

St. Matthew 11:4

And Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you see and hear: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Good News preached to them."



**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH**

## THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 14, 2025

Prelude

\*The Processional Hymn *The First Noel* (ELW) No. 300

\*The Confession and Forgiveness (ELW) page 94

P: In the name of the Father, and of the †Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

P: God of all mercy....of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C: Amen.**

P: Most merciful God,

**C: We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. 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. 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: In the mercy of almighty God,.....in the name of the Father, and of the †Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

\*The Apostolic Greeting (ELW) page 138

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

\*The Kyrie (*sung response*) (ELW) page 138

P: ....., let us pray to the Lord.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

P: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**C: Amen.**

\*The Hymn of Praise *Be Thou My Vision* (ELW) No. 793

\*The Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray

**C: Lord Jesus Christ, give ear to our prayers, and lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

First Reading

Isaiah 35:1-10

(After the Old Testament Lesson is announced, Cristina and Andrew Serbak will light the first three candles on the Advent Wreath as the congregation sings verse 1, 2 & 3 of Hymn No. 240.)

L: The Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

The Psalmody for the Day *(read responsively)*

Psalm 146

<sup>1</sup>Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul!

**<sup>2</sup>I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.**

<sup>3</sup>Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation.

**<sup>4</sup>When his breath departs, he returns to the earth; on that very day his plans perish.**

<sup>5</sup>Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God,

**<sup>6</sup>who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, who keeps faith forever;**

<sup>7</sup>who executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets the prisoners free;

**<sup>8</sup>the LORD opens the eyes of the blind. The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.**

<sup>9</sup>The LORD watches over the sojourners; He upholds the widow and the fatherless, but the way of the wicked He brings to ruin.

**<sup>10</sup>The LORD will reign forever, your God, O Zion, to all generations. Praise the LORD!**

L: The Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

\*The Gospel Acclamation (*sung*)

(ELW) page 142

**C: Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia. Alleluia.**

\* The Gospel

Matthew 11:2-15

**C: Glory to You, O Lord.** (sung after announcement of the Gospel)

**C: Praise to You, O Christ.** (sung after conclusion of the Gospel)

Children's Sermon

Pastor Grewe

(children leave for Sunday School)

Sermon

Rev. Robert B. Grewe

\*The Hymn of the Day

*Prepare the Royal Highway*

(ELW) No. 264

\*The Nicene Creed

**I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through Him all things were made. For us and for our salvation He came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit He became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate; He suffered death and was buried. On the third day He rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son He is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets.**

**I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen**

\*The Prayers of the Church (response)

P: Lord, in Your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

\*Sharing of the Peace

The Musical Offering

\*The Offertory

*Create in Me a Clean Heart*

(SBH) No. 27

\*The Lord's Prayer

**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.**

Announcements

\*The Benediction (*sung response*)

**C: Amen, Amen, Amen.**

\*The Recessional Hymn

*Away in a Manger*

(ELW) No. 277

\*The Dismissal (*response*)

**C: Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to  
 2 They look - ed up and saw . . a star shin - ing  
 3 And by the light of that . . same star three . .  
 4 This star drew near to the . . north - west, o'er . .  
 5 Then en - tered in those wise . . men three, full . .

cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where  
 in . . . the east . . be - yond . . them far; and to the  
 wise . . men came . . from coun - try far; to seek for a  
 Beth - le - hem . . it took . . its rest; and there it  
 rev - 'rent - ly . . . up - on . . . their knee, and of - fered

they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's  
 earth it gave . . . great light, and . . so it con -  
 king was their . . . in - tent, and to fol - low the  
 did both stop . . . and stay right . . o - ver the  
 there in his . . . pres - ence their . . gold, . . . and

*Refrain*

night that was so deep.  
 tin-ued both day and night.  
 star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -  
 place where Je - sus lay.  
 myrrh, and frank - in - cense.

el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;  
 2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;  
 3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,  
 4 Light of my soul, af - ter vic - to - ry won,

naught be all else to me, save that thou art:  
 I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord.  
 thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:  
 may I reach heav - en's joys, O heav - en's Sun!

thou my best thought both by day and by night,  
 Thou my soul's shel - ter and thou my high tow'r,  
 thou and thou on - ly the first in my heart,  
 Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,

wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.  
 raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.  
 great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.  
 still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

# Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah 240



- 1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.  
He shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.  
Lift your heads and lift high the gate-way for the King of glo - ry.  
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

## Prepare the Royal Highway

1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!  
 2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!  
 3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!  
 4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.

Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!  
 Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!  
 Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.  
 His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.

Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:  
 God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!  
 All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:  
 So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:

*Refrain*

Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

# The Communion

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God: and re -

The first system of musical notation consists of a treble and bass staff in G minor (one flat). The melody is primarily composed of eighth and quarter notes, with some rests. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff.

new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff.

way from thy pres - ence: and take not thy Ho - ly

The third system continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff.

