

Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 22, 2024
Abiding Hope Lutheran Church
Rev. Karen Parsh, Pastor
Sheryl Williams, Coordinator of Music



Cradle and cross are inextricably connected on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Between a lovely tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and Mary's magnificent song of praise, the letter to the Hebrews reminds us in no uncertain terms that Christ's advent is for "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." It is the kind of tension in which the church always lives as when in holy communion—with high delight—"we proclaim the Lord's death."

December 24 ~ Christmas Eve
"A Symphony of Light and Love"
Seasonal Music 4:10p
Candlelight Worship 4:30p

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS ~

PRELUDE

GATHERING

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

Please stand

CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation.

Amen.

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

Everlasting God,

you love justice and you hate wrongdoing.

We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that make us reluctant to work against oppression.

We are complicit in systems of exploitation.

We choose comfort over courage.

We are careless with creation's bounty. Look upon us with mercy.

Turn our hearts again to you.

Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world. Amen.

Hear these words of assurance: God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. God's covenant is eternal, and God's blessing rests upon us all. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN ~ ELW 251 *My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness* v.1,2,4

GREETING

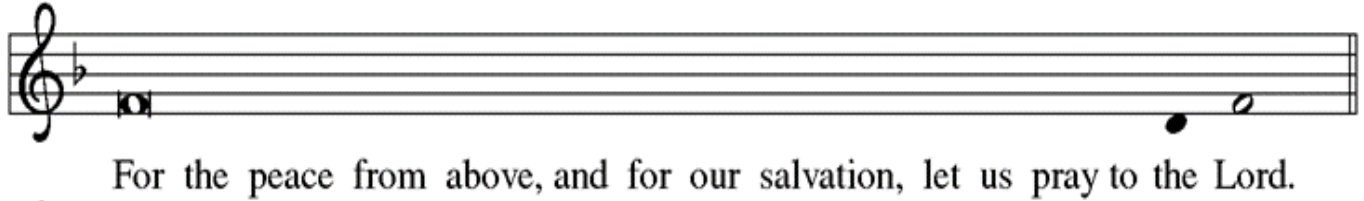
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you. **And also with you.**



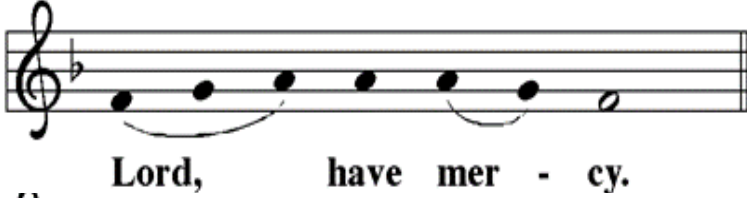
KYRIE



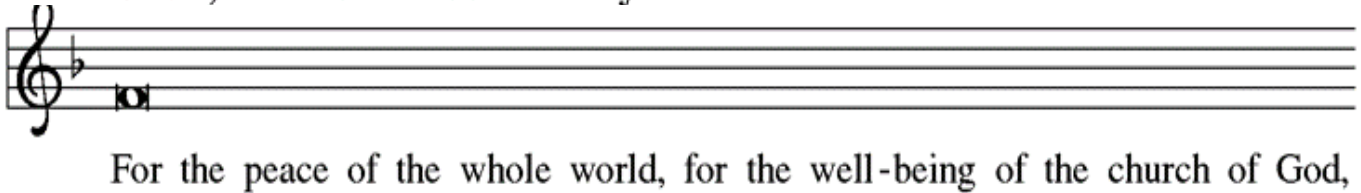
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



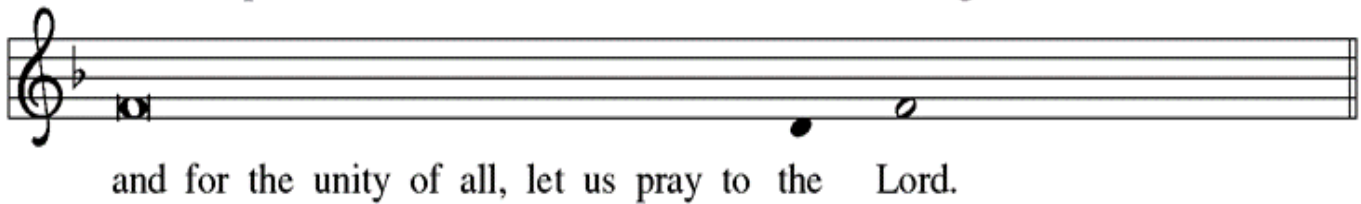
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



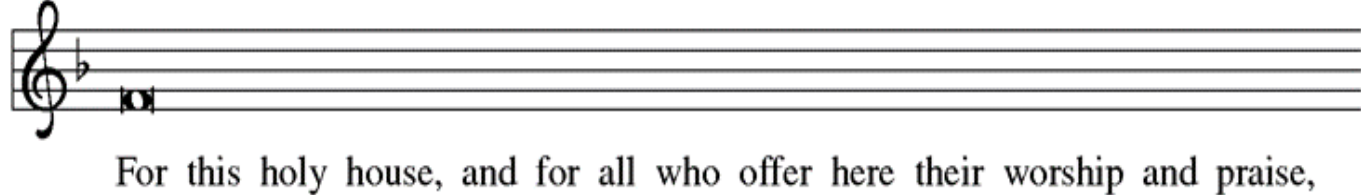
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



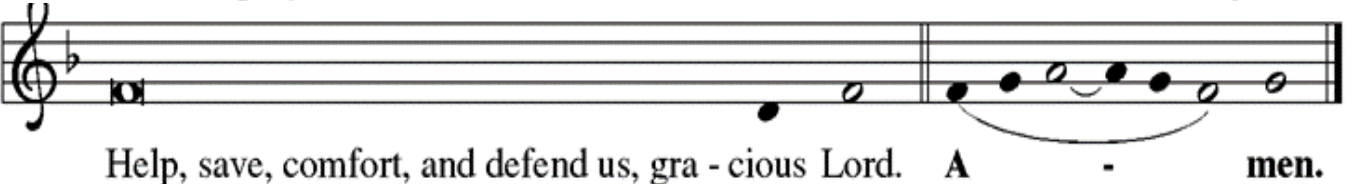
Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. A - men.

