



Thursday, December 18, 2025
Fourth Sunday of Advent

First English Lutheran Church
402 N. 3rd Ave., Wausau, Wisconsin 54401-4448
715-842-5727

<https://www.firstenglishlutheranwausau.org>

A Congregation of The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Pastor: Reverend Mary E. Zupansic
Minister of Music: Daniel Larson
Pianist: Hal Osborn
Parish Administrator: Debra Kluetz

WELCOME TO FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH

Whether you are joining us in person or online, we are blessed to have you worshipping with us today. We pray that our time of worship together further encourages and strengthens our call to discipleship.

If you are a visitor, please fill out the neon green Visitor Card and drop and give it to an usher or greeter. Please come to worship with us again!

Worship Leader: Pastor Mary E. Zupansic

Pianist: Hal Osborn Lector: Maralee Moellendorf

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

Today Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. The gospel is Matthew's account of the annunciation and birth of the one named Emmanuel, God-with-us. During these final days of Advent we pray, "O come, O come, Emmanuel," a beloved hymn based on the O Antiphons, ancient prayers appointed for the seven days preceding Christmas. On this final Sunday of Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
whose home is heaven and earth,
whose salvation is sure.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God
and of one another.

(pause)

Long-expected God,
we confess that we look to ourselves
for the peace and security only you can provide.
We reach for swords and spears,
reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.
We become impatient while waiting
and weary of keeping awake.
Free us from self-reliance,
and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.
Increase our trust in God's timing,
and awaken us to your advent among us,
that we may abound in the hope you have promised.
Amen.

God judges us not as we deserve,
 but according to God's own righteousness.

✠ You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace,
 and ready to welcome the Savior. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG

People, Look East

ELW #248



1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing
 2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is
 3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the
 4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new



of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,
 plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,
 bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,
 life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming



trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look
that in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look
bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look
with the word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look



east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881–1965

Music: BESANÇON, French carol

Text © Miss E. Farjeon Will Trust, by permission of David Higham Associates.

GREETING

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

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might,
free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your
promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now
and forever.

Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 7:10-16

A reading from Isaiah.

¹⁰ The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹ “Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹² But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.” ¹³ Then Isaiah said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.”

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

¹ Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

² **In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and come to help us.**

³ Restore us, O God;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

⁴ **O LORD God of hosts,
how long will your anger fume when your people pray?**

⁵ You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

⁶ **You have made us the derision of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**

⁷ Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

¹⁷ **Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one you have made so strong for yourself.**

¹⁸ And so will we never turn away from you;
give us life, that we may call upon your name.

¹⁹ **Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.**

SECOND READING: Romans 1:1-7

A reading from Romans

¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³ the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, ⁶ including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

⁷ To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18-25

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ “Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,”
which means, “God is with us.” ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the
angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ²⁵ but had no marital
relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

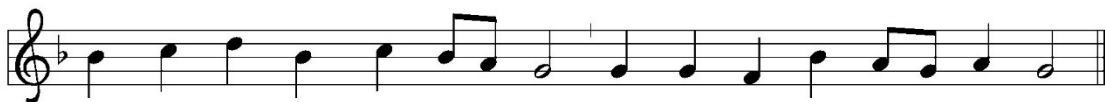
Pastor Mary E. Zupansic

HYMN OF THE DAY *Savior of the Nations, Come*

ELW #263



- 1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come; vir - gin's son, make here your home.
- 2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, but the mys - tic Breath of God,
- 3 Won - drous birth—oh, won - drous child—from his throne, a vir - gin mild!
- 4 From God's heart the Sav - ior speeds, back to God his path - way leads;



Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth: God has cho - sen such a birth.
was the Word of God made flesh, fruit of wom - an, blos - som fresh.
Ver - y God, and Mar - y's son, ea - ger now his race to run!
out to van - quish death's com - mand, back to reign at God's right hand.

5 Now your manger, shining bright,
hallows night with newborn light.
Night cannot this light subdue;
let our faith shine ever new.

