTMAS SERVICE. FORMS ARE ON THE NARTHEX TABLE.**



**Christmas Card Fair Oaks**  
Ninety Christmas cards were delivered for all residents of Fair Oaks Nursing Home. These were signed, "From your friends at Faith Lutheran Church."

*Please continue using your Advent devotional book, "From Heaven Above", by Michael Hoy. It is for every day use during Advent. We also have key tags, either Advent or a 2017 calendar.*



## INTRODUCTION

**P:** A note of joyful expectation marks today's worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom. Jesus points to signs of God's reign: the blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ's advent among us.

**C: Amen**

## THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. Your prophets spoke of a day when the desert would blossom and waters would break forth in the wilderness. Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath. Strengthen our hearts as we prepare for the coming of the Lord. May he give water to all who thirst, for he is our light and our salvation. Blessed by God forever.

**C: Amen**

## ADVENT HYMN, LIGHTING OF THE THIRD CANDLE Verses 1, 2, and 3

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive  
2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things  
3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on  
4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's

Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here  
far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;  
Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law  
tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,

*Refrain*  
un - til the Son of God ap - pear.  
teach us your will and guide our way.  
in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!  
and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.

Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray. (A brief silence.)

**ALL: Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## Children's Church

### FIRST READING: Isaiah 35:1-10

A reading from Isaiah, the 35<sup>th</sup> chapter.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

R: Word of God, Word of Life

**C: Thanks be to God!**



Today we pray for our friends and family here at Faith Lutheran Church. Thank you to those who pray for the people on our prayer list. Even if we don't recognize a name or know exactly their need, their friends and family truly appreciate it. We can pray for health, healing, and wholeness for each of them as well as their loved ones. Thank you for your faithfulness in prayer. We pray for: Audrey, Barb, Barbara, Bea, Ben, Bill, Bob Parisot Family, Boyd Miller, Carl, Cindy, Connie, Debi, Denise, Dennis, Diane, Don, Donna, Emily, Ethel Strasser, Florence, Fred, the Funk Family, Gary, George, Georgia, Harriet, Heidi, Helen and Pastor Rick, Howard, Ian, Jackie, Jaleena, Janet, Janice, Jessie, John, family of John Palmer, Joyce, Joyce Hatch, June, Kaci, Kamy, Larry, Linda, Logan, Lucas, Mark B., Marjean, Mary, Mary B., Mary Lou, Mary Pat, Nash, Nikko, Noah, Patty, Rich, Rick Dunaway, Ricky, Sara, Sarah, Scott Wright, Shalom, Shannon, Shirley, Steve, Sue, Ted, Teresa, Terri, Tim, Todd, Tom, Tony, Trisha, Tristan, Vance, all service men and women, all homeless and unemployed, our shut-ins, our college students, and those in the military and their families - that God will keep them in his grace and care.



**Can You Lend A Hand?**  
Until a custodian is hired in January, we are asking for volunteers to help clean our church at 5:15pm:  
Friday, December 16  
Friday, December 23  
Friday, December 30  
Thank you very much!

### **Pledge Cards Update**

We have 45 pledge cards for 2017, totaling \$1627.28/wk. Please bring in your pledge card and "Time & Talents" sheet, or mail it in to us as soon as possible. Thank you.

## Worship

**Welcome to Faith Lutheran Church.** We are so happy to have you worship with us today! Please join us after worship in our Fellowship Room for beverages, snacks and conversation.

**Communion** is by intinction. Come forward as directed by the ushers, receive the bread with an open hand then dip it in the wine (dark) or juice (light). If you accidentally eat the bread before dipping or drop it, please ask for another piece. You do not have to be a member of Faith or be Lutheran to take Communion. Christ is the host of the meal and ALL baptized believers are welcome!

**Offering** ~ As always, if you are unable to attend worship, please make sure to catch up with your **offering** the next week. Or, if you'd like, please mail it to the church office and write "offering" on the envelope and it will be included in that week's offering and seen only by the designated counters for the day. Thank you for being faithful in giving generously to God's work here at Faith Lutheran!

### Financials for Sunday, December 4, 2016 - Week 49

Attendance - 78

Weekly Offering Actual	\$2,698.20
Weekly Offering Budget	\$2,068.00
2016 YTD Actual Offering	\$98,545.00
2016 YTD Offering Needed	\$101,332.00
Offerings YTD Toward Roof Loan	\$5,389.50

### Today's Worship Leaders

**Altar Guild - Carol & Roger Frey**

**Computer Technician - Mike Banker**

**Offering Video - Helen Meier**

**Counters - Roger & Carol Frey**

**Fellowship - Thrivent**

**Greeters - Viola Thostenson, George & Sue Brunson**

**Musician - Betty Comins**

**Reader - Ellen Olson**

**Ushers - Doug Congdon and Craig Miller**

**Pastor - Rev. Dr. Richard J. Meier**

### **PSALM 146 ~ A Responsive Reading**

- R: Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help, whose hope is in the LORD their God;
- C: who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; who keeps promises forever;**
- R: who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger. The LORD sets the captive free.
- C: The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.**
- R: The LORD cares for the stranger; the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.
- C: The LORD shall reign forever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!**
- R: In his time may the righteous flourish; and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.
- C: Blessed are you, LORD God, the God of Israel; you alone do wondrous deeds!**
- R: And blessed be your glorious name forever, and may all the earth be filled with your glory.
- C: Amen.**

