

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH OF TEMPLE CITY

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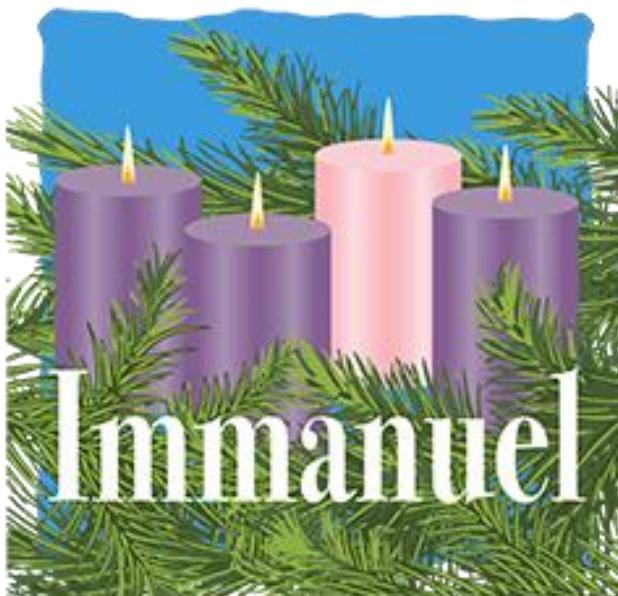
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FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

They Shall Call His Name Immanuel

December 21, 2025



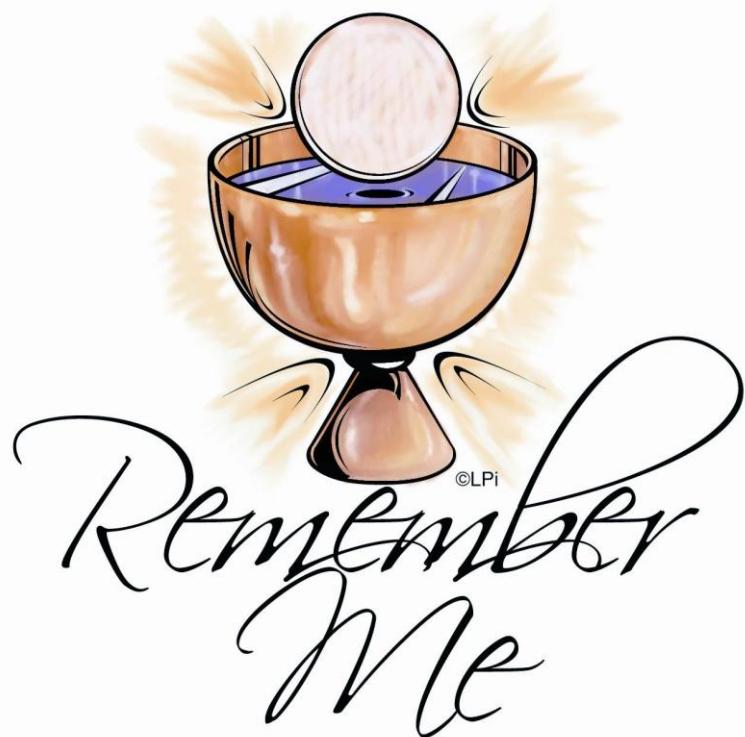
AS WE GATHER

It is still Advent, but today we hear an account of the Christmas story early so that we may know what to look for later this week. The Son of Mary by the Holy Spirit is Jesus, who saves us from our sins and who fulfills the promise of Immanuel: God is with us. Perhaps the richness of the details of Luke's account sometimes distracts us from the message. The Lord has come to keep His Word, to save us from our sins, and to keep us in His hand so that we may be His eternally. None of this was obvious to either Mary or faithful Joseph, and yet the Lord was at work through it all to deliver to us His Son to be our Savior. We will still worry when things do not go as we plan, and we will still struggle with doubts and fears, but the angel of God's presence is no mere messenger sent in His place. No, the angel of God's presence is His only-begotten Son, whose name is Jesus and whose work is our salvation.

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 ✖

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✖ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
People: Amen.

CONFESION AND ABSOLUTION *Psalm 130:7; Philippians 1:6*

Pastor: O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is steadfast love,
People: and with Him is plentiful redemption.

Silence for self-examination.

Pastor: Holy and gracious God,
People: I confess that I have sinned against You this day. Some of my sin I know—the thoughts and words and deeds of which I am ashamed—but some is known only to You. In the name of Jesus Christ I ask forgiveness. Deliver and restore me that I may rest in peace.

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.

Pastor: He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

People: Amen.

✖ WORD ✖

The Advent wreath is lit with the other candles as the hymn is sung.

HYMN “Life Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates” Hymnal page 340, verses 1 and 5

1. Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates!
Behold, the King of glory waits.
The King of kings is drawing near;
The Savior of the world is here.
Life and salvation He doth bring;
Therefore rejoice and gladly sing.
To God the Father raise
Your joyful songs of praise.

5. Redeemer, come and open wide
My heart to Thee; here, Lord, abide!
O enter with Thy grace divine;
Thy face of mercy on me shine.
Thy Holy Spirit guide us on
Until our glorious goal is won.
Eternal praise and fame
We offer to Thy name.

KYRIE

Hymnal page 168

Pastor: Kyrie, Kyrie eleison.

People: Kyrie, Kyrie eleison.

Pastor: For peace in our hearts, for peace in the church, and for peace in the world, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Kyrie, Kyrie eleison.

Pastor: For mercy to forgive all our sins, for mercy to forgive the sins of one another, and for mercy for all those in need, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Kyrie, Kyrie eleison.

Pastor: For grace to rule our unruly wills, for grace to prepare to receive the Lord in His Word and Supper, and for grace to be found faithful when He comes at the end of all time, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Kyrie, Kyrie eleison.

Pastor: For hope to preserve us from despair, for hope to bear cheerful witness to Christ before the world, and for hope to sustain us in the hour of trial, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Kyrie, Kyrie eleison.

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.



OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 7:10–17

(“The virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”)

¹⁰ Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz: ¹¹ “Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹² But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.” ¹³ And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the LORD Himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel. ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey when He knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the Boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted. ¹⁷ The LORD will bring upon you and upon your people and upon your father's house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria!”

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM *Psalm 24; antiphon: v. 7*

24 ¹ The earth is the LORD 's and the fullness thereof,
the world and those who dwell therein,
² for He has founded it upon the seas
and established it upon the rivers.
³ Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?
And who shall stand in His holy place?
⁴ He who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who does not lift up his soul to what is false
and does not swear deceitfully.
⁵ He will receive blessing from the LORD
and righteousness from the God of his salvation.
⁶ Such is the generation of those who seek Him,
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.
⁷ Lift up your heads, O gates!
and be lifted up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.
⁸ Who is this King of glory?
The LORD, strong and mighty,
The LORD, mighty in battle!
⁹ Lift up your heads, O gates!
And lift them up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.
¹⁰ Who is this King of glory?
The LORD of hosts,
He is the King of glory!

EPISTLE *Romans 1:1–7*

(Long promised by God, the Savior, Jesus Christ, has come.)

1 ¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, ³ concerning His Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by His resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of His name among all the nations, ⁶ including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

7 To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 1:18–25*

(“The birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way.”)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the first chapter.

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

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³ “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son,
and they shall call His name Immanuel”

(which means, God with us). ²⁴ When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵ but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called His name Jesus.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

HYMN OF THE DAY

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

Hymnal page 357

1. O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.

3. O come, O come, Thou Lord of might,
Who to Thy tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times didst give the Law
In cloud and majesty and awe. [Refrain]

Refrain:

Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel
Shall come to thee,
O Israel!

4. O come, Thou Branch of Jesse's tree,
Free them from Satan's tyranny
That trust Thy mighty pow'r to save,
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave. [Refrain]

2. O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,
Who ord'rest all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And teach us in her ways to go. [Refrain]

5. O come, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery. [Refrain]

CHILDREN / YOUTHFUL MINISTRY MOMENT

SERMON

SOLO

“O, Holy Night” – Song Solo by Pastor Frank Matthews

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: In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: For faith to rejoice in the promise of the Father kept in Christ, for an end to worries and fears, and for peace to rule our hearts, let us pray to the Lord:

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: For the courage in the face of danger and confidence in the face of doubt, knowing that God will keep us as His own possession, let us pray to the Lord:

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: For this congregation and the church across many nations, called by the Spirit and sustained by the means of grace, that we may not fail to tell the story of our Savior's birth nor the promise of His name, let us pray to the Lord:

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: For the peoples and leaders of all the nations, that in every place they may know justice and be free to worship the Lord without fear, and for an end to violence and war, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For all those who protect us in this and every place, for the emergency workers and disaster relief personnel, and for those who watch on our behalf in the armed forces, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For generous hearts that those in poverty and need may be supplied from the abundance the Lord has granted to us, and for our tithes and offerings to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For families and homes, especially those alone in this holy season of our Savior's birth, that we may love and serve them, extending Christ's compassion to all those around us, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For God's mercy to the sick, His relief to those who suffer, His presence with the grieving and dying, and His peace to those troubled in mind or spirit, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For faith to discern and believe Christ's presence in this Holy Communion and for repentance that we may receive His body and blood for our good, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For all those who travel and those whose celebrations may be missing loved ones, that the Lord may at last bring us together in His presence on high, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: Come to the aid of Your people, O Lord, and defend us against all our enemies of body and soul, that at the day You have appointed, we may rejoice in Your presence together with those who have gone before us with the sign of faith and now rest in peace; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whom with the Father and the Spirit You are one God, one Lord, now and to the end of the ages.

People: Amen.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

"Hark the Glad Sound"

Hymnal page 349, verses 1 and 3

1. Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes,
The Savior promised long;
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne
And ev'ry voice a song.

3. He comes the broken heart to bind,
The bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of His grace
To enrich the humble poor.

¤ 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, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory. 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: When the peace of perfection was broken by the voice of rebellion and death became our end, You looked upon us in love, O merciful Father, and You sent forth the promise of a new day made possible by a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. He fulfilled Your Word, was incarnate of the virgin by the Holy Spirit, and was delivered in flesh and blood as one of us, yet without sin. He fulfilled all Your saving will and offered up Himself in our place to death, paying the price of our redemption and forging a path through death to life everlasting. In this Holy Supper He established, He placed His promise, that by our communion in His flesh and blood, we might be forgiven of our sins and strengthened in the new life granted to us in Baptism. Now, by His own Word and testament, we gather to set aside this bread, that it may be to us His flesh for the life of the world, and this cup, that it may be His blood to cleanse us from all our sin, as He Himself has said.

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 \mathbb{X} 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 \mathbb{X} 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: Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good,

People: for His steadfast love endures forever.

Pastor: Gracious God, our heavenly Father, You have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of Your Son's body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of pilgrimage that, on the day of His coming, we may, together with all Your saints, celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end; 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

BENEDICAMUS

Pastor: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

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 “Gentle Mary Laid Her Child” Hymnal page 374

1. Gentle Mary laid her child
Lowly in a manger;
There He lay, the Undefiled,
To the world a stranger.
Such a babe in such a place,
Can He be the Savior?
Ask the saved of all the race
Who have found His favor.

2. Angels sang about His birth,
Wise Men sought and found Him;
Heaven's star shone brightly forth
Glory all around Him.
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight,
Heard the angels singing;
All the plains were lit that night,
All the hills were ringing.

3. Gentle Mary laid her child
Lowly in a manger;
He is still the Undefiled
But no more a stranger.
Son of God of humble birth,
Beautiful the story;
Praise His name in all the earth;
Hail the King of glory!

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:	Sharon Corey
Reader:	Richard Swanson
Musician:	Christine Geltz
Ushers:	Craig Boehne, Donald Lammerts, & Dave Lassanske

PRAYERS OF CARE & CONCERN FOR OUR FLC FAMILY

Pastor Frank: Prayers of continuing healing after his outpatient surgery.

Bruce & Lynn Bertram: Prayers for these former members as they deal with their grief upon the passing of their niece, Sandi Sussman.

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.

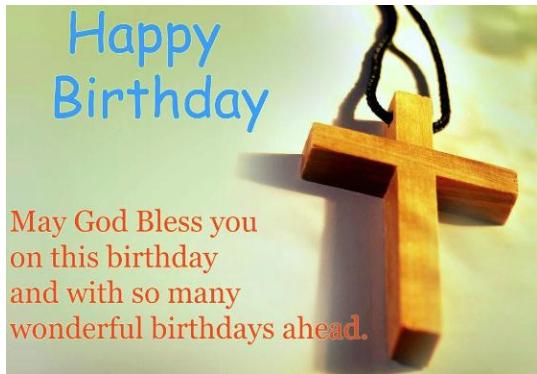
Rachel Whitcher: Please continue to extend healing prayers for her wrist as she is recovering slowly.

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

Patricia Caballero: We give praise and thanksgiving that she has healed nicely.

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

Betty Nelson December 24
(Shut In)

From her daughter – Nancy Reese:
"My mother used to be a regular attender for many years. Betty will be 96 years old on December 24th. She is homebound and quite weak, but does enjoy receiving a 'happy card'. Thank you and God bless you all this Christmas season."

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 9. 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: [Ihm.org/guide](http://ihm.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.

11:00 a.m.

TODAY – DECEMBER 21

Fellowship time

Bible Study & Sunday School

Board of Directors meeting

WEDNESDAY

12:00 noon

DECEMBER 24

Christmas Eve midday worship



The Fourth Sunday of Advent