



FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
Second Sunday in Advent
Sunday, December 8, 2024

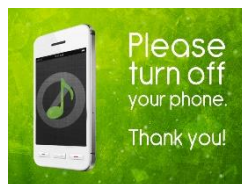
Luke 3:4 – “As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’” God makes long-range plans: Isaiah lived more than seven hundred years before St. John the Baptist preached by the Jordan River. Obviously, God sees farther into the future than we do! That’s yet another reason to trust Him when it comes to how He tells us to live our lives: He knows what’s coming and we don’t.



WELCOME VISITORS: We extend a warm welcome to all our visitors today. We pray that your worship with us is rewarding. Please be sure to sign your name and address in

our guest register, located in the narthex. If you are looking for a church home we would like to invite you to be a part of our Bible Based Church family

Please **TURN OFF ALL CELLPHONES** before service begins. Phones that are on may interfere with transmission of the service to social media and shutting down your phone can help solve network connectivity problems.



♪♪ **Special Music**
Ed Stiver ♪♪

OPENING HYMN

“On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”

LSB #344

INVOCATION

P Jesus said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

(Matthew 28:18-20)

We begin our worship as we began our Christian life, through Holy Baptism, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

- P** “God is spirit, and His worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.” (*John 4:24*) And, “He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy. (*Proverbs 28:13*) Therefore, let us confess and renounce our sins with a sincere heart and mind before the Lord, receiving His Almighty, Divine, and Eternal forgiveness.

*(A moment of silence
for personal confession and reflection.)*

- P** We confess:

C **God forgive me, a sinner. 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.**

- P** “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, so that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish, but shall have everlasting life. (*John 3:16*) “Blessed is the one whose sin the LORD does not count against him, and in whose spirit is no deceit. (*Based on Psalm 32:1, 2*) By this, your confession, I, by virtue of my office as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto you, and by the command and in the stead of the Lord Jesus Christ, (*John 20:22-23; Matthew 16:19 NIV*) I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. “Be of good cheer, your

sins are forgiven you. (*Matthew 9:2 KJV*) Now, go and live a life worthy of your calling in Christ Jesus, and produce fruit in keeping with real repentance. (*Ephesians 4:1*)

HYMN OF RESPONSE “*Silent Night*”

Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht

(sung by Ed)

Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!

Alles schläft, einsam wacht

Nur das traute, hockhelige Paar.

Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,

Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!

Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!

Congregation sings

**Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
Round yon Virgin, Mother and Child, holy infant so
tender and mild**

Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace

**Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight
Glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing
Alleluia**

Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born

**Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face, with the dawn of
redeeming grace**

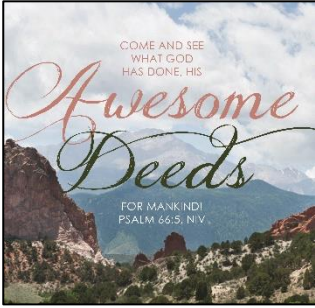
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus Lord, at Thy birth

RESPONSIVE PSALM

Psalm 66:1-12

- P** ¹ Shout for joy to God, all the earth;
 ² sing the glory of his name;
 give to him glorious praise!

C ³ Say to God, “How awesome are your deeds!
So great is your power that your enemies come
cringing to you.



P ⁴ All the earth worships you
and sings praises to you;
they sing praises to your name.”

C ⁵ Come and see what God has
done:

**he is awesome in his deeds
toward the children of man.**

P ⁶ He turned the sea into dry land;
they passed through the river on foot.

There did we rejoice in him,

C ⁷ **who rules by his might forever,
whose eyes keep watch on the nations—
let not the rebellious exalt themselves.**

P ⁸ Bless our God, O peoples;
let the sound of his praise be heard,
⁹ who has kept our soul among the living
and has not let our feet slip.

C ¹⁰ **For you, O God, have tested us;
you have tried us as silver is tried.**

P ¹¹ You brought us into the net;
you laid a crushing burden on our backs;

C ¹² **you let men ride over our heads;
we went through fire and through water;
yet you have brought us out to a place of
abundance.**

✘ **GOD SPEAKS TO US THROUGH HIS HOLY WORD** ✘

P “For everything that was written in the past was written
to teach us, so that through endurance and the
encouragement of the Scriptures, we might have
hope.