### **SECOND READING: James 5:7-10**

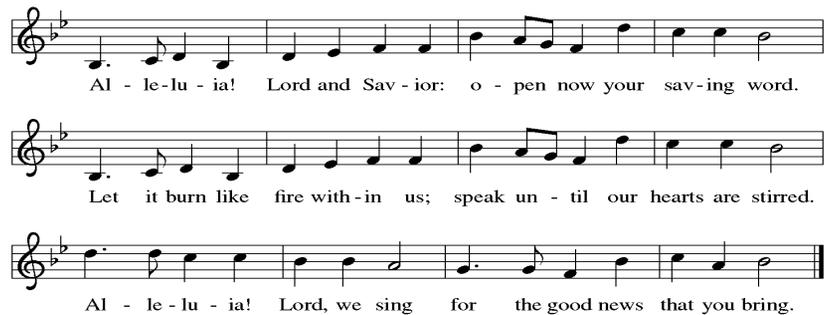
A reading from James, the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter.

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

R: Word of God, Word of Life

**C: Thanks be to God**

## “ALLELUIA”



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.  
Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.  
Al - le - lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

## GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2-11

P: The holy gospel according to Matthew, the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.” As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, ‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’ Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## SERMON

## CLOSING HYMN

### Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing



- 1 Lord, dis - miss us with your bless - ing, fill our hearts with joy and peace;
- 2 Thanks we give and ad - o - ra - tion for your gos - pel's joy - ful sound.
- 3 Sav - ior, when your love shall call us from our strug - gling pil - grim way,



let us each, your love pos - sess - ing, tri - umph in re - deem - ing grace.  
May the fruits of your sal - va - tion in our hearts and lives a - bound.  
let no fear of death ap - pall us, glad your sum - mons to o - bey.



Oh, re - fresh us; oh, re - fresh us, trav - 'ling through this wil - der - ness.  
Ev - er faith - ful, ev - er faith - ful to your truth may we be found.  
May we ev - er, may we ev - er reign with you in end - less day.

Text: attr. John Fawcett, 1740–1817, sts. 1–2, alt.: Godfrey Thring, 1823–1903, st. 3, alt.

Music: SICILIAN MARINERS, Sicilian, 18th cent.

## DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

~ COMMUNION ~

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

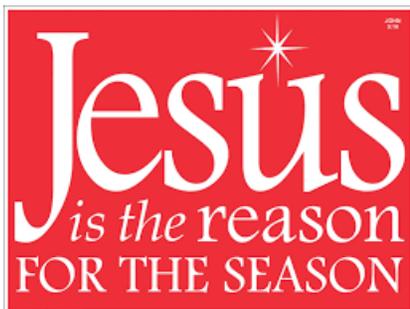
P: God for whom we wait, you come to us in the broken bread and the cup we share. Make us ready always to welcome Christ into our hearts, and send us forth to be your people in the world announcing your coming among us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

## BLESSING

P: May Christ the Sun of righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path. Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen



~ Hymn of the Day ~

## On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an - nounce - es  
2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; make straight the  
3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our ref - uge  
4 Stretch forth your hand, our health re - store, and make us  
5 All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, whose ad - vent

that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,  
way for God with - in, and let us all our  
and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we  
rise to fall no more; oh, let your face up -  
has our free - dom won, whom with the Fa - ther

for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings!  
hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.  
waste a - way like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.  
on us shine and fill the world with love di - vine.  
we a - dore, and Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.

Text: Charles Coffin, 1676-1749; tr. composite  
Music: PUER NOBIS, European tune, adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571-1621

## THE APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: As we anticipate the fullness of the presence of Christ, we join with the church throughout the world, praying for all who are in need. (A brief silence.) For the church and all messengers of the gospel, for all who call upon the name of the Lord, and for congregations throughout the world; that God work through us to bring harmony and reconciliation, let us pray.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

P: For rain forests and deserts, for wilderness and developed land, and for plants blossoming and dormant; that the splendor and diversity of creation proclaim the glory of the Lord, let us pray.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

P: For our government, for the military and international relief workers, and for those who care for the stranger, widow, and orphan; that God raise up leaders who work for the protection of all, let us pray.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

P: For the hungry and homeless, for those in captivity, for the fearful and sorrowful, for those living with HIV/AIDS, and for the sick (*especially*); that those who help others serve with patience and grace, let us pray.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

P: For all who call this community home, for those visiting from near and far, and for those preparing for the holiday season, that the advent of Christ make our hearts and minds rejoice, let us pray.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

P: In thanksgiving for the departed who were faithful to God's word; that their words and actions direct us to the one who prepares a way for us, let us pray.

**C: Have mercy, O God.**

P: Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, those spoken aloud and those known only to you, and grant us peace through Jesus Christ, our coming Savior.

**C: Amen.**

## PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

~ VIDEO DURING OFFERTORY ~  
"Mary, Did You Know?" by Texas Tenors

## OFFERTORY RESPONSE



1 We give thee but thine own, what - e'er the gift may be;  
2 May we thy boun - ties thus as stew - ards true re - ceive,



all that we have is thine a - lone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.  
and glad - ly, as thou bless - est us, to thee our first - fruits give.

## OFFERING PRAYER

P: Send your Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us: renew our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need. Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

**C: Amen**

## DIALOGUE

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts

**C: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks and praise to the Lord our God.

**C: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION