

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH OF TEMPLE CITY

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SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Grace Beyond Us

January 4, 2026



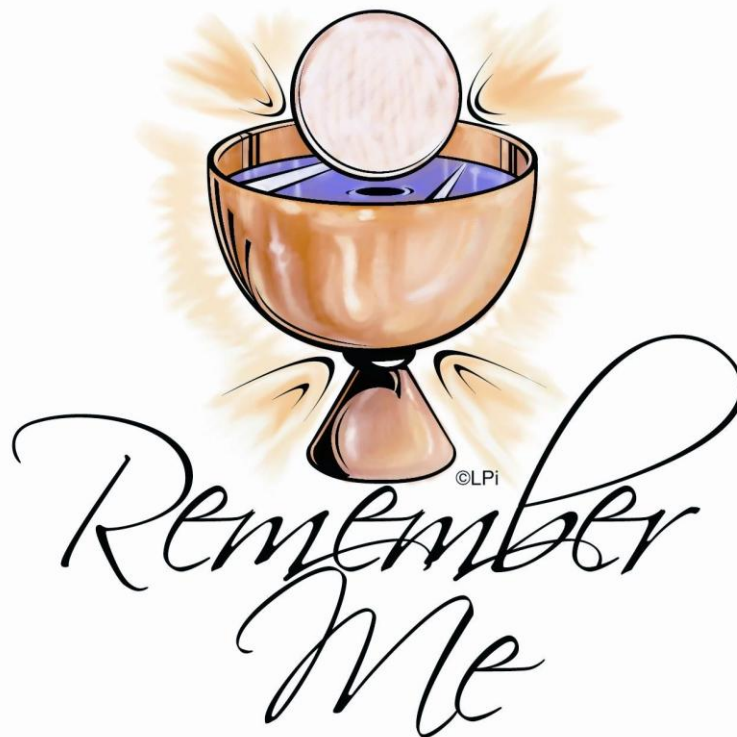
AS WE GATHER

We can't figure God out. Mary and Joseph must have been completely confused about Jesus' desire to stay in the temple, but it was obvious to Him. There was a long list of blessings God was able to give to Solomon; fortunately, the king chose the right one. The Epistle tells us what God wants and what He has done for us, regardless of if we have understood His plan. He has chosen us, given us the Holy Spirit, and included us in a gracious inheritance. And it all revolves around our Savior—His birth, suffering, death, and resurrection. Jesus did all that was necessary for grace to be poured out on us, thanks be to God. It is all certainly beyond our understanding.

WELCOME TO THE LORD'S HOUSE

We celebrate the Lord's Supper in our worship service today. In 1 Corinthians Chapter Ten, Paul writes about the Lord's Supper saying, "The bread that we break, isn't it a participation in the body of Christ? The cup that we bless, isn't it a participation in the blood of Christ?" That's why we believe, teach, and confess that Christ is truly present as we receive the bread and the wine. In this Supper we are participating in the true body and blood of Jesus in a real yet mysterious way and by faith we receive Him in the bread and wine. Therefore, we ask all who commune, including our own members, to examine themselves before reception:

- + I am a baptized believer in Jesus Christ.
- + I believe that, because of my sin, I am not adequate to make myself acceptable to God.
- + I believe that God forgives and accepts me by His grace through Jesus Christ who died for my sins.
- + I believe that in this Sacrament of the Lord's Supper the risen Christ comes to me in, with and under the bread and wine, assuring me of the forgiveness of my sins.
- + I want to receive this Sacrament today to renew my baptismal relationship with Jesus Christ, and to rededicate my life in Christian faith, hope and love.



✠ PREPARATION ✠

HYMN "Once in Royal David's City"

Hymnal page 376, verses 1 to 3

1. Once in royal David's city
Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby
In a manger for His bed:
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.

2. He came down to earth from heaven,
Who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable,
And His cradle was a stall;
With the poor and mean and lowly
Lived on earth our Savior holy.

3. For He is our childhood's pattern,
Day by day like us He grew;
He was little, weak, and helpless,
Tears and smiles like us He knew;
And He feels for all our sadness,
And He shares in all our gladness.

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

PSALM *Psalm 119:97–104*

Pastor: Oh how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day.