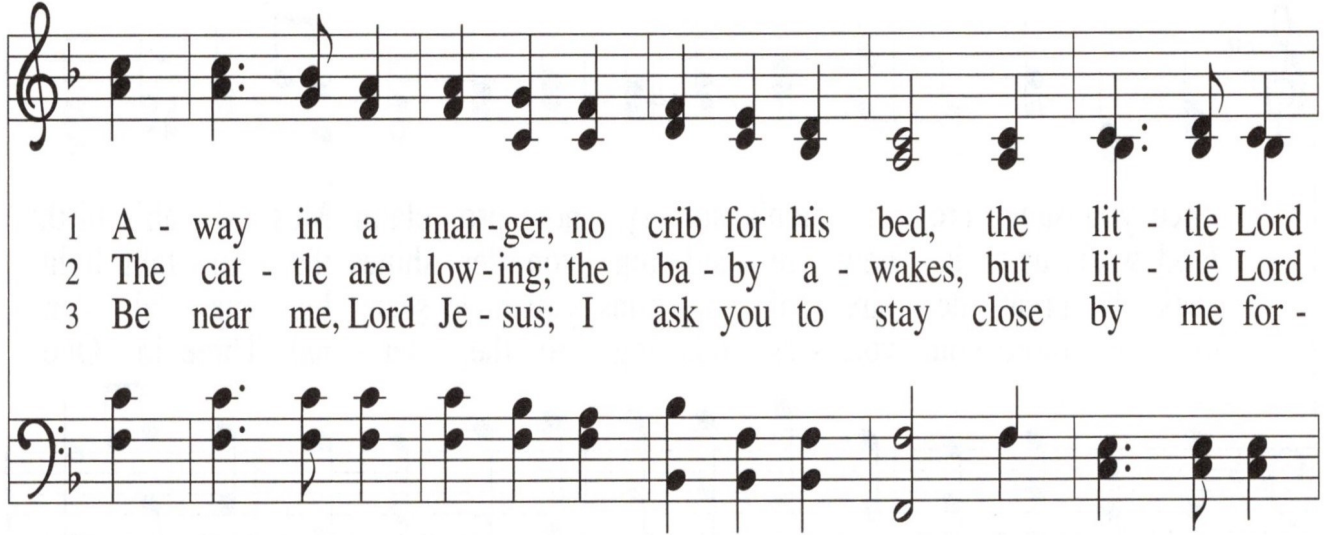
Spir - it from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of

The fourth system continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff.

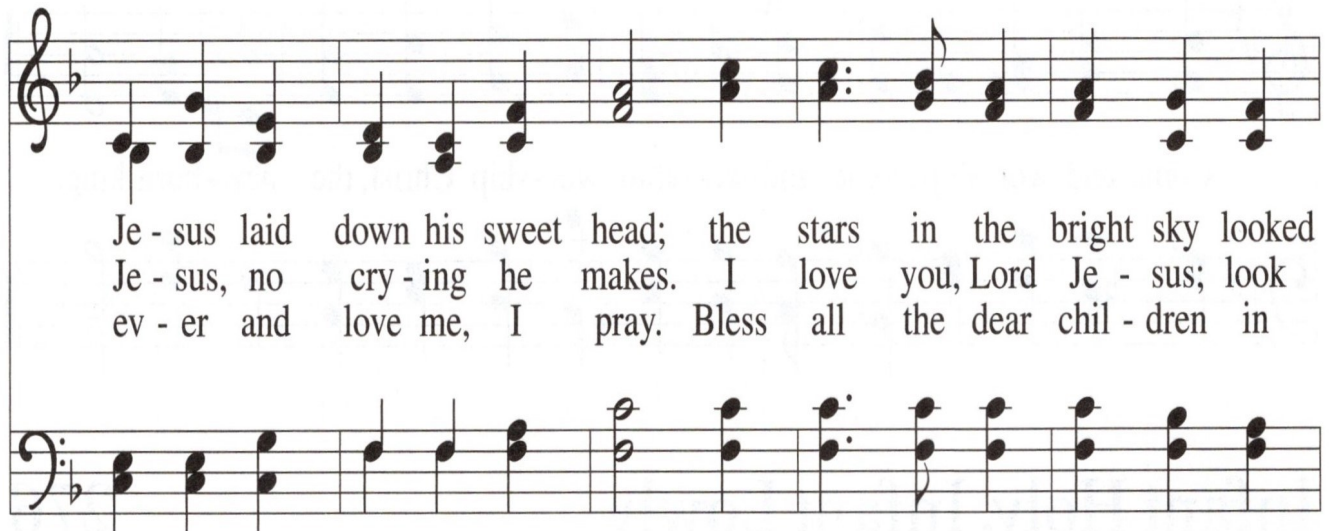
thy sal - va - tion: and up - hold me with thy free Spir - it.

The fifth system concludes the piece with a final cadence. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff.

## Away in a Manger



1 A - way in a man-ger, no crib for his bed, the lit - tle Lord  
 2 The cat - tle are low-ing; the ba - by a - wakes, but lit - tle Lord  
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay close by me for -



Je - sus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked  
 Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes. I love you, Lord Je - sus; look  
 ev - er and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil - dren in



down where he lay, the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.  
 down from the sky and stay by my cra - dle till morn-ing is nigh.  
 your ten - der care and fit us for heav-en, to live with you there.