6 Praise we sing to Christ the Lord,
virgin's son, incarnate Word!
To the holy Trinity
praise we sing eternally!

Text: attr. Ambrose of Milan, 340–397; Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. hymnal version
Music: NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND, J. Walter, *Geistliche Gesangbüchlein*, 1524
Text © 2006 Augsburg Fortress

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was
conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was
buried; he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and
he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the
holy catholic church, the
communion of saints, the
forgiveness of sins, the
resurrection of the body, and
the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting
your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

Each petition ends with the following response.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

... Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your
mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Nourishing God,

you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert.

Through this meal, satisfy our parched places,

that we may rejoice and be for the world

signs of your kingdom come. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

In the night in which he was betrayed,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,

shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Here is life. God is with us.

Come, receive what God has promised.

Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION: Instrumental Interlude

TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

God our host,

at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness.

Send us forth, eager to share the feast,

welcome the stranger,

and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

May God who comes among us,

Father, ✚ Son, and Holy Spirit,

grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness,

and good news to share today and always.

Amen.

To - da la tie - rra es - pe - ra, al Sal - va - dor
 1 All earth is hope - ful, the Sav - ior comes at last!
 2 Peo - ple of Is - rael, you heard the proph - et tell;
 3 Moun - tains and val - leys will have to be pre - pared;
 4 We first saw Je - sus a ba - by in a crib.

y, el sur - co, a - bier - to, la ob - ra del Se - ñor; es el
 Fur - rows lie o - pen for God's cre - a - tive task; this, the
 "A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em - man - u - el"; she con -
 new high - ways o - pened, new pro - to - cols de - clared. Al - most
 This same Lord Je - sus to - day has come to live in our

mun - do que lu - cha por la li - ber - tad, re -
 la - bor of peo - ple who strug - gle to see how
 ceived him, "God with us," our broth - er, whose birth re -
 here! God is near - ing, in beau - ty and grace! All
 world; he is pres - ent, in neigh - bors we see our

cla - ma jus - ti - cia y bus - ca la ver - dad, dar - nos li - ber - tad.
 God's truth and jus - tice set ev - 'ry - bod - y free.
 stores hope and cour - age to chil - dren of this earth.
 clear ev - 'ry gate - way, in haste, come out in haste!
 Je - sus is with us, and ev - er sets us free.

Text: Alberto Taulé, b. 1932; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946

Music: Alberto Taulé

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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PASTORAL CARE

If you would like a visit from Pastor Mary, or if you have a pastoral emergency, please call Pastor on her cell phone 920-671-4338.

NEW OFFICE EMAILS

Pastor Mary: pastor@firstenglishlutheranwausau.org

Deb: parishadmin@firstenglishlutheranwausau.org

These are now working emails. Please send all correspondence to these addresses.

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

Thursday, Dec. 11: 22

Sunday, Dec. 14: 105 You Tube Views: 109

SUNDAY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE Sunday, December 14:

AN OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE

Our annual Advent Hunger Offering will be received during the month of December.

The need for such an offering remains so important.

The special Hunger Appeal offering envelopes are available on the narthex tables.

Let your gratitude and love flow freely during this season of giving with an extra gift to ELCA World Hunger. You may place your gifts in the offering plate on Sunday morning or Thursday evening. Thank you for caring and sharing!

YOUTUBE

First English is now on our previous YouTube channel. Go to the **YouTube Channel**. In the search space, put **first english wausau**. Then click on **First English Wausau**. You will then have access to our live-streaming for Sunday worship and special services. If you have any questions, feel free to call the office.

FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH CANCELLATION POLICY

If cancellation of FELC worship service is necessary because of inclement weather, please check the following sources for notice of the closing:

WSAW Channel 7

WAOW Channel 9

First English Lutheran Church Facebook Page

First English Lutheran Church Congregation Email

Every effort will be made to communicate worship service cancellation to you by the above listed communication tools. In case something prevents those communications from reaching you and there are poor weather conditions, please prioritize your safety and stay home.