ADVENT READING and CANDLE LIGHTING

God of grace: Return us to one another.
To the broken, give wholeness.
To the mourning, give strength for dancing.
To the grieving, give solace.

Fill us with your hope and be near us now.

May your eternal love spring forth from the pain and uncertainty of the world.
Fill us with your peace and release our grip of control and fear.

Lighten our hearts, clear our minds, burn away all that does not bring life to your people and your whole creation.
Fill us with your joy and nourish us to bear good fruit in the world.

Renew our hearts in you, and help us look again to the day of restoration.
Fill us with your love and prepare us to welcome you.

Lighting of the Advent Candle ~ Just the Start

The musical score is written on five staves in a single system. It begins with a treble clef and a 6/8 time signature. The lyrics are: "Light of Life, show us the way. Burn-ing fire turns night to day. Make a home in chill-y hearts. Your thrill of hope is just the start. Give us hope when you are near. Bring us peace, re-lease the fear. Spring up joy through-out the earth. Your qui-et love gives us new birth." The music consists of eighth and quarter notes, with some rests and a final double bar line.

O Christ who was and is and ever shall be:

Light the fire of hope in our hearts, open us to your call to peace, ground us in your love. Amen

PRAYER of the DAY

Let us pray. **Stir up our hearts in love, O God. Give us voices to sing your praise as you make beginnings out of our endings. Deepen the imagination of our hearts, that we may live in justice, restoration, and peace. Through Jesus Christ, our love and salvation. Amen.**

Please be seated

FIRST READING: Micah 5:2-5a

² But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel.⁴ And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth;^{5a} and he shall be the one of peace.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Luke 1:46b-55 Sung Responsively ~ Tone 9



^{46b} My soul proclaims the greatness | of the Lord, ⁴⁷ my spirit rejoices in | God my Savior,

⁴⁸ **for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your | lowly servant.**

From this day all generations will | call me blessed:

⁴⁹ you, the Almighty, have done great | things for me and holy | is your name.

⁵⁰ **You have mercy on | those who fear you, from generation to | generation.**

⁵¹ You have shown strength | with your arm and scattered the proud in | their conceit,

⁵² **casting down the mighty | from their thrones and lifting | up the lowly.**

⁵³ You have filled the hungry | with good things and sent the rich | away empty.

⁵⁴ **You have come to the aid of your | servant Israel, to remember the prom- | ise of mercy,**

⁵⁵ **the promise made | to our forebears, to Abraham and his chil- | dren forever.**



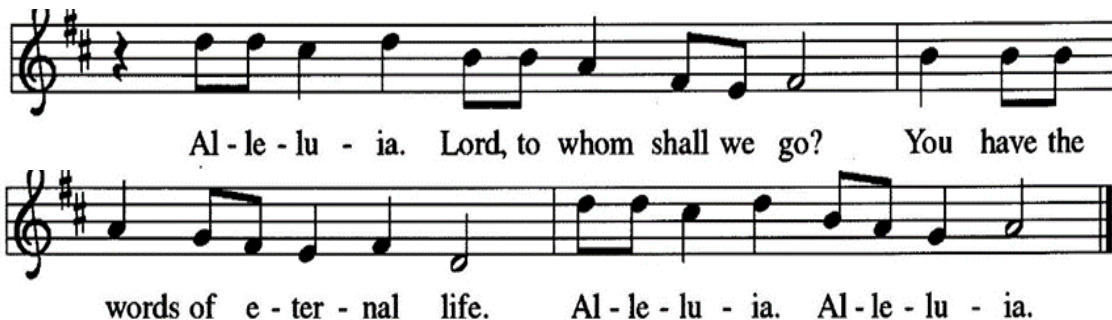
SECOND READING: Revelation 21: 1-6

¹Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ²And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; ⁴he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." ⁵And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." ⁶Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: Luke 1:39-55

The holy gospel according to St. Luke, Chapter 1. **Glory to you, O Lord**

³⁹In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴²and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." ⁴⁶And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. ⁵⁰His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. **cont'd**

⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.” The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Please be seated

SERMON ~ Pastor Karen Parsh

Please stand

HYMN of the DAY ~ **ELW 490** *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*

PRAYERS of INTERCESSION

As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God’s presence. *A brief silence.*

God our uniter, increase communication and cooperation in our relationships with those of other traditions and religions. Root your church in the radical message of your incarnation, and enable us to pursue your justice in the world. Lord, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

God our creator, we praise you for the beauty that surrounds us. Awaken in us a renewed sense of care for the wildlife in our communities. Form us into faithful stewards of what you have made. Lord, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

God our sovereign, Mary proclaims a new way of life that lifts up the lowly and fills the hungry with good things. Nurture in local governments a desire to care for all who are overlooked and ignored. Lord, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

God our beacon, as the northern hemisphere begins its slow turn toