



*With the birth of Jesus in our hearts
We carry light and love to the world.*

*Sunday, December 22, 2024
Fourth Sunday of Advent*



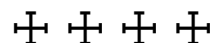
OUR VALUES STATEMENT: We recognize that we are not here by chance but are gathered together to be the church of God in Christ.

We recognize that God is making us, through grace, into a fellowship that embodies and expresses the spirit of Christ.

In this fellowship, there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female, for all of us are one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28). We, therefore, welcome equally all people, regardless of religious office, position, possessions, education, race, age, gender, sexual orientation, mental ability, physical ability or other distinctions. (Adopted 9/7/07)

VISION STATEMENT:

Working as a supportive family of faith to extend God's gracious welcome through worship, community service, and spiritual growth opportunities.



The Liturgy is from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.

Are you hearing impaired? If you are having difficulty hearing our worship service, try using our Assisted Hearing System, which is available from an usher.

Today's worship service is being live-streamed beginning at 9:25am and will be replayed next Sunday at 6pm on FM radio station 102.9. The service is available to view anytime on the home page of our website www.nlcww.org.

In-person attendance for last Sunday: 168

PLEASE MAKE SURE CELL PHONES ARE SILENCED.

CHIMES

Indicates the start of worship.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

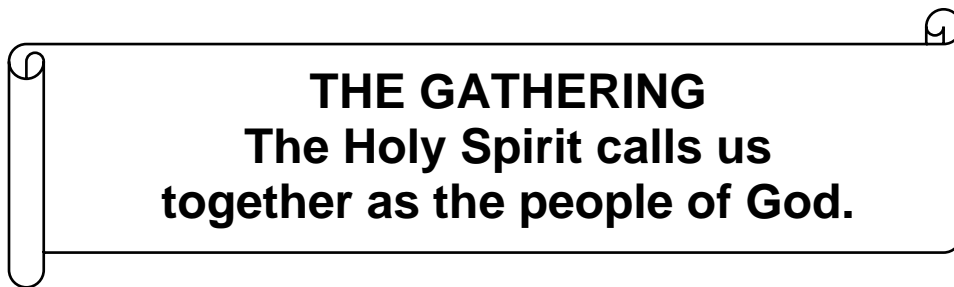
CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Bishop Pedro Suarez

PRELUDE

The Wexford Carol

Mark Hayes



SEASON OF ADVENT

Please stand as you are able and turn toward the baptismal font.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel!

For God is with us. God's love is everlasting.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel!

For the Lord our God is in our midst, a mighty One who will save.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel!

For God's Spirit shines upon us, giving light for our darkness.

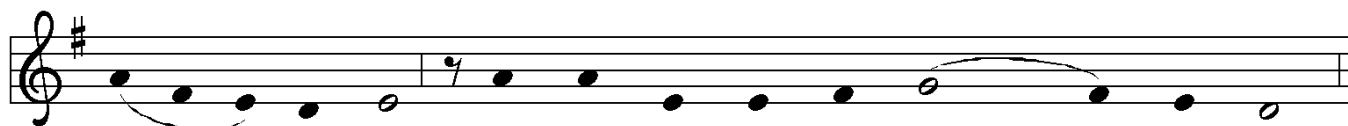
Blessed be the Lord God of Israel!

Let us worship God together.

Please look toward the cross as it processes toward the altar.



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,



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



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

GATHERING BLESSING

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon. **Amen.**

GREETING

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

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Praise to You, O God, who lives with us, sharing our flesh and bones. As Mary waited and Joseph dreamed, so we wait and dream of You. Bless us and let your face shine upon us, more radiant than these candles, and more dear than all else we seek. Restore us when we fail to refuse the evil and choose the good, and banish all our fears. We pray in the name of Emmanuel, your promised Child and our Savior. **Amen.**

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES

Fourth Candle – The Candle of Love

ADVENT CANDLE HYMN *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah*
240, vv. 1-4

Light one candle to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.

He shall bring salvation to Israel, God fulfills the promise.

Light two candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.

He shall feed the flock like a shepherd, gently lead them homeward.

Light three candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.

Lift your heads and lift high the gateway for the King of glory.

Light four candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.

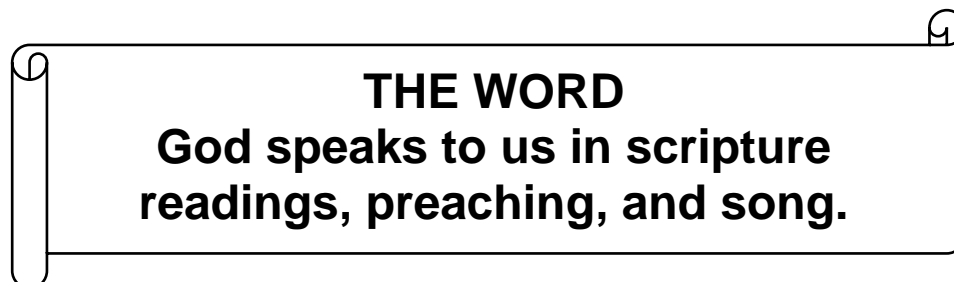
He is coming, tell the glad tidings. Let your lights be shining!

Love is like a light shining in a dark place. As we look at this candle, we celebrate the love we find in Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Stir up your power, Lord Christ... one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Please be seated.



THE WORD

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

SPECIAL MUSIC

Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring

J.S. Bach

Flute Solo: Karen Wendler

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Children may depart for Sunday School.

A READING FROM THE PROPHET MICAH

5:2-5a

Reader: Juliet Wright

² 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. ³ 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. ⁴ 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; ^{5a} and he shall be the one of peace.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

THE HOLY GOSPEL

LUKE 1:39-45

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to You, O Lord.

³⁹ In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰ where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴² and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³ And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴ For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

SERMON

Please stand as you are able.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

A moment of silence for reflection.

God of mercy, **we confess that we have sinned. We grow fearful. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We cling to false comforts.**

God of might, **we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.**

God in our midst, **we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.**

A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through † Christ Jesus, whose day draws near. **Amen.**

HYMN OF THE DAY

Blessed Be the God of Israel

250

1 Blessed be the God of Is - ra - el who comes to set us free
 2 With prom - ised mer - cy will God still the cov - e - nant re - call,
 3 My child, as proph - et of the Lord you will pre - pare the way,

and rais - es up new hope for us: a Branch from Da - vid's tree.
 the oath once sworn to A - bra - ham, from foes to save us all;
 to tell God's peo - ple they are saved from sin's e - ter - nal sway.

So have the proph - ets long de - clared that with a might - y arm
 that we might wor - ship with - out fear and of - fer lives of praise,
 Then shall God's mer - cy from on high shine forth and nev - er cease

God would turn back our en - e - mies and all who wish us harm.
 in ho - li - ness and righ - teous - ness to serve God all our days.
 to drive a - way the gloom of death and lead us in - to peace.

Remain standing or sit as you desire.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

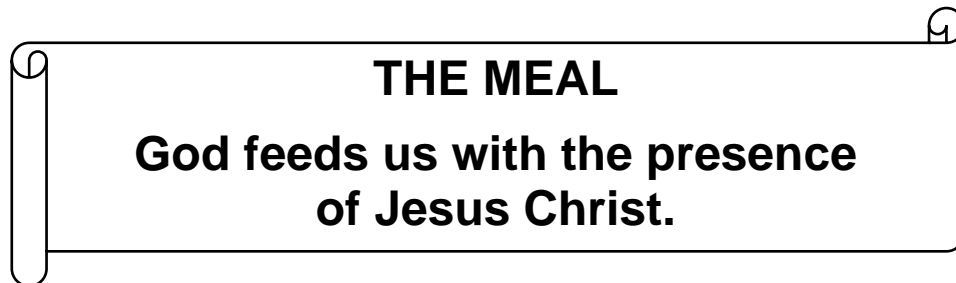
After each petition: Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

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

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

Please be seated.



OFFERTORY

Gifts of bread and wine are brought to the altar. You may drop your monetary offering in the basket by the exit door or at the office during the week. You may also donate on-line at <https://www.nlcww.org>, or on our Facebook page. Now you may also contribute using Venmo or Zelle if you have an account or using the QR code below. For more information about these methods see today's Weekly Announcement Sheet.