People: **Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me.**

Pastor: I have more understanding than all my teachers,

People: **for Your testimonies are my meditation.**

Pastor: I understand more than the aged,

People: **for I keep Your precepts.**

Pastor: I hold back my feet from every evil way, in order to keep Your word.

People: **I do not turn aside from Your just decrees, for You have taught me.**

Pastor: How sweet are Your words to my taste,

People: **sweeter than honey to my mouth!**

Pastor: Through Your precepts I get understanding;

People: **therefore I hate every false way.**

HYMN "Once in Royal David's City"

Hymnal page 376, verses 4 and 5

4. And our eyes at last shall see Him,
Through His own redeeming love;
For that child so dear and gentle
Is the Lord in heav'n above;
And He leads His children on
To the place where He is gone.

5. Not in that poor, lowly stable
With the oxen standing by
Shall we see Him, but in heaven,
Set at God's right hand on high.
Then like stars His children, crowned,
All in white, His praise will sound!

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

People: **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

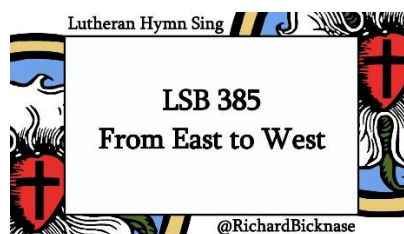
☩ WORD ☩

HYMN "From East to West" Hymnal page 385, verses 1 and 5

*** Please stand if you are able ***

1. From east to west, from shore to shore
Let ev'ry heart awake and sing
The holy child whom Mary bore,
The Christ, the everlasting king.

△ **5.** All glory for this blessed morn
To God the Father ever be;
All praise to You, O Virgin-born,
And Holy Ghost eternally.



KYRIE

Pastor: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For the peace from the Word becoming flesh, dwelling among us, and revealing this glory to us, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For the peace of the whole world, uniting to laud our God with an uplifting song of praise, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For this holy house, rejoicing to realize that God's understanding is beyond measure, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

People: Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE

"A Great and Mighty Wonder"

Hymnal page 383

1. A great and mighty wonder,
A full and holy cure:
The virgin bears the infant
With virgin honor pure!

Refrain:
Proclaim the Savior's birth:
"To God on high be glory
And peace to all the earth!"

2. The Word becomes incarnate
And yet remains on high,
And cherubim sing anthems
To shepherds from the sky. [Refrain]

3. While thus they sing your Monarch,
Those bright angelic bands,
Rejoice, O vales and mountains,
And oceans, clap your hands. [Refrain]

4. Since all He comes to ransom,
By all be He adored,
The infant born in Beth'lem,
The Savior and the Lord. [Refrain]

5. All idols then shall perish
And Satan's lying cease,
And Christ shall raise His scepter,
Decreeing endless peace. [Refrain]

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.
Almighty God, You have poured into our hearts the true Light of Your incarnate Word.

People: Grant that this Light may shine forth in our lives;

Pastor: through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

1 Kings 3:4–15

(Solomon asks for an understanding mind, a listening heart.)

⁴ And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. ⁵ At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I shall give you." ⁶ And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to Your servant David my father, because he walked before You in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward You. And You have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day. ⁷ And now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ And Your servant is in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude. ⁹ Give Your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern Your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this Your great people?" ¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹ And God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹² behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. ¹³ I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days. ¹⁴ And if you will walk in My ways, keeping My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days." ¹⁵ And Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream. Then he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

PSALM *Psalms 119:97–104*

- ⁹⁷ Oh how I love Your law!
It is my meditation all the day.
- ⁹⁸ Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies,
for it is ever with me.
- ⁹⁹ I have more understanding than all my teachers,
for Your testimonies are my meditation.
- ¹⁰⁰ I understand more than the aged,
for I keep Your precepts.
- ¹⁰¹ I hold back my feet from every evil way,
in order to keep Your Word.
- ¹⁰² I do not turn aside from Your rules,
for You have taught me.
- ¹⁰³ How sweet are Your words to my taste,
sweeter than honey to my mouth!
- ¹⁰⁴ Through Your precepts I get understanding;
therefore I hate every false way.

EPISTLE *Ephesians 1:3–14*

(Paul tries to explain the overwhelming grace of God and our response to it.)

