



*With the birth of Jesus in our hearts
We carry light and love to the world.*

*Sunday, December 28, 2025
The Day of the Holy Innocents, Martyrs*



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

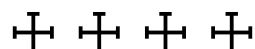


OUR VALUES STATEMENT: We recognize that we are not here by chance but are gathered together to be the church of God in Christ.

We recognize that God is making us, through grace, into a fellowship that embodies and expresses the spirit of Christ.

In this fellowship there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female, for all of us are one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28). Therefore, we welcome all people, regardless of religious office, position, possessions, education, race, age, gender expression or identity, sexual orientation, mental ability, physical ability or other distinctions; and work to promote anti-racism. (Adopted 4/6/25)

VISION STATEMENT: Working as a supportive family of faith to extend God's gracious welcome through worship, community service, and spiritual growth opportunities.



The Liturgy is from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.

Are you hearing impaired? If you are having difficulty hearing our worship service, try using our Assisted Hearing System, which is available from an usher.

Today's worship service is being live-streamed beginning at 9:25am and will be replayed next Sunday at 6pm on FM radio station 102.9. The service is available to view anytime on the home page of our website: www.nlcww.org.

In-person attendance for last Sunday: 147

PLEASE MAKE SURE CELL PHONES ARE SILENCED.

CHIMES

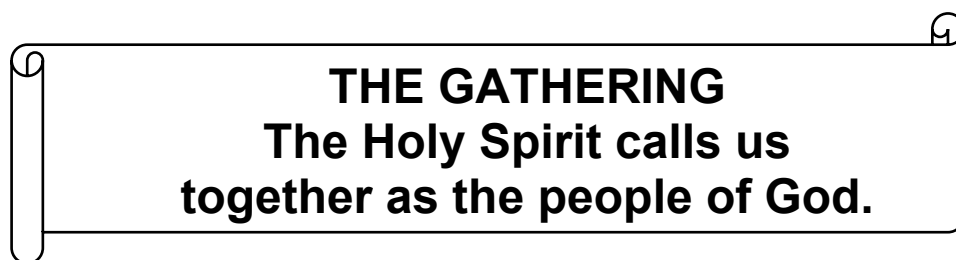
WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Phil Schroeder leads our worship today and is our preacher. He is a retired Lutheran pastor, and with his wife Sharon, are long-time members of Nativity. From 2007 to 2014 he served as an assistant to the pastor of Nativity, and earlier he served as interim pastor at a number of area congregations. Most of his ministry was in campus ministry (Denison, Ohio State, Valparaiso, Augustana). In 1996 he retired from Trinity Lutheran Church, in Mt. Morris, IL, and moved to Spring Hill.

PRELUDE

Once In Royal David's City

Mark Hayes



Please stand as you are able and turn toward the baptismal font.

CALL TO WORSHIP

I will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.

I declare that your steadfast love is established forever; your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.

Let the heavens praise your wonders, O Lord, your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones.

Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; steadfast love and faithfulness go before You. (Psalm 89:1-2.5.14)

Please look toward the cross as it processes toward the altar.

GATHERING HYMN

Children of the Heavenly Father

781



Tryg - ga - re kan ing - en va - ra än Guds lil - la bar - na - ska - ra,
1 Chil - dren of the heav'n-ly Fa - ther safe - ly in his bo - som gath - er;
2 God his own doth tend and nour-ish, in his ho - ly courts they flour-ish.
3 Nei - ther life nor death shall ev - er from the Lord his chil - dren sev - er;
4 Though he giv - eth or he tak - eth, God his chil - dren ne'er for - sak - eth;

stjär - nan ej på him - la - fäs - tet, få - geln ej i kän - da näs - tet.
nest - ling bird nor star in heav - en such a ref - uge e'er was giv - en.
From all e - vil things he spares them, in his might - y arms he bears them.
un - to them his grace he show - eth, and their sor - rows all he know - eth.
his the lov - ing pur - pose sole - ly to pre - serve them pure and ho - ly.

