



FEAR NOT! AN EVENING SERVICE FOR ADVENT

The angels who appeared to Zechariah, Mary, and Joseph all proclaimed, “Fear not!” in response to the human emotions displayed before them. God’s word also breaks into the fears of our world with the promise of Christ. Surely God is our salvation; we will trust, and will not be afraid.

Welcome to First English Lutheran Church. You’re invited to fully participate in a community of faith and friendship that gathers for worship, relationship building, personal growth, and service in the community and the world. Following the example of Christ, this congregation welcomes you exactly as you are. We are committed to the work of racial equity, justice, and advocating for marginalized groups. We welcome people in all places on the journey of faith and life. We celebrate differences in age, appearance, economic status, ethnic origin, nationality, race, family configuration, marital or relationship status, political leaning, religious background, and those who are differently abled physically or mentally. Since 1989, FELC has openly welcomed persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities and expressions to full participation in the church and society. We’re Lutheran, so that means we believe in grace for everyone. The good news of Jesus Christ, who brings us the love and mercy of God as a gift, liberates us to love as we are loved, serve as we are served, and give as we have been given much. We rejoice in the diversity that has nurtured and enriched the whole church. Whether you’re from another faith tradition, a seeker and questioner looking for more to life and a place to explore, or even a lifelong Lutheran, we’re glad to have you.

We ask everyone worshipping in the sanctuary to respect each individual’s safety needs and desires, especially anyone at high risk for Covid complications.

Children are welcome here to be fully present and fully children

ELW references in this worship bulletin refer to hymns that may be sung from the worship book *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* in the pew rack.

All Gender Restrooms with changing tables are in the left side hallway as you face the front of the sanctuary.

GATHERING MUSIC

GATHERING SONG

People, look east ELW 248

OPENING DIALOGUE

Surely God is my salvation; **I will trust, and will not be afraid,**
for the Lord God is my strength, and my might; **and has become my salvation.**
A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, **and a branch shall grow out of his roots.**
The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him; **his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.**
(Based on Isaiah 11:1-3; 12:2)

OPENING PRAYER

(Isaiah 35)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

God of our salvation, you speak through angels and prophets, telling us: “Be strong, do not fear! For I will come and save you.” Open our eyes and unstop our ears, that we may sing for joy at the coming of your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

FEAR NOT, ZECHARIAH, PRIEST AND RIGHTEOUS ONE

Reading: Luke 1:5-25

Following a brief silence for prayer and meditation:

Thus says the Lord: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you.

You have called us by name; we are yours.

HYMN

Blessed be the God of Israel ELW 250

FEAR NOT, MARY, FAVORED ONE OF GOD

Reading: Luke 1:26-38

Following a brief silence for prayer and meditation:

Thus says the Lord: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you.

You have called us by name; we are yours.

HYMN

My soul proclaims your greatness ELW 251

FEAR NOT, JOSEPH, SON OF DAVID

Reading: Matthew 1:18-25

Following a brief silence for prayer and meditation:

Thus says the Lord: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you.

You have called us by name; we are yours.

HYMN

Wait for the Lord ELW 262

FEAR NOT, CHOSEN PEOPLE OF GOD

Reading: Isaiah 43:1-7, 15-21

Following a brief silence for prayer and meditation:

Thus says the Lord: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you.

You have called us by name; we are yours.

HYMN O Come, O Come, Emmanuel ELW 257 (stanzas 1, 2, 3, 4)

REFLECTION

HYMN As the dark awaits the dawn ELW 261 (stanza 1 – solo)

PRAYERS

God of Zechariah, you break into our fearful world with news of joy and gladness. Give light to all who sit in darkness, and guide our feet into the way of peace.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

God of Mary, you know the fears of your people. Lift up the lowly, especially those who are sick, those who mourn, those who are hungry, and all in need of your care.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

God of Joseph, your message calls us to let go of our fears and place our trust in you. Sustain us in your hope as we await our Savior's birth.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

God of all creation, you name us as your precious and chosen people and redeem us through Christ. Take hold of our hearts and shine your love through our lives.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

God of our lives, hear the prayers we offer in our hearts. *Silent Prayer*

Teach us to boldly pray in the words our Savior gave us:

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.

BLESSING

Soon, the angel will announce to the shepherds, "Fear not! I bring you good news of great joy." As we await the coming of Christ, may the God of our salvation grant you peace and joy, hope and gladness. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG Awake! Awake, and greet the new morn ELW 242

DISMISSAL

Fear not! Christ is coming. **Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!**

CHRISTMAS & EPIPHANY AT FELC

Christmas Eve Candlelight Liturgy with Holy Communion

In-person and YouTube livestream

Saturday, December 24

One Liturgy at 8:00 PM. Prelude Music Begins at 7:45 PM

Christmas Day Lessons & Carols Liturgy with Holy Communion

In-person and YouTube livestream. Festive hospitality follows the liturgy.

Sunday, December 25 at 10:00 AM

First Sunday of Christmas / New Year's Day Zoom Worship & YouTube Livestream

NO in-person worship at the church

Sunday, January 1, 2023 at 10:00 AM

FELC Community Zoom link (at the end of each weekly email news)

The Zoom worship will also be livestreamed to our YouTube channel.

Epiphany House Blessings

Epiphany is a traditional time for blessing of the home with readings, prayer, and chalking above the entrance to the home with a blessing for the year. As the magi visited the home of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus and brought gifts and blessings, we bless homes in the name of Christ. **On January 4 Bryan Rust and Pastor Coffey will visit homes north of FELC, and on January 5 they will visit homes south of FELC. Both days they will schedule between 10 AM and 3 PM.**

If you would like them to come to your home and bring an Epiphany house blessing, email Pastor Coffey (pastor@felcaustin.org) to request being added to the list. Approximate times will be sent out once the schedule is complete. Blessings are performed outside at the front door. You need not be present to have your home blessed, but you're welcome to join in if you are home.