

**THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD
THE FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS
SERVICE OF WORD & PRAYER**

CHRISTMAS 1 / NEW YEAR'S DAY

JANUARY 1, 2023 10:00 AM

ZOOM & YOUTUBE LIVESTREAM



BIENVENIDOS! EVERYONE IS WELCOME. THIS MEANS YOU.

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.

To learn more about our history: <https://www.felcaustin.org/information/aboutfelc/felc-history>

ESTA LITURGIA/THIS LITURGY

If this is one of your first times to connect with FELC, WELCOME! **Use the online Welcome Visitors information form** and provide feedback on your visit: <http://www.felcaustin.org/forms/visitors>.

At First English, **we strive to use language** for God, Christ, and humanity **that is inclusive and diverse**. Our use of feminine, non-gender, and masculine names and metaphors for God, both biblical and contemporary, helps us to experience God more fully. Languages that include persons of all gender identities, sexualities, ethnicities, and color, helps us better reflect God's expansive love and diversity.

Children and adults are welcome here to be fully present and fully themselves.

We welcome your generosity in person and online. All of life is an offering to God.

In an effort to connect with the broadest number of people, **we livestream and archive our services and events for broadcast on the internet**. Your attendance at an event constitutes your consent to be included in filming, photographing, audio recording, or broadcast and for any other use in whole or in part, including promotion.

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✠AL CONGREGARSE/GATHERING

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS, YEAR A

As we gather this morning, you are invited to have an open heart and mind.

We continue praying for and supporting the people and leaders of Ukraine as conflict continues.

As we celebrate the Twelve Days of Christmas, our gospel today confronts us with the death of innocent children at the hands of Herod. The birth of Christ does not remove the power of evil from our world, but its light gives us hope as we walk with all the “holy innocents” of past generations and today who have suffered unjustly. In our gathering, God continues to redeem us, lift us up, and carry us into this new year, as in days of old.

GATHERING & GATHERING MUSIC

BIENVENIDO A ADORAR/WELCOME TO WORSHIP

If this is one of your first times to connect with FELC, WELCOME!

www.felcaustin.org/forms/visitors

OPENING DIALOGUE

O Lord, open our lips,

and our mouths shall proclaim your praise.

O God, make speed to save us.

Make haste to help us, O Lord.

Glory to the Father, ✠ and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit:

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Give glory to God, our light and our life.

Oh come, let us worship and praise!

We will hear and see this carol on-screen.

The introduction prepares us to sing.

The text on-screen guides our singing.

OPENING CAROL

Cold December Flies Away

Catalonian Carol
El Desembre Congelat

GREETING

Glory to God in the highest,

and peace to God's people on earth!

Beloved of God, the grace of Jesus Christ,

and the community formed in the Spirit, are with you now.

And also with you.

KYRIE

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

For peace in ourselves, for peace in the world,
for unity in the church in all its diversity,
for our congregation and all whom we connect with,
for all people of good will, and for our enemies,
for health and healing, for justice and mercy:

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

ORACIÓN DEL DIÁ/PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord God, you know that we cannot place our trust in our own powers.

As you protected the infant Jesus,

so defend us and all the needy from harm and adversity,

through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord,

who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Worship of God, in Christ, by the power of the Spirit is the center of Christian life. Through encountering God we are formed and transformed. Liturgy refers to the patters, forms, elements, words, silence, and actions through which public worship happens at this physical site and online.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 63:7-9

God does not delegate divine intervention to a messenger or angel. God's own presence brings salvation. The prophet and all who read these words join in celebrating God's gracious deeds. God trusts that God's people will not act falsely.

⁷I will recount the gracious deeds of the LORD,
the praiseworthy acts of the LORD,
because of all that the LORD has done for us,
and the great favor to the house of Israel
that he has shown them according to his mercy,
according to the abundance of his steadfast love.

⁸For he said, "Surely they are my people,
children who will not deal falsely";
and he became their savior
⁹in all their distress.

It was no messenger or angel
but his presence that saved them;
in his love and in his pity he redeemed them;
he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

God communicates in scripture, preaching, conversation, song, prayer, silence, and action.

The psalm may be read responsively.

¹Hallelujah! Praise the LORD from the heavens;
praise God in the heights.

²**Praise the LORD, all you angels;
praise the LORD all you hosts of heaven.**

³Praise the LORD, sun and moon;
Praise the LORD, all you shining stars.

⁴**Praise the LORD heaven of heavens,
and you waters above the heavens.**

⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD,
who commanded, and they were created,
⁶**who made them stand fast forever and ever,
giving them a law that shall not pass away.**

⁷Praise the LORD from the earth,
you sea monsters and all deeps;
⁸**fire and hail, snow and fog,
tempestuous wind doing God's will;**

⁹mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars;

¹⁰**wild beasts and all cattle,
creeping things and flying birds;**

¹¹sovereigns of the earth and all peoples;
all rulers of the world;

¹²**young men and maidens,
old and young together.**

¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD,
whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.

¹⁴**The LORD has raised up strength for the people and praise for all faithful servants,
the children of Israel, a people who are near the LORD. Hallelujah!**

Through Jesus' suffering and death, the trail to eternal salvation has been blazed for us. We do not fear death, because he has conquered the power of death. Thus Christ, our merciful and faithful high priest, has the final say over the destiny of our lives.

¹⁰It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

¹¹For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, ¹²saying,

“I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters,
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.”

¹³And again,

“I will put my trust in him.”

And again,

“Here am I and the children whom God has given me.”

¹⁴Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death.

¹⁶For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham.

¹⁷Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

In a dream, Joseph is warned to flee to Egypt to protect the infant Jesus from the jealousy of Herod.

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹³Now after [the wise men] had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” ¹⁴Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, ¹⁵and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.”

¹⁶When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. ¹⁷Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

¹⁸“A voice was heard in Ramah,
wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.”

¹⁹When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, ²⁰“Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” ²¹Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. ²²But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. ²³There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazorean.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ!

REFLECTION ON THE WORD

ORACIÓN/PRAYER

Each intercession of the prayers ends with:

God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Everyone is invited to unmute Zoom as we pray together.

PADRE NUESTRO/LORD'S PRAYER

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

Padre nuestro que estás en el cielo,
santificado sea tu nombre.
Venga tu reino.
Hágase tu voluntad
en la tierra como en el cielo.

Danos hoy nuestro pan de cada día.

Perdona nuestras ofensas
como también nosotros
perdonamos a los que nos ofenden.

No nos dejes caer en tentación
y líbranos del mal.

Porque tuyo es el reino, tuyo es el
poder, y tuya es la gloria,
ahora y siempre. Amén.

✝ENVIO/SENDING

Please mute your Zoom.

ANUNCIOS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENDICIÓN/BLESSING

May the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the persistence of Mary,
the humility of Joseph,
and the peace of Christ be with you;
almighty God, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you, now and forever. **Amen.**

*We are sent with God's presence as we serve in
actions of faith, hope, and love.*

*We will hear and see this carol on-screen.
The introduction prepares us to sing.
The text on-screen guides our singing.*

SENDING CAROL

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)
Felix Mendelsohn (1809-1847)

You may unmute your Zoom.

LA PAZ/SHARING THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

We offer words of peace.

You are also invited to make a comment in the chat or to text someone.

LAS OFRENDAS

Worshippers may give online:

www.felcaustin.org/information/giving

*The offering is our response to God's grace.
Time, labor, wisdom, skill, energy, wonder, rest,
finances, resistance, prayers, protest, care, and
play all serve God's purposes.*

HOSPITALIDAD/HOSPITALITY

FELIZ NAVIDAD! FRÖHE WEIHNACHTEN! JOYEUX NOËL! NOHELI NZIZA! EEDOOKH BREEKHA!

The people, congregation council, child development center board and families, & staff of First English Lutheran Church wish each person a merry Christmas & happy New Year!

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 Michael 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 offer an Epiphany house blessing, email Pastor Coffey (pastor@felcaustin.org) to request being added to the list.

Blessings are performed outside at the front door, and you don't have to be home.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

Christmas is the 12 day season that began at the vigil of Christmas. We celebrate the mystery of the incarnation, the embodiment of God's Word in human life – in the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. More than that, through God's grace in Christ, we celebrate that God's love, justice, and mercy dwells in us and through us in the world.

Saint Stephen, Deacon and Martyr—December 26

Stephen was a deacon and the first martyr of the church. He was one of those seven upon whom the apostles laid hands after they had been chosen to serve widows and others in need. Later, Stephen's preaching angered the temple authorities, and they ordered him to die by stoning.

Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist—December 27

The son of Zebedee and brother of James, John was one of the twelve disciples and witness to the transfiguration. Tradition has named him also the writer of the Gospel of John, the three letters of Christian scripture bearing his name, as well as Revelation.