GATHERING BLESSING

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty Savior, Prince of Peace. **Amen.**

PASTORAL 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

We remember today, O God... now and forever. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

THE WORD

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

CHILDREN'S TIME

Pat Squires

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH

31:15-17

Reader: Nina Vaznelis

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



THE HOLY GOSPEL

MATTHEW 2:13-20

The holy gospel according to Matthew.
Glory to You, O Lord.

Please be seated.

SERMON

Speaking of Innocents

Pr. Phil Schroeder

Please stand.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Reconciling God, **we yearn for your presence to transform our grief, pain, and despair. We confess that we have not always prepared room in our hearts for your love; we have not always recognized your presence among us; we have not always embraced your message of peace.**

We cry out, weary with the burden of violence, oppression, and fear. We confess our failure to make room for those seeking refuge; our participation in violent systems that harm your innocent ones; our reluctance to embody your good news.


Be born in us today and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation. Amen.

God's grace upon grace flows over you. ✝ Christ's presence redeems the whole creation. Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad! **Amen.**


HYMN OF THE DAY

What Child Is This


296




1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar-y's lap is sleep-ing?
 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas-ant, king, to own him.



Whom an - gels greet with an-thems sweet while shep-herds watch are keep - ing?
 Good Chris-tian, fear; for sin-ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.
 The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en-throne him.



This, this is Christ the king, whom shep-herds guard and an - gels sing;
 Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
 Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

Please be seated.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

United with the great cloud of witnesses throughout the ages, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

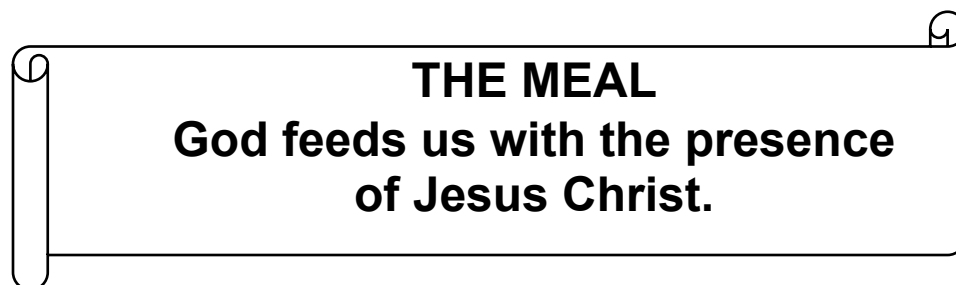
After each petition: Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

In the company of your saints we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your eternal mercy and love; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

You may offer your neighbor a sign of peace.



OFFERTORY

You may place your offering in the offering basket by the baptismal font, or bring/mail to the office during the week. You may also donate on-line at <https://www.nlcww.org>, or on our Facebook page. You may also contribute using Venmo or Zelle if you have an account or use the QR code. For more information about these methods see today's Weekly Announcement Sheet.



Assisting Minister unveils the chalice and paten.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. God of Glory, **great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior. Amen.**

Please stand as you are able.

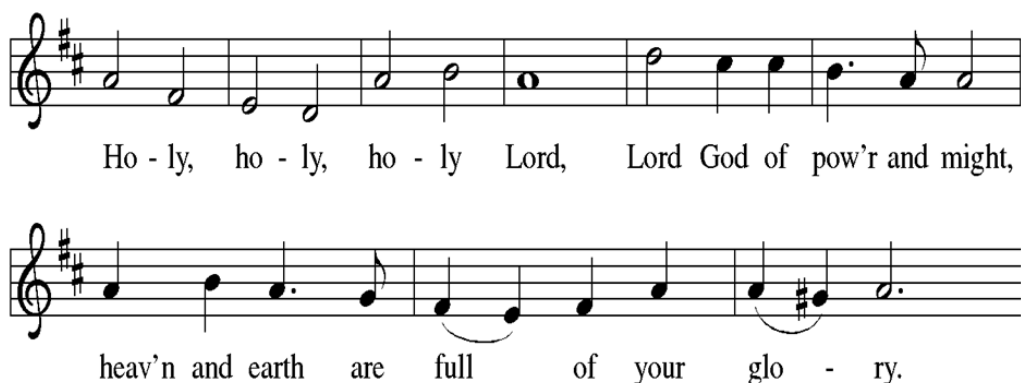
GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

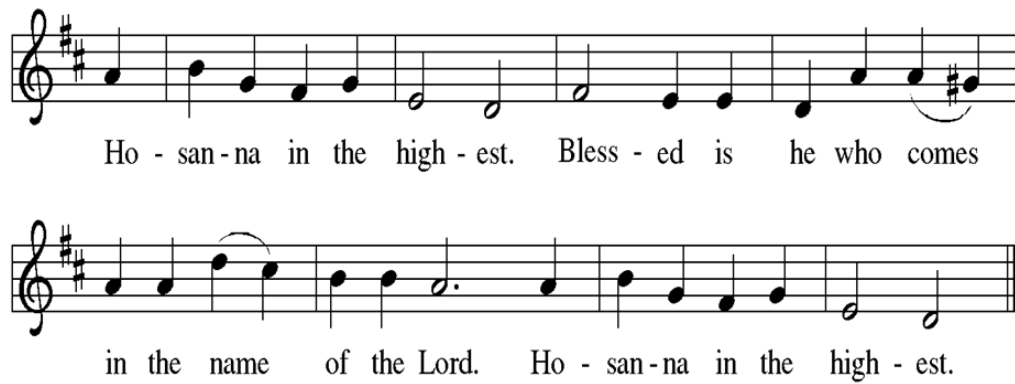
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.



Holy One, the beginning and the end, the Giver of Life:

Blessed are You for the birth of creation.
Blessed are You in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are You for your promise to your people.
Blessed are You in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are You for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are You for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

WORDS OF CONSECRATION

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming. **Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Let us pray the prayer Christ himself taught us:

THE 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

God is now in flesh appearing. Come to the feast of joy! Guests and friends of any age and background, take your place at the table!

You may be seated. Each row may come to the altar starting with the front row and progressing to the back. You may stand or kneel at the communion rail and receive bread and wine (or request a gluten free host and/or grape juice). Please let an usher know if you cannot come to the altar to receive communion. We will have communion brought to you.

Lamb of God



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the



sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMNS

272 & 282

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

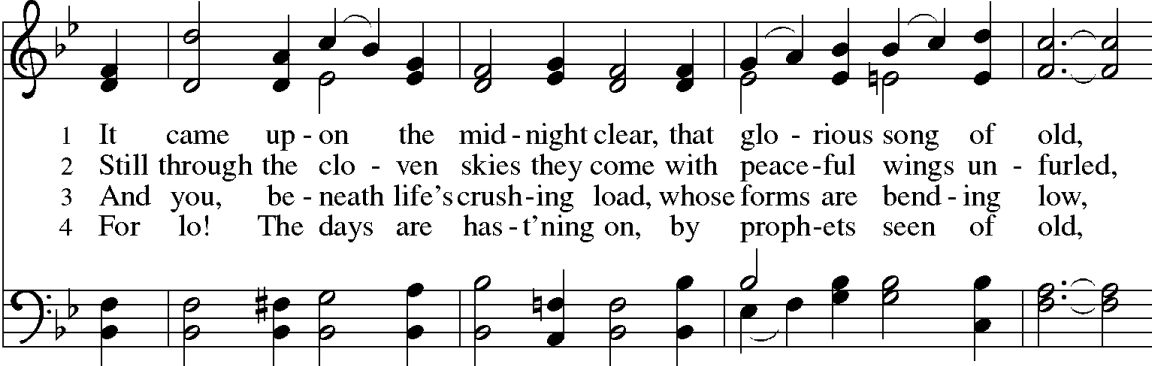
1 Lo, how a rose e'er bloom - ing from ten - der stem hath
 2 I - sai - ah had fore - told it, the rose I have in
 3 This flow'r, whose fra - grance ten - der with sweet-ness fills the
 4 O Sav - ior, child of Mar - y, who felt our hu - man

sprung! Of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing as
 mind; with Mar - y we be - hold it, the
 air, dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor the
 woe; O Sav - ior, king of glo - ry, who

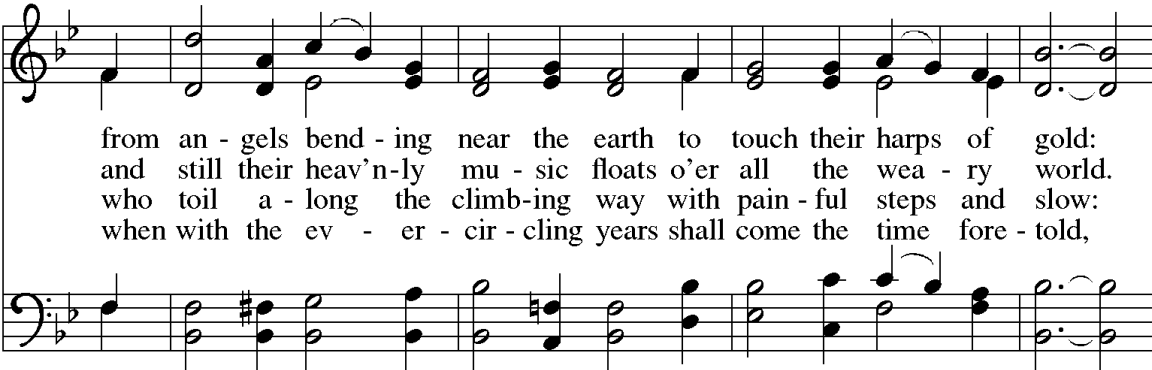
seers of old have sung, it came, a flow'r so bright, a -
 vir - gin moth - er kind. To show God's love a - right, she
 dark-ness ev - 'ry - where. True man, yet ver - y God, from
 dost our weak - ness know: bring us at length, we pray, to

mid the cold of win - ter, when half - spent was the night.
 bore to us a Sav - ior, when half - spent was the night.
 sin and death he saves us and light - ens ev - 'ry load.
 the bright courts of heav - en and in - to end - less day.

