



# CELEBRATE ADVENT, CHRISTMAS, & EPIPHANY

**Sundays in Advent | December 14, 21 | 10:00 am**

*Onsite & YouTube livestream. Jesus is coming!*

**Wednesdays in Advent Evening Prayer | December 10, 17 | 7 pm**

*Holden Evening Prayer by Candlelight*

*Onsite & YouTube livestream*

**Christmas Caroling | Saturday, December 13**

*We visit homebound folks to spread the joy of Christmas*

*Meet at the church at 12:45*

**Blue Christmas Winter Solstice | Sunday, December 21 | 5 pm**

*A service of quiet reflection in this holiday season*

*Onsite & YouTube livestream*

**Christmas Eve | Wednesday, December 24 | 7 pm**

*Onsite & YouTube livestream*

*Holy Communion & Candlelight | 7:00 pm*

*Prelude Music begins at 6:45 pm*

**Sunday after Christmas Lessons & Carols | December 28 | 10 am**

*Onsite & YouTube livestream*

*Worship together with scripture, poetry, and music for Christmas*

**Epiphany Sunday | January 4, 2025 | 10 am**

*Onsite & YouTube livestream*

*Epiphany Celebration Hospitality*

## First English Lutheran Church

3001 Whitis Ave, Austin, Texas | 512-478-1933

*Visit [felcaustin.org](http://felcaustin.org) to learn more about the FELC welcome, worship, community life, learning, engagement, racial justice, & reconciliation ministries.*



## HOLDEN EVENING PRAYER BY CANDLELIGHT

### Second Wednesday of Advent | December 10, 2025 – 7 pm

#### *Out of the Blue*

Evening Prayer, or Vespers, is an ancient form of daily prayer and is part of the historic Liturgy of the Hours. This was a daily prayer practice developed in religious communities that gathered at various hours throughout the day. Each of these liturgies makes use of psalms, Scripture lessons, Gospel canticles, and Prayers. They do not typically involve preaching and are separate from the eucharistic liturgy.

*For this liturgy you need an open heart, an individual candle, this worship bulletin, and Holden Evening Prayer.*

### Welcome to Community

*The assembly may stand at the sound of a singing bowl.*

### Service of Light

Procession page 2

*As you pass the light of an individual candle, tip the unlit candle.*

Evening Hymn page 3

Evening Thanksgiving page 4



*The assembly is seated. The assembly may keep individual candles lit as long as desired.*

### Psalmody, Readings, & Canticles

Psalm 141 pages 4—7

Silence for Meditation page 8

Psalm Prayer

Song “Comfort, Comfort Now My People” | ELW 256

Lesson 2 Samuel 11:2-27a

Response page 8

*The assembly may stand.*

The Annunciation page 8

The Magnificat pages 8—9

*The assembly may kneel, as able.*

### Litany & Prayers

pages 10—11

*The assembly may stand.*

Final Blessing page 12

Sharing the Peace

*The assembly may greet each other with signs of peace as you depart this evening. Please return the Holden Evening Prayer booklets and individual candles to a welcome table for future use.*

Leader: Shannon Aguirre    Letor: Betsy Appleton

# Second Wednesday in Advent | December 10, 2025

Theme, Scripture Lesson, Reflection Questions

**Theme:** God forges redemption in the surprising mess of resurrection.

**Scripture Lesson:** 2 Samuel 11:2-27a

**Content notification:** This week’s scripture reading deals with Bathsheba’s sexual assault, David’s murder of her spouse, and the death of an infant. These themes may be difficult for worshipers, so you may need to choose your participation accordingly.

<sup>2</sup> It happened, late one afternoon when David rose from his couch and was walking about on the roof of the king’s house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; the woman was very beautiful. <sup>3</sup> David sent someone to inquire about the woman. It was reported, “This is Bathsheba daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite.” <sup>4</sup> So David sent messengers to get her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she was purifying herself after her period.) Then she returned to her house. <sup>5</sup> The woman conceived, and she sent and told David, “I am pregnant.” <sup>6</sup> So David sent word to Joab, “Send me Uriah the Hittite.” And Joab sent Uriah to David. <sup>7</sup> When Uriah came to him, David asked how Joab and the people fared and how the war was going. <sup>8</sup> Then David said to Uriah, “Go down to your house and wash your feet.” Uriah went out of the king’s house, and there followed him a present from the king. <sup>9</sup> But Uriah slept at the entrance of the king’s house with all the servants of his lord and did not go down to his house. <sup>10</sup> When they told David, “Uriah did not go down to his house,” David said to Uriah, “You have just come from a journey. Why did you not go down to your house?” <sup>11</sup> Uriah said to David, “The ark and Israel and Judah remain in booths,<sup>[a]</sup> and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field; shall I then go to my house to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? As you live and as your soul lives, I will not do such a thing.” <sup>12</sup> Then David said to Uriah, “Remain here today also, and tomorrow I will send you back.” So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day. On the next day,<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>13</sup> David invited him to eat and drink in his presence and made him drunk, and in the evening he went out to lie on his couch with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house. <sup>14</sup> In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah. <sup>15</sup> In the letter he wrote, “Set Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, and then draw back from him, so that he may be struck down and die.” <sup>16</sup> As Joab kept watch over the city, he assigned Uriah to the place where he knew there were valiant warriors. <sup>17</sup> The men of the city came out and fought with Joab, and some of the servants of David among the people fell. Uriah the Hittite was killed as well. <sup>18</sup> Then Joab sent and told David all the news about the fighting, <sup>19</sup> and he instructed the messenger, “When you have finished telling the king all the news about the fighting,



<sup>20</sup> if the king’s anger rises and if he says to you, ‘Why did you go so near the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall?’ <sup>21</sup> Who killed Abimelech son of Jerubbaal?<sup>[c]</sup> Did not a woman throw an upper millstone on him from the wall, so that he died at Thebez? Why did you go so near the wall?’ then you shall say, ‘Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead, too.’ ” <sup>22</sup> So the messenger went and came and told David all that Joab had sent him to tell. <sup>23</sup> The messenger said to David, “The men gained an advantage over us and came out against us in the field, but we drove them back to the entrance of the gate. <sup>24</sup> Then the archers shot at your servants from the wall; some of the king’s servants are dead, and your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.” <sup>25</sup> David said to the messenger, “Thus you shall say to Joab, ‘Do not let this matter trouble you, for the sword devours now one and now another; press your attack on the city and overthrow it.’ And encourage him.” <sup>26</sup> When the wife of Uriah heard that her husband was dead, she made lamentation for him. <sup>27</sup> When the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son.

## Reflection questions:

- \* The author of Matthew made sure to include Bathsheba in Jesus’ family tree despite the complexity of her story. Who are the people who we tend to leave out of our own histories, as a community or as individuals? How can we reclaim them?
- \* Nicholas of Myra gave from his own good fortune to help those who had no other recourse. Who are the people with no recourse in our communities today? How is God calling us to accompany them?
- \* What conditions do we put on our own charity, and how do they risk harming others?

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