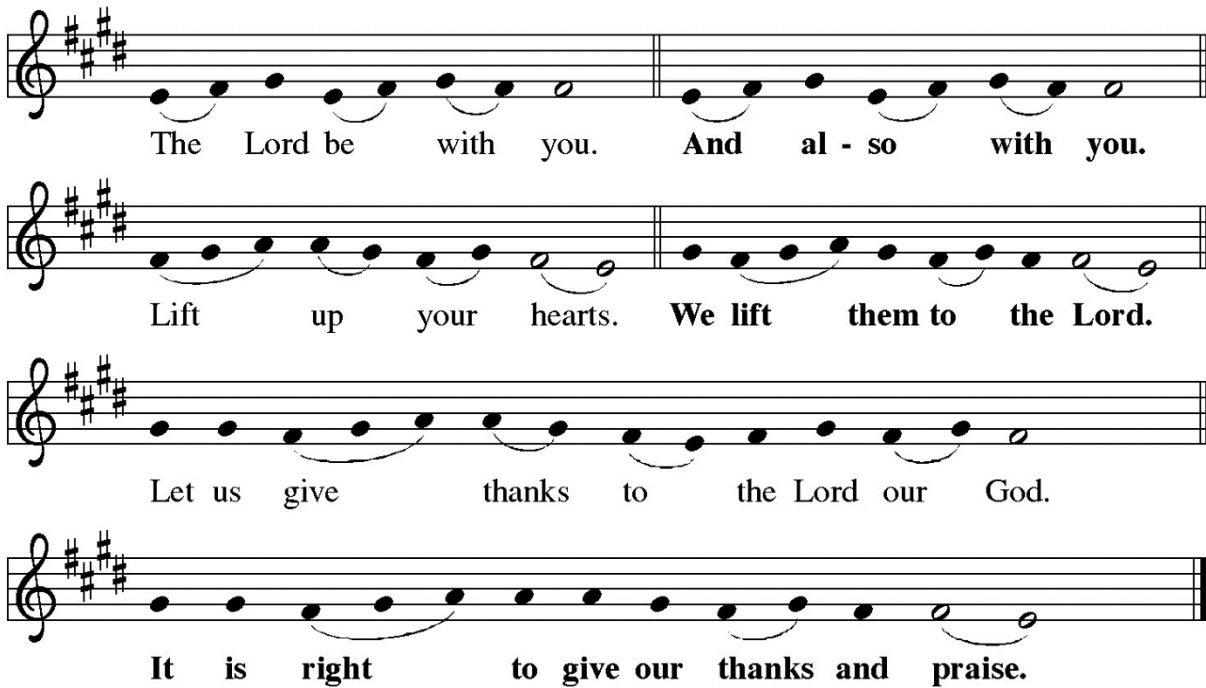
Assisting Minister unveils the chalice and paten.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. Creator God, You made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and You draw near to feed us. We praise You for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Please stand as you are able.

GREAT THANKSGIVING



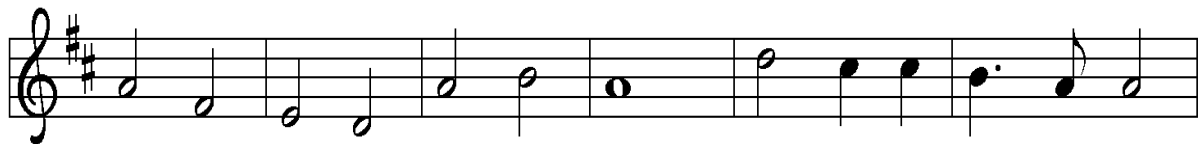
The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,



heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.



Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes



in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the Giver of Life:

Blessed are You for the birth of creation.

Blessed are You in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are You for your promise to your people.

Blessed are You in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are You for Mary's openness to your will.

Blessed are You for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

WORDS OF CONSECRATION

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming. **Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Let us pray the prayer Christ himself taught us:

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 COMMUNION

God feeds us with tender mercy. Guests and friends of any age and background, take your place at the table!

You may be seated. The ushers will invite each row to come to the altar. You may stand or kneel at the communion rail and receive bread and wine (or request a gluten free host and/or grape juice). Please let an usher know if you cannot come to the altar to receive communion. We will have communion brought to you.

Lamb of God



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, grant us peace.

MEDITATIVE MUSIC

Please stand as you are able.

TABLE BLESSING

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

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.**



BLESSING

God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our Hope for the journey, ✝ bless and keep you now and forever.
Amen.

SENDING SONG

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers

244
vv. 1,2,4

1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear;
 2 The watch - ers on the moun - tain pro - claim the bride - groom near;
 3 The saints, who here in pa - tience their cross and suf - f'ring bore,
 4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;

the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, and dark - er night is near.
 go forth as he ap - proach - es with al - le - lu - ias clear.
 shall live and reign for - ev - er when sor - row is no more.
 a - rise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this be - night - ed sphere.

The bride - groom is a - ris - ing and soon is draw - ing nigh.
 The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the gates wide o - pen stand.
 A - round the throne of glo - ry the Lamb they shall be - hold;
 With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see

Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; at mid - night comes the cry.
 A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the bride - groom is at hand.
 in tri - umph cast be - fore him their di - a - dems of gold.
 the day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple free!