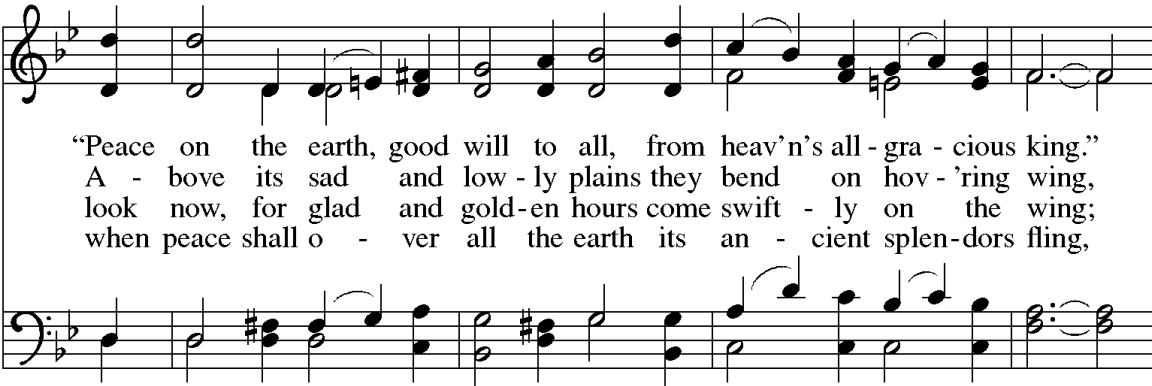
It Came upon the Midnight Clear



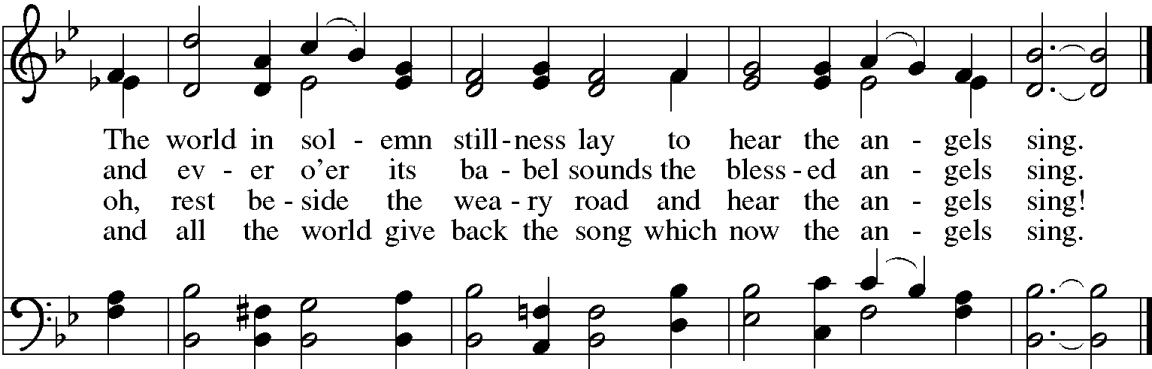
1 It came up - on the mid - night clear, that glo - rious song of old,
 2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come with peace - ful wings un - furled,
 3 And you, be - neath life's crush - ing load, whose forms are bend - ing low,
 4 For lo! The days are has - t'ning on, by proph - ets seen of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
 and still their heav'n - ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world.
 who toil a - long the climb - ing way with pain - ful steps and slow:
 when with the ev - er - cir - cling years shall come the time fore - told,



"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all - gra - cious king."
 A - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov - 'ring wing,
 look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing;
 when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen - dors fling,



The world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
 and ev - er o'er its ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.
 oh, rest be - side the wea - ry road and hear the an - gels sing!
 and all the world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.

The Assisting Minister puts away the communion trays and covers the paten and chalice.

Please stand as you are able.

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. Incarnate God, **You are among us at this table. May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence. Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us. Amen.**



BLESSING

The triune God, glorious Mystery, holy Incarnate One, abiding Comforter, ✚ bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG

Once in Royal David's City

269

1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,
 2 He came down to earth from heav-en who is God and Lord of all,
 3 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re-deem-ing love;
 4 Not in that poor low - ly sta - ble, with the ox - en stand-ing by,

where a moth-er laid her ba - by in a man - ger for his bed:
 and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall;
 for that child so dear and gen - tle is our Lord in heav'n a - bove;
 we shall see him; but in heav - en, set at God's right hand on high;

Mar - y was that moth-er mild, Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.
 with the poor and meek and low-ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
 and he leads his chil - dren on to the place where he is gone.
 there his chil - dren gath - er round, bright like stars, with glo - ry crowned.

SENDING

People of Nativity, what is our mission?

With the birth of Jesus in our hearts we carry light and love to the world.

DISMISSAL

Glory to God in the highest!

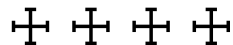
And peace to God's people on earth!

Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*

J.S. Bach



NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Jeremiah 31:7-14	Psalm 147:12-20
Ephesians 1:3-13	John 1:1-18

COFFEE HOUR – Please join us for fellowship in Winemiller Hall after today's worship service.

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

New this week:

Continue to pray for: Brian Albright, Killian Ash, Anne B, Carlos B, Eric Vincent Baez, Tracy Baker, Frani Barnes, Maria Baynon, Baynon family, Herb Baynon, Waltraut Bellmann, Betty Lou Bernhardt, Windy Binns, Robert Bonesteel, Ruth Brellenthin, Paul Todd Brown, Agnes Burkart, Canea family, Diane Cello, Stacy Christian, C.J. & Colleen, Karen Chipko, Beryl Clements, Patti Cotter, Denise Crawford, Charles Deon, Dominik Desormeaux, Judy Dietz, JoAnn Faulkner, Gavin, Jenna, & Ben Felder, Flower family, Vicki Goers, Patrick Gould, Donald Haig, Irma Haig, Terry Halgren, Carrie Hall-Tannenbaum, D. Hambaugh, June Heinecke, Gary and Mary Heinecke, Glenn Heinecke, Marilyn Henkel, Kay Hill, Sandra Hill, Barbara Hofving, Linda Hrab, Brian Johnson, Monica Jusino, Willy K, Karen family, Finn Katona and family, Candice Kochounian, Leonore Kopitzke, Stephanie Krepshaw, Mary Krol, Maggie Kull, Debra Leinenger, Donna Lucier, Bob Maday, Germaine Major, Mallory, Elaine Malone, Raina McDannold, Bradford Allen McWilliams, Beth Morris, Mark and Wayne