If the schools are closed due to poor weather conditions, the First English Lutheran Church office will also be closed and scheduled events cancelled.

FREE LITTLE PANTRY

The Food Pantry Transition Team is looking for a willing woodworker who would build a Free Little Pantry for First English to provide food for our neighborhood friends in need of assistance.

A materials list, diagrams, and specific directions will be provided. In addition, the FELC Council will purchase and provide the needed materials. Please contact the church office if you are able to help us make this neighborhood outreach a reality.

ADDRESS / PHONE NUMBER CHANGES

Here is a request...if you have an address change or a phone number change please let Deb know in the office so our records can stay current. Thank you!

TREASURE SALE NEWS...

Items for next year's Treasure Sale are coming in on a regular basis. We are accepting clean clothes in good condition, housewares, collectibles, books, linens, DVDs, CDs, and more. If donating linens, please mark them with what size they are. This is very helpful.

We will accept small appliances in working condition, and furniture. Your donations can be brought downstairs in the hallway by the Sunday School rooms. There is a sign on the door. Thank you so much for your donations!

FIRST ENGLISH IS ON INSTAGRAM

First English now has an Instagram social media page to help spread the word about all of the wonderful things our church is doing. If you are on Instagram, be sure to follow "firstenglishwausau." You'll see the same photos/posts that appear on our Facebook page. If you have any news and photos to share on our Instagram, Facebook, or web site, please email kmpempek@gmail.com or sue.juedes@gmail.com.

PEEK AT THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 21-28, 2025

Sunday, Dec. 21:	9:00 a.m. Worship
	10:15 a.m. Sunday School
	3:00 p.m. Christmas Meditation
Wednesday, Dec. 24:	4:00 & 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship
Thursday, Dec. 25:	No Worship on Christmas Day
Friday, Dec. 26:	6:30 p.m. NA Meeting
Sunday, Dec. 28:	9:00 a.m. Worship

LET US REMEMBER IN PRAYER...

John Otto

Karl Otto

Linda Kittel

Judy Beemer (*sister of Roger DeWitt*)

Ron Wiese (*friend of the DeWitt family*)

John (family of Klapperich and Wynn)

Melinda (*sister of Matt Heyne*)

John & Pat Alters (*parents of John & Mike*)

Diane (*Aunt to Angela Greenfield & Jarek Nelson*)

Heidi Olson (*daughter of Duane & Darlene Chapman*)

Janet Alters (*Family member of Mike & Joan, Jack & Kim, Erin, Spencer and Ella*)

Tracey (*friend of Sheri Fochs*)

Homebound / Assisted Lived: Kathie Peterson (*Primrose*), Dolores Hintz (*Sylvan Crossings*), Sue McKee (*Rennes in Weston*), Diane Zuelke (*Mountain Terrace*), Michelle Detert (*Cady Home*), Ila Barttelt (*Rennes*), Joyce Utecht (*Rennes*), Gary Klingbeil (*Wood Aven*), Rick Petzke (*Crossroads Care Center in Weyauwega*)
Dennis & Laurayne Nicoliasen (*Rennes*) Geraldine Hopperdietzel (*Wood Aven*)
Audrey Fellbaum
Delphine Saeger

Daily Prayers Offered for: Bishops Anne Edison-Albright (*East Central Synod*) and Yehiel Curry (*Presiding Bishop of the ELCA*), and all those who work in the East Central Synod Office; ShyAnn and Peter Egwalata (*in Uganda*)

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

John of the Cross, renewer of the church, died 1591

Sunday, December 14, 2025

John was a member of the Carmelite monastic order, and worked to reform it. His writings reflect a deep interest in mystical thought and meditation.

Katharina von Bora Luther, renewer of the church, died 1552

Saturday, December 20, 2025 Born to an impoverished nobleman, Katie eventually took vows as a nun, but around age twenty-four she and several other nuns who were influenced by the writings of Martin Luther left the convent. Six children were born to Katie and Martin.