## First Lutheran Church

92 W. Walnut St., Washington, PA

724-225-4040

e-mail: secretary@flcwash.church

Online services posted weekly on website:

<https://firstlutheranwashington.church/>

The Rev. Robert B. Grewe

724-705-4050

revrob@flcwash.church

Dennis Schmidt, Lutheran Lay Worship Leader

Mark Black, Lutheran Lay Worship Leader

Matthew Cimino, Organist and Music Director

---

**The Flowers on the Chancel** are given to the glory of God by Chris and Lisa Maust. May God's inspiring word bring peace, comfort and salvation to the ears that hear His infallible truth! We happily donate to the Restoration Fund in lieu of natural flowers.

**The Lay Reader** is Dennis Schmidt.

**Acolytes** are Jacin and Trevor Flowers.

**Counters/Greeters** today are L. Coleman and R. Williams.

**Welcome to our Visitors!** The people of this congregation welcome you as you join us in worship this morning. Please sign the register, located in the narthex. If you have questions, please see the pastor or contact the church office.

**Do you wish to become a member of First Lutheran Church?** Please contact Pastor Grewe.

**Nursery:** We welcome all children to be a part of worship, but we realize that sometimes the service can be too long for the little ones. We have a nursery for those attending to the needs of infants and small children. There is a speaker in the nursery so that parents can still hear the service. You are welcome to use the nursery for the entire service, or just a small part.

**The Flower Chart for 2026** is posted in the narthex. If you wish to place flowers, (real or artificial) near the altar, sign your name opposite the date of your choice. You will be reminded of your date and asked for the wording you want in the bulletin two weeks before the due date.

**Sign-up sheets are posted to host a coffee hour in 2026.** Please write your names under the month you would like to host. The coffee hours have been a wonderful time of fellowship and the hosts have been awesome! Thank you!!

**Sign-up sheets are posted for Lay Readers in 2026.** Please sign up.

---

***Please pray for those in need of healing:***

Isaac Christian, Lindsay Mankey, Amy Verderber, Lou Mayne, Greg Mason, Ed Dupas, Pat Dupas, Carol Cancelmi, Amanda Laib, Sandy Hebrank, Richard Hager, Judd Lacko, Sandy Mannsman, Ian, Isaiah, Aleashia, Sharon, Tammy, Edelgard, Wolfgang, Klaus & Mel, Bernadette, Bob and Anneleise Christian, Carl Group, Shari Kienzel, Susan Westott, Amber Falosk, Appolos Yocca, Brenda Tennant, Darlene Kosak, Gary Conti, June Gosnell, Sally Hazlett, and Erin Reel.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

PA Mental health support and referral line

1-855-284-2494

WASHINGTON, PA BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS LINE

1-877-225-3567

WASHINGTON COUNTY BHDS LINE

724-228-6832

SCOTT BERRY DIRECT LINE

724-250-4079 (FOR CHURCH MEMBERS ONLY)

FOR OTHER NEEDS, CONTACT 211 OR THE CHURCH.

---

Sober House Living

724-228-2203

Turning Point at Washington

---

**Dec. 17-Midweek Advent service at 7 PM.**

# Listening for the Promise

## Weekly Devotional

Third Sunday in Advent – December 14, 2025

*“<sup>7</sup>Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. <sup>8</sup>You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.”*  
James 5:7-8 -

Back in 2006 there was a survey done on more than 1,000 adults. The survey revealed that most people take an average of 17 minutes to lose their patience while waiting in line. Additionally, most people lose their patience in only 9 minutes while on hold on the phone. Impatience appears to be a common trait among us human beings. Well, it turns out that not much has changed about humans over the years.

The early church struggled with waiting. Jesus said he would come again, and so, the early church expected that to happen at any moment. But as the weeks and months and even years went by, they became frustrated and confused. This is the group of believers to whom James was writing his letter. These believers were living in distressing times. Not only did they become impatient with God, but they also became impatient with one another. And so, James does his best to encourage them.

James called them to be like a farmer. The farmer waits patiently for the rain to come. If the crop needs water, the farmer can't make it rain. He must wait patiently for God to provide the rain on crop. In the same way, the farmer can't make his crop produce good fruit for the harvest. Again, the farmer must wait patiently for God to provide the fruit for the harvest. The same is true for the life a Christian.

We strive to make disciples; we invite people to worship, Sunday School, church activities. We think we've made a connection with someone and surely, they will show up for worship on Sunday. But they don't. So we try again. And we get frustrated and impatient because all these seeds that we've so diligently tried to plant don't seem to be producing anything. But that's where we must be like the farmer, who plants the seeds, and waits. We wait for God to nourish those seeds. We wait for God to produce fruit from those seeds. It might take years, and that's hard. Why? Because waiting is hard. We are impatient, but God calls us to be patient.

Along with the early church, James urges us to not give up. The finish line is just ahead. We can trust in his compassion and mercy and continue to live by faith.