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love ⁵ He predestined us for adoption to Himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will, ⁶ to the praise of His glorious grace, with which He has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, ⁸ which He lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of His will, according to His purpose, which He set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth in Him. ¹¹ In Him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of His glory. ¹³ In Him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in Him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of His glory.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

HOLY GOSPEL *Luke 2:40–52*

(The Boy Jesus is found in the temple.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

⁴⁰ And the Child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon Him. ⁴¹ Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. ⁴² And when He was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. ⁴³ And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the Boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, ⁴⁴ but supposing Him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for Him among their relatives and acquaintances, ⁴⁵ and when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for Him. ⁴⁶ After three days they found Him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. ⁴⁸ And when His parents saw Him, they were astonished. And His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You treated us so? Behold, Your father and I have been searching for You in great distress." ⁴⁹ And He said to them, "Why were you looking for Me? Did you not know that I must be in My Father's house?" ⁵⁰ And they did not understand the saying that He spoke to them. ⁵¹ And He went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And His mother treasured up all these things in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

HYMN OF THE DAY "Hail, O Source of Every Blessing"

Hymnal page 409, verses 1 and 2

1. Hail, O Source of ev'ry blessing,
Father of our human race!
Gentiles now, Your grace possessing,
In Your courts obtain a place.
Grateful now, we fall before You,
In Your Church rejoice to live,
See Your glory and adore You,
Thankful for the grace You give.

2. Once far off but now invited,
We approach Your sacred throne,
In Your covenant united,
Reconciled, redeemed, made one.
Now revealed to Eastern sages,
See the Star of Mercy shine,
Myst'ry hid in former ages,
Myst'ry great of love Divine.

CHILDREN / YOUTHFUL MINISTRY MOMENT

SERMON

CREED

Nicene Creed

**People: I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both
the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

- Pastor: Blessed be You, O God our Father, for in Your great wisdom, mercy, and love You have chosen us to be Your own children by faith in Christ. Grant to Your whole church Your light, love, and peace. Lord, in Your mercy,
- People: hear our prayer.**
- Pastor: Give wisdom, O God, to all preachers of Your Word, to all pastors and leaders in Your church, wherever they may be, that they may rightly divide Your Word, proclaim it with power, and administer Your Holy Sacraments according to Your will. Lord, in Your mercy,
- People: hear our prayer.**
- Pastor: Let Your Holy Spirit seek out and reveal Your salvation for those who hear and believe Your saving Gospel. Cast away all doubt and strengthen the faith of Your people everywhere. Lord, in Your mercy,
- People: hear our prayer.**
- Pastor: Give peace among the nations, O Lord, that Your Word may not be bound but be proclaimed freely and boldly to all people. Lord, in Your mercy,
- People: hear our prayer.**
- Pastor: Bring Your healing and comfort to all who are sick or injured or in any need. Give confidence in suffering and thankful hearts for Your every blessing. Lord, in Your mercy,
- People: hear our prayer.**
- Pastor: Let the body and blood of Your Son strengthen faith and grant the wisdom that comes down from above, that all who commune may be one in confession and faith. Lord, in Your mercy,
- People: hear our prayer.**
- Pastor: Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- People: Amen.**

OFFERING



OFFERTORY

“What Child Is This”

Hymnal page 370

1. What child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The babe, the son of Mary!

2. Why lies He in such mean estate
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,
The cross be borne for me, for you;
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
The babe, the son of Mary!

3. So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh;
Come, peasant, king, to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise the song on high,
The virgin sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy, for Christ is born,
The babe, the son of Mary!

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

PREFACE

2 Timothy 4:22

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; for in the mystery of the Word made flesh You have given us a new revelation of Your glory that, seeing You in the person of Your Son, we may know and love those things which are not seen. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS

Hymnal page 178

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
Lord God of power and might:
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for by Your design, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Blessed are You, for You have given us faith to acknowledge Your overwhelming grace, which is beyond human understanding.

Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we ask for firm faith to receive Him in, with, and under this bread and wine for strength each day until we join all the faithful at the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

*Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24;
Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25*

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

1 Corinthians 11:26; Revelation 22:20

Pastor: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

People: **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Pastor: O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and Passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

LORD'S PRAYER

(Matthew 6:9–13)

People: 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.

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: Amen.

AGNUS DEI

Hymnal page 180

**Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world:
grant us peace, grant us peace.**

DISTRIBUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift,

People: and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another;

Pastor: through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION *Numbers 6:24–26*

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you.
 The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
 The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

People: **Amen.**

HYMN “It Came upon the Midnight Clear” Hymnal page 366, verses 1 and 3

1. It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, goodwill to all,
From heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

3. All you, beneath your heavy load,
By care and guilt bent low,
Who toil along a dreary way
With painful steps and slow:
Look up, for golden is the hour,
Come swiftly on the wing,
The Prince was born to bring you peace;
Of Him the angels sing.

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Go in peace as you serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God!**

Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series A, Quarter 1.
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Pastoral Care:

Please contact –

Pastor Frank Matthews at: (213) 247-8838 or no1redder@gmail.com

BLESSED TO BE SERVING TODAY

Pastor: Reverend Frank Matthews
Greeter: Connie Kean
Reader: Richard Swanson
Musician: Christine Geltz
Ushers: Craig Boehne, Donald Lammerts, & Dave Lassanske

PRAYERS OF CARE & CONCERN FOR OUR FLC FAMILY

Monica Ganas: Please continue to extend prayers and her family of their unexpected loss, and the dealing with their grief, especially during this time of the year.

Judy Gunther: Please extend healing prayer for her as she has broken her hip.

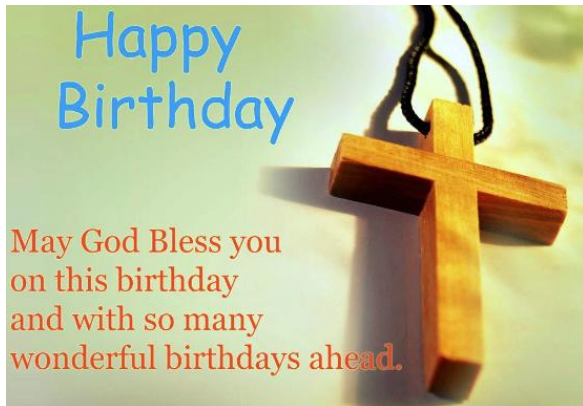
Bob Lujan: Prayer for Christine Geltz's friend as he is dealing with many health issues.

Rachel Whitcher: Please continue to extend healing prayers for her wrist as she is recovering slowly.

Perry Singleton, Jan and Keith Edmunds: More prayers for Pastor Frank Matthews' friends and cousin as they continue to deal with many health issues.

Betty Nelson: Pray for this shut-in member as she continues to deal with the challenges of aging.

Gregg Ruiz: Please pray for his family during their time of grief. Pray also for Penny (Gregg's sister-in-law), as well.



BIRTHDAY THIS WEEK

Rachel Whitcher January 8

John Daly January 9



VOTERS' MEETING 2026

Join us on January 25th, 2026 (Sunday), at 11:00 a.m. for the annual Voters' Meeting. The budget for 2026 will also be on the agenda, along with any other topics for discussion and voting. A light lunch shall also be provided.

TECH FRIDAYS

Members & community are invited to come with their smart phone, laptop, Chrome Book, iPad etc. to learn more about their devices and receive help from Foothill Prep students. Some public libraries have regularly scheduled hours with volunteers helping senior citizens and others with technology challenges. First Lutheran will have high school volunteers eager to help you weekly beginning January 9th, 2026 from 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Please let Pat Grabowski know if you are interested in this opportunity.



Sunday Worship at Home

Although the Lutheran Hour no longer airs on KBRT 740 AM, you can find other airings at: lhm.org/guide.

Also, listeners can hear the weekly sermons whenever and wherever they are, and daily devotions are available which come in a daily email to read or listen to. Just go to:

<https://familytalktoday.com/programguidedaily>.

Or you can listen to Lutheran Hour podcasts any time by going to:

<https://www.youtube.com/@LutheranHourMin>.

If you have a TV and can get DirectTV, Channel 377 you can view Worship Anew at: 8:30 a.m. on Sundays. This service is filmed at our Fort Wayne Seminary in Indiana.

You may also access or review the sermons online by going to:

<https://firstlutherantc.org/Media>

THIS WEEK AT FIRST LUTHERAN

SUNDAY

9:30 a.m.

9:45 a.m.

TODAY – JANUARY 4

Fellowship time

Bible Study & Sunday School

WEDNESDAY

12:00 noon

JANUARY 7

First Wednesday Soup and Sandwich