Musarra, Eva Mydland, Lydia Noto, Kelly Oliver, Brian Oliver, Oliver family, Michele Oliver, Zuma Perez, Lou Prettyman, Barbara Prochilo, Mary Reber, Rinehart family, Katherine Rizzo, Colleen Rocco, Rocco family, Dennis Rogers, Nancy Salzbach, John Sannuto, Carole Schaefer, Shaun, Sirmenis family, Kathy Swank, Jackie Sweet, Bob & Alice Totten, Antonio Vaznelis, Vernon, Lauren West, West family, Ginger Wielk, Howard Williams, Luke Williams, Christopher Younger, Eileen and Carol and Jason

PRAYERS FOR OUR LOVED ONES IN THE MILITARY

Nic Baker, Brandi Culpepper, Private Tony D'Angelo, Areil Dietz, Isaac Furr-Army, Maj. Matthew Henry, Colton Hill, Brandon Holt-Chief Warrant Officer 3, Andria T. Hook, Jonathan Hudson, Perry Langbein, Maj. USAF Will Lawlor, Cullen McDannold, Zachary McGuire, US Navy CTT2 William Pause, Brandon Pierce, Clinton Pierce, Isaac Redmond, Andrea Roache, Joel Roberts, Cpl. Timothy Spruytte, Cameron James Thompson-Airman 3rd Class, LCpl. Erich Timm, Kesley Underwood, Kyle Underwood, Maj. Chad Waldorf - Airforce.

PRAYERS: *The list will be cleared every four weeks. If you wish to remain on the list for longer than four weeks, please call the office and request a long-term prayer. In case of emergency, contact the office at 352-597-1456 and leave a detailed message. Messages are checked daily.*

Poinsettias – if you ordered a poinsettia, you may take it home.

Altar Flowers: *If you would like to order flowers in honor or in memory of someone, there is a sign-up sheet in the narthex, or you can call the office at 352-597-1456. Donation is \$25.00. Flowers can be picked up after the 9:30AM Sunday service, or you can schedule a pick-up time with the office if you are not attending the service.*

Worship Leaders

Presiding Minister	Pastor Phil Schroeder
Assisting Minister	Pat Squires
Communion Assistant	Robert Rios
Scripture Reader	Nina Vaznelis
Ushers	Gwen Mahon & Nina Vaznelis
Acolyte/Crucifer	Lou Prettyman
Greeter(s)	Carol Anderson & Evelyn Galli
Music Director	Donna Olsen
Organist	Kathy Hackemer
Altar Guild	Connie Chase & Robert Rios
Sanctuary	Connie Chase & Beryl Clements
AV Director	Art Alt
Audio	Francesca Bugini & Pat Squires
Cameras	Mark Major
Graphics	Diane Alt, Ed Lewis & Linda Rizzo
Video Production	Vicki Page
Head counter this week	Judie Brayman
Data Entry	Barbara Crisanti

**NATIVITY LUTHERAN CHURCH OF WEEKI WACHEE
A CONGREGATION OF THE FLORIDA-BAHAMAS SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

6363 Commercial Way, Weeki Wachee, FL 34613

Phone (352) 597-1456

Email: Nativitylutheran63@gmail.com, Website: nlcww.org

Reverend Giuseppe Mattei

Deacon Charlotte Downing

Music Director: Donna Olsen

Audio/Visual Director: Art Alt

Sunday Service at 9:30 a.m.