The Holy Innocents, Martyrs—December 28

This day commemorates the young children killed by Herod in Bethlehem in his jealous attempt to murder the baby Jesus, a sobering reminder of the evil that led Christ to be born for our salvation.

Name of Jesus—January 1

By Jewish law, every baby boy was circumcised and named on the eighth day of life, so on the eighth day of Christmas the church celebrates this event in Jesus' life. The keeping of the covenant as well as Jesus' name are signs of God's salvation given to us through him.

Johann Konrad Wilhelm Loehe, renewer of the church, died 1872—January 2

A nineteenth-century German Lutheran pastor, Loehe worked to enliven the church with the eucharist at its center, from which would flow evangelism and social ministry. He sent pastors to North America, Australia, New Guinea, Brazil, and the Ukraine.

HOLIDAY HOURS

The church office and child development center are closed and will open again on January 3, 2023.

If you have an immediate need, please call the church office and leave a voice message for Bryan Rust or Pastor Coffey.

GOSPEL MESSAGE

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

Necessary Truths

This tragic account in Matthew's gospel today comes as a bleak and jarring interruption in this season of joy. It is a hard text to hear and a hard text to preach. And yet this text speaks truths that we would do well to hear, in this and all seasons.

This story of terror also invites us to see, confront, and lament the griefs and injustices in our world, none of which take a nice, neat break for the holidays. As the holy family fled to safety, so also do current populations of refugees, migrants, and asylum-seekers flee their homelands in search of security and opportunity. As Herod rages out of insecurity and fear, so also do our government and world leaders grapple and ever go to war over questions of power, authority, and control. As the trauma of violence gives way to inconsolable loss, so also do many in our midst know the sting of deep and even debilitating grief.

This gospel account draws us beyond our own celebrations out to the persistent needs in our world. It challenges us to stand in solidarity and compassion with all who do not have the luxury of joy in this season. It gives us permission to honor the griefs and struggles that we are too often told have no place in Christmas cheer and celebration.

Howard Thurman, in his poem "The Work of Christmas," reminds his listeners that when the bustle of holiday celebrations is through, the needs of the world remain. The true work of the season is hearing the call of the vulnerable and powerless infant Christ, and going forth to attend to the needs of our neighbors and to work toward a world of peace and provision that is truly good news for all people.

GROW IN SERVICE, WORSHIP, FORMATION, & CARE

To learn about our faith community, greet one another and visit our webpage. You'll find information about our weekly updates and emails, online connections, racial justice action, adult and children's formation, our Child Development Center, our serving, locally and globally. God loves. We love. Everyone!

Webpage	http://www.felcaustin.org/ updates and news about ministry & mission
YouTube, Facebook, & Twitter	YouTube: First English Austin Facebook: FELCAustin Twitter: @FELCAustin
Communications Sign-Up	Subscribe on our website to our weekly email news, praying, & other updates https://www.felcaustin.org/news/communications-sign-up
Online Giving	Offer your stewardship in multiple ways: www.felcaustin.org/giving
ELCA	https://www.elca.org/ learn about our ecumenical, interfaith, & global mission
Disaster Response	www.elca.org / —800-638-3522 give directly to Lutheran Disaster Response
Immigration & Refugee Services	https://www.lirs.org & https://www.casamarianella.org/ for advocacy & donation

PRAYER LIST: REQUESTS FOR PERSONS & FAMILIES

12/29/2022

We pray for:

the citizens, immigrants, and refugees, and the national, state, and local leaders of the United States;
the people of Ukraine and of Russia; for all conflicts and places of gun violence, worldwide;
God's guidance for our congregation and community as we begin a pastoral transition;
all in need of healing, including those recovering from Covid-19;
healing for Cecily, colleague of Nancy Baden, diagnosed with Leukemia and in treatment;
all traveling in these days, near and far.

We welcome your prayer requests for needs and thanksgivings for yourself, individuals, families, and situations.

Please submit prayer requests for the FELC prayer list online: <https://www.felcaustin.org/forms/prayer-request>

The FELC Prayer Circle gathers faithfully to pray. If you desire prayers offered (including confidentially) for you, your loved ones, needs and thanksgivings, our faith community, the church, the world contact Teresa at ttbhip@gmail.com

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Gwen Flory

Todd Jermstad

Mary Lou Larson

Teresa Ringness

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GOD LOVES. WE LOVE.
Everyone!
DIOS AMA. AMAMOS.
Todos!

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a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—a sanctuary church body in the United States