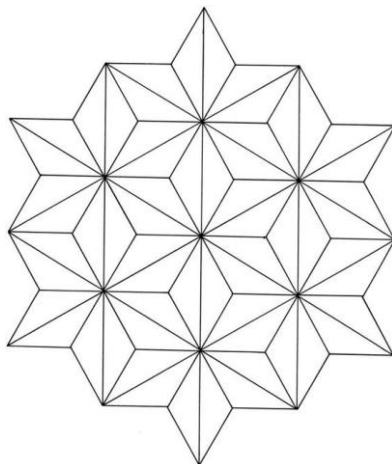


Welcome to Worship on this Lessons & Carols -Christmastide



**December 31, 2023 ~10:00 a.m.
French River Lutheran Church
Duluth, MN**

Phil Jensen ~ Presiding
Worship Assistant: Haeli Pettis
Lectors: Phil Jensen
Altar Guild: Brita Aug
Musicians: Organist - David Fiebiger
FRLC Choir & Riversong Rising

Welcome to all in Jesus' Name!

LARGE PRINT worship folders are available from an usher. A family restroom and nursery are to the left of the sanctuary. To contact the pastor or church office, you are invited to complete a pew card and return the information portion either to an usher or by way of the offering plate. Please keep the bookmark and worship with us again! We appreciate electronic devices set on "mute" during the service.

Bold Print signals places where the assembly speaks in unity in worship

* Indicates where to stand as you are able in body or in Spirit

Prelude:

Organist: David Fiebiger

Welcome/ Announcements:

———GATHERING———

The Holy Spirit gathers us together as people of God

***Greeting:**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
the keeper of the covenant,
the source of steadfast love,
our rock and our redeemer.

Amen.

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.**

***Entrance Carol Hymn: “Your Little Ones, Dear Lord”**

ELW #286

First Reading: *Genesis 1:1-5, 14-18*

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

¹⁴And God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth." And it was so. God made the two great lights — the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night — and the stars. God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.

First Carol Hymn: “I Wonder As I Wander”

WOV(Blue Hymnal)#642

Second Reading: Luke 1:26-35, 38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁸Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Second Carol Hymn: "In the Bleak Midwinter"

~Harold Drake
FRLC Choir

Third Reading: Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Third Carol Hymn: "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" V.1 (See Song Sheet)

Verse 1

God rest ye merry gentlemen
Let nothing you dismay
Remember Christ our Saviour
Was born on Christmas Day
To save us all from Satan's pow'r
When we were gone astray

Chorus

O tidings of comfort and joy
Comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy

CCLI Song # 39441

Unknown

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Fourth Reading: Luke 2:8-20

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,
"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Fourth Carol Hymn: "Go Tell It on the Mountain"

V.1, ELW#290
John Kronstedt

Fifth Reading: Matthew 2:1-11

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.'

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Fifth Carol Hymn: "We Three Kings"

V.1 (see song sheet)

Verse 1

We three kings of Orient are
Bearing gifts we traverse afar
Field and fountain moor and mountain
Following yonder star

Chorus

O star of wonder star of night
Star with royal beauty bright
Westward leading still proceeding
Guide us to Thy perfect light

Sixth Reading: John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Sixth Carol Hymn: "Away in a Manger -Cradle Song"

V.1, ELW#278

***Offering Prayer:**

(If you did not place your offering in the plate as you entered the sanctuary, please feel free to hand it to an usher upon dismissal. During the week, offerings may be placed in the secure lockbox by the lower doors [slot is right of the door]. Mail and online giving are also available. Thank you for your generous support of our ministry together!)

Let us Pray, Faithful God, you walk beside us in desert places, and you meet us in our hunger with bread from heaven. Accompany us in our lives of love and hope, that we may pass over from death to life with Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

***Lord's Prayer:**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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.

***Sending:**

C: The Triune God blesses us and sends us to love and serve our neighbors.

L: Glory to God in the highest,

C: And peace to God's people on earth.

L: Blessed are you, Prince of peace.

You rule the earth with truth and justice.

C: Send your gift of peace to all nations of the world.

L: Blessed are you, Son of Mary, you share our humanity.

C: Have mercy on the sick, the dying and all who suffer this day.

L: Blessed are you, Son of God.

You dwell among us as the Word made flesh,

C: That we bear your light to all the world.

***Blessing:**

The Lord Bless you and keep you, the Lord's face shine upon you and be gracious onto you, and look upon you with favor, and give you peace. **Amen.**

***Final Carol Hymn: "The First Noel"**

V.1, ELW#300

***Sending:**

Go in peace. Share the good news that Christ is Born!

Thanks be to God.

(For those in pews, please remain seated until invited by an usher to depart.)

***Sending Hymn: "Hark the Herald Angels Sing"**

ELW #270

Postlude:

Organist: David Fiebiger

Thank you for joining us wherever you are.

Remember, you are beloved and blessed!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

†Extending sympathy to the family & friends of Pr. Art Solberg who passed away on December 12. A Celebration of Life will be held on January 22, 2024 at 2 p.m. at Hosanna! Church, 9600 163rd St. W. Lakeville, MN 55044.

Coming Up:

12/31 Sun: 10a – Lessons & Carols; Worship In-Person/Online: Phil Jensen
11:15a – Coffee Fellowship

1/1 Mon: Happy New Year!

1/2 Tues: 9a – Bulletin Deadline; 5:45p – Exec. Council; 7p – AA

1/3 Wed: 7p – Choir

1/7 Next Sun: 10a – Epiphany; Worship In-Person/Online: Rev. Kim Sturtz
10:45a – Sunday School starts again!
11:15a – Coffee Fellowship

Your 2024 offering envelopes can be picked up near the usher's stand. If you didn't get a box and want one, please contact Kay Libby, Financial Secretary, at 218-390-3281.

FRLC Annual

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

January 21, 2024 following the 10:00 AM
worship service ("*Snow Date*" is Jan. 28).

How will you serve the congregation and God's
Kingdom in 2024? Prayerfully consider this
question for elected and appointed positions of
leadership!

Reports are due! Our Annual Report deadline of December 29 has passed. If you have not yet submitted, please submit ASAP as the work has begun! (Microsoft Word document in Tahoma 12 pt font) to frlc5310@gmail.com.

Thank you!



Welcome to French River Lutheran Church

You are welcome; to keep this bulletin however, we recycle when possible so you may leave it on the ushers' stand.



Immediate: Family & friends of Pr. Art Solberg; Family & friends of Rita Cook; Family and friends of Paul B. Peterson; Carol Pearson; Bonnie Smrstick; prayers for peace and comfort both as she travels to be with Dennis as he is nearing the end of his journey.; Deb Sodomka (cousin of Bill & Susie Lannon).

Long-Term: Phil Strom, for Parkinsons; Julie Moe-Hommerding; 5-year-old great niece of Susie Lannon (heart surgery 6/26/17, still not healthy); Kathy Johnson (Carol Leppala's friend); Bruce Sundberg; Angela Debelak, (niece of Gail Johnson) is currently in remission from for her brain cancer and recovering slowly; please continue to pray for no recurrence.; Alex Peterson – military service; David Peterson (brother of Paul Peterson); Todd Sironen.

WHEN SUBMITTING A NAME TO THE TELEPHONE PRAYER CHAIN, PLEASE INDICATE IF IT IS PERMISSABLE TO LIST IN THE BULLETIN.

<i>Called by the Spirit</i>	<i>December 31</i>	<i>January 7</i>
Worship Leader	Phil Jensen	Rev. Kim sturtz
Lector	Phil Jensen	Peggy Dahlberg
Altar Guild	Brita Aug	Sue Baker
Ushers	TBD	Chris & Ann Rankila
Counters/Worship Assistant*	Sheila Laiti/ Haeli Pettis*	Dave Edblom/ Sue Baker*
Coffee Fellowship	Don Mattson	Team Jerusalem
Prayer Chain	Babs Strom 218.525.6200	

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 Church: (218)525-5659; frlc5310@gmail.com
 Pr. Kim Sturtz: (218)393-7444; frlcpastorsturtz@gmail.com
 Office hours vary so please call ahead.
 FRLC webpage: www.frenchriverlutheran.org.
 FRLC Mission: *“To live and love as God commands, accept His grace, and share the Good News.”*

Watch services at FRLC anytime! **YouTube live streaming of the service** at <https://www.youtube.com/c/FrenchRiverLutheranChurch>
 This link is also found on our church homepage and Facebook group. If you are unable to watch it live, you can view it any time after the service by following the same link.

✝ We're glad you worshiped with us today. Thanks be to God! ✝