SENDING

People of Nativity, what is our mission?

With the birth of Jesus in our hearts we carry light and love to the world.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace! Prepare the way for Emmanuel!

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

A Joyous Noel

David Paxton

✙ ✙ ✙ ✙

NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26	Psalm 148
Colossians 3:12-17	Luke 2:41-52

COFFEE HOUR – Please join us for fellowship in Winemiller Hall after today's worship service.

PRAYERS: *The list will be cleared every four weeks. If you wish to remain on the list for longer than four weeks, please call the office and request a long-term prayer. In case of emergency, contact the office at 352-597-1456 and leave a detailed message. Messages are checked daily.*

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

New this week: Tina Jones, Karen family, Virginia Lucas, Bob Maday, Rocco family

Continue to pray for: Carol Anderson, Larry & Frani Barnes, Stephen Benner, Windy and Bill Binns, Iris Brunner, Agnes Burkart, Libby & John Capell, Roger Cawley, Karen Chipko, Jim Christensen, Joyce Colombo, Ginny Dempsey, Judy Dietz, Zoe Fernandez, Irene Froehlich, Donald Haig, Irma Haig, Terry Halgren, Dottie Haney, June Heinecke, Gary and Mary Heinecke, Glenn Heinecke, Marilyn Henkel, Kay Hill, Barbara Hofving, Klaus Horstmann, Brian Johnson, June Johnston, Nancy Jung, Hillary Kanea, Stephanie Krepshaw, Anthony Laviano & family, Debra Leinenger, Elaine Malone, Charlene Massey, Antonio Mattei, Richard Matthews, Raina McDannold, Benjamin McDowall, Dennis McKenna, Mark and Wayne Musarra, Oliver family, Cindy Preston, Lou Prettyman, Katherine Rizzo, Dennis Rogers, Angela Russell, John Sannuto, Carole & Dick Schaefer, Eileen Smith, Barbara Strohl, Roswitha Junge Testani, Alice Totten, Antonio Vaznelis, West family, Christopher Younger

PRAYERS FOR OUR LOVED ONES IN THE MILITARY

Nic Baker, Brandi Culpepper, Private Tony D'Angelo, Areil Dietz, Tyler A. Germann, Maj. Matthew Henry, Colton Hill, Andria T. Hook, Jonathan Hudson, Maj. USAF Will Lawlor, Zachary McGuire, CTT2 William Pause, Brandon Pierce, Clinton Pierce, Isaac Redmond, Andrea Roache, Joel Roberts, Cpl. Timothy Spruytte, Cameron James Thompson-Airman 3rd Class, LCpl. Erich Timm, Airman Bob Totten, Kesley Underwood, Kyle Underwood, Maj. Chad Waldorf - Airforce.

Altar Flowers: No Altar flowers 12/22 and 12/29. *If you would like to order flowers starting in January 2025 in honor or in memory of someone, there is a sign-up sheet in the narthex, or you can call the office at 352-597-1456. Donation is \$25.00. Flowers can be picked up after the 9:30AM Sunday service, or you can schedule a pick-up time with the office if you are not attending service.*

Worship Leaders

Presiding Minister	Reverend Giuseppe Mattei
Assisting Minister	Vicki Page
Scripture Reader	Juliet Wright
Crucifer/Acolyte	
Ushers	Gwen Mahon & Noel Prettyman
Music Director	Donna Olsen
Guest Organist	Kathy Hackemer
Bell Choir Directors	Janet & Todd Holly
Altar Guild	Suzanne Chelf, Gayle Howland & Nancy Vangilder
Greeter	Evelyn Galli
Sanctuary	Connie Chase & Beryl Clements
AV Director	Art Alt
Audio	Pat Squires
Cameras	Tim Cotter & Mark Major
Graphics	Diane Alt, Francesca Bugini, Ed Lewis & Linda Rizzo
Video Production	Vicki Page
Head counter this week	Barbara Crisanti
Data Entry	Gwen Mahon

**NATIVITY LUTHERAN CHURCH OF WEEKI WACHEE
A CONGREGATION OF THE FLORIDA-BAHAMAS SYNOD OF
THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

6363 Commercial Way, Weeki Wachee, FL 34613

Phone (352) 597-1456

Email: Nativitylutheran63@gmail.com, Website: nlcww.org

Reverend Giuseppe Mattei

Deacon Charlotte Downing

Deacon Clyde Rosten

Music Director: Donna Olsen

Audio/Visual Director: Art Alt

Bell Choir Directors: Janet & Todd Holly

Sunday Service at 9:30 a.m.