C “May the God who gives endurance and
encouragement give you a spirit of unity among
yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that

with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 15:4-6)

OLD TESTAMENT

Malachi 3:1-7b

¹ “Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. ² But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. ³ He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the Lord. ⁴ Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be



pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

⁵ “Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the

hired worker in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts.

⁶ “For I the Lord do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. ⁷ From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts. But you say, ‘How shall we return?’

P “The grass withers and the flowers fall,

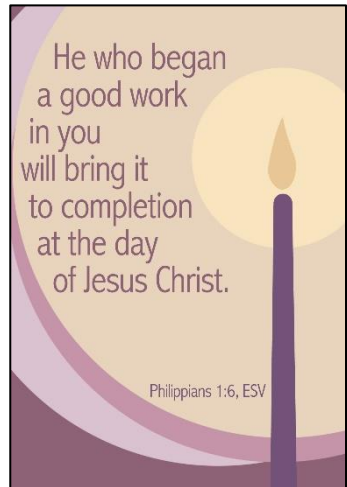
C **“but the Word of God stands forever.”** (Isaiah 40:8)

EPISTLE

Philippians 1:2-11

² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³ I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, ⁴ always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, ⁵ because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶ And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷ It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸ For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. ⁹ And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰ so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.



P “And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you received from us, you accepted it, not as the word of men,

C **“but as it actually is, the Word of God, which is at work in you who believe.”** *(1 Thess. 2:13-14)*

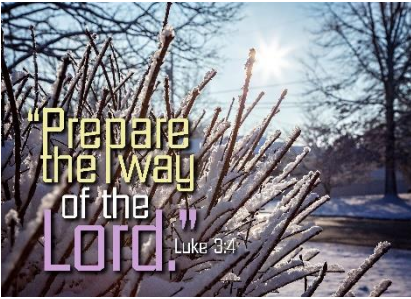
THE HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 3:1-20

¹In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of

Abilene, ² during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³ And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁴ As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:



‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

⁵ Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough places shall become level ways,

⁶ and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. ⁹ Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, “What then shall we do?” ¹¹ And he answered them, “Whoever has two tunics^[b] is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise.” ¹² Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, “Teacher, what shall we do?” ¹³ And he said to them, “Collect no more than you are authorized to do.” ¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what shall we do?” And he said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages.”

¹⁵ As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, ¹⁶ John answered them all, saying, “I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the

strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

¹⁸ So with many other exhortations he preached good news to the people. ¹⁹ But Herod the tetrarch, who had been reproved by him for Herodias, his brother's wife, and for all the evil things that Herod had done, ²⁰ added this to them all, that he locked up John in prison.

P “As Jesus was saying these things, a woman in the crowd called out, ‘Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you.’

C “He replied, ‘Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God, and obey it.’” *(Luke 11:27-28)*

SERMON HYMN

“Joy to the World”

LSB #387

✠ **SERMON** ✠

✠ **THE APOSTLES' CREED** ✠

✠ **WE BRING OUR FIRSTFRUITS TO THE LORD** ✠

OFFERTORY RESPONSE

“Give Thanks With a Grateful Heart”

LSB #806

✠ **THE LORD'S PRAYER** ✠

P Taught by our Lord and trusting His promises, we are bold to pray:

C **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.

✕ THE BENEDICTION ✕

- P** 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.
- C** Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

LSB #368



DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Sunday: Isaiah 24:14 – 25:12; Obadiah 1–21; 1 John 2:15-29

Monday: Isaiah 26:1-19; 1 John 3:1-24

Tuesday: Isaiah 26:20 – 27:13;
1 John 4:1-21

Wednesday: Isaiah 28:14-29; 1 John 5:1-21; 2 John 1-13;
3 John 1-15

Thursday: Isaiah 29:1-14; Jude 1-25

Friday: Isaiah 29:15 – 30:14; Revelation 1:1-20

Saturday: Isaiah 30:15-26; Revelation 2:1-29

FAITH and ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCHES



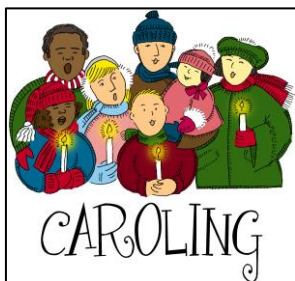
Please remember the following in your prayers:

Gary Baumann Bob Burish
Alice Fromm Wallace Emmerich
Sally Hannemann Angie
Harkner Emma Hein

Dale Janisch Cecelia & Lucille Klade Rob Koebe
 Bruce Krenz Ron Lang Karen Love Debbie Olson
 Mark Pester Edgar Pfaff Marge Radenz Karen Rajek
 Jo Schedler Audrey Steckling Lorraine Steckling
 Carl Uttech Philip Vogel Deb Wiederhoeft
 Susie and Ellie Zastrow

CHRISTMAS GIFTS for PINE CREST RESIDENTS

Pine Crest is asking for donation of Christmas presents and/or money which allows Pine Crest to give a gift to each resident. Items should be dropped off by Sunday, December 8 at Faith. A list of items can be found on the table in the church entrance.



CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Lunch will be served right after worship service at Faith followed by caroling to shut-ins on **Sunday, December 15.** Carolers will leave from Faith at 1:00 p.m.

Come along and help share the Christmas spirit. Bring a friend!

Gifts for Children

Tags are available on the tree in the narthex at Faith. Gifts need to be returned by Sunday, December 15. For information, contact Bonnie Grueneberg



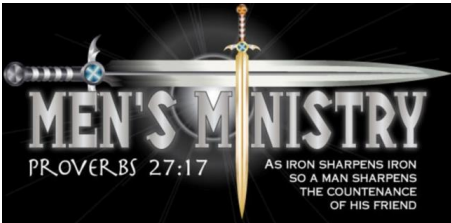


WOMEN OF FAITH DECEMBER ACTIVITY

Attending the **Lyric Choir Concert** at
the Presbyterian Church, Wausau at
3:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 14.
Spouses are welcome.

FRUIT PICKUP

The fruit will be available for pick
up at Faith on Friday, December
13 from 4-6 p.m., Saturday,
December 14 from 8-10 a.m. and
on Sunday morning, December
15. Please pay for fruit when it is
picked up.



IRON SHARPENS IRON

Sunday,
December 8
4:30 p.m.

Hosted by Bruce Pfingsten
W5110 Nibler Road, Tomahawk

In the beauty and celebration of
Christmas, we are decorating the
Sanctuary and Narthex at Faith with
poinsettias this year. Donations for the
POINSETTIA FUND will be taken
through **Sunday, December 15.** Forms
are available on the Scrip table in the
back of the church.





CHURCH CALENDAR ST. JOHN'S and FAITH

Sunday, December 8

8:30 a.m. Worship at St. John's

Sunday School during Sermon at St. John's

9:15 a.m. Sunday School at Faith

10:15 a.m. Worship at Faith

11:15 a.m. Bible Study at Faith

4:30 p.m. ISI Men's Ministry at Bruce Pfingsten's

Monday, December 9

6:30 p.m. Church Council at Faith

Tuesday, December 10

6:00 p.m. Church Council at St. John's

7:00 p.m. Elders' Meeting at St. John's

Wednesday, December 11

10:00 a.m. AbleLight Volunteers

5:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class

6:30 p.m. Midweek Advent Worship at Faith

Saturday, December 14

3:00 p.m. Women of Faith Christmas Activity. Lyric Choir at Presbyterian Church, Wausau

Sunday, December 15

8:30 a.m. Children's Christmas Program and Worship at St. John's

9:15 a.m. Sunday School at Faith

10:15 a.m. Children's Christmas Program and Worship at Faith

11:15 a.m. Bible Class at Faith

1:00 p.m. Caroling to Shut-Ins

Wednesday, December 18

5:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class at Faith

6:30 p.m. Midweek Advent Worship at Faith



ST. JOHN'S CHRISTIAN CARE is looking for a **part time assistant teacher**. Must have Infant/Toddler and Early Childhood experience. If the right person fits, we will be willing to train if person is willing to take cases. For more information or to apply,

contact Patti Beilke at St. John's Christian Care at 715-539-8120.



ST. JOHN'S NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY

Looking for updated pictures and contact information for all St. John' members and their families. Please check your church mailboxes for more information.

CHRISTMAS IS JUST A FEW WEEKS AWAY!

Be sure to pick up scrip cards for your holiday feasts and those special gifts for your 'naughty and nice' list. Pick up scrip for all your household needs. Help support the ministry of our church through the Scrip program. ... *All without it costing you an extra penny!*



2025 OFFERING ENVELOPES

Are available on tables in the church narthex.

Do NOT use until after January 1, 2025.



2024 Advent Series
His Name
Shall Be
Called

MIDWEEK ADVENT SERVICES

Wednesday, December 11 at 6:30 p.m. at Faith

Our second midweek Advent sermon is “Mighty God”—a title given to Jesus in Isaiah 9:6. We will learn from Scripture that Jesus is more than a mere human who was a great teacher or a popular hero. Jesus *was* and *is* God in human flesh. We will also learn *why* it is important for us to believe that Jesus *was* and *is* God in human flesh.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank You for your generous sacrificial offerings to the Lord, to help us keep our ministry going. You can also mail your offerings to Our Churches at

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

15425 County Road K South
Merrill, WI 54452 or

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

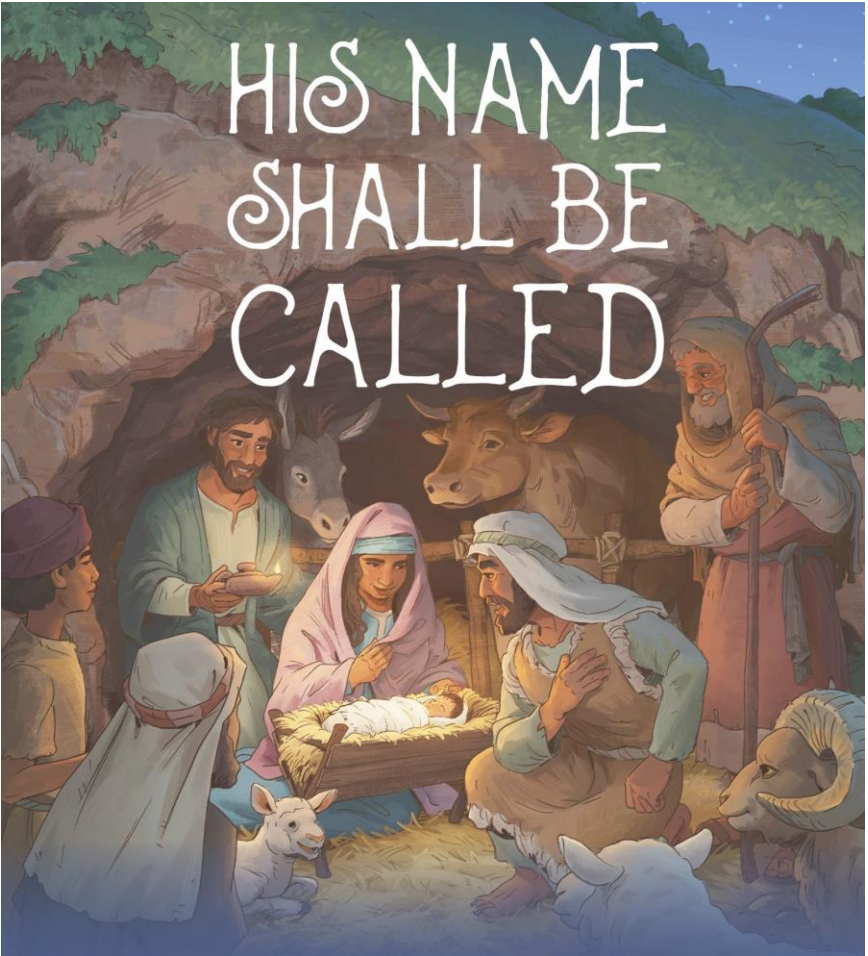
134058 County Road L
Athens, WI 54411

(Please do not send hard cash through the mail)

Please help us spread the Word. Visit us online at Pastor's (Don Love) Facebook Page, or Faith Lutheran Church, or on the church website at

www.faithlutheranmerrill.com

HIS NAME
SHALL BE
CALLED



**CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS
PROGRAM**

Sunday morning, December 15

**DURING WORSHIP
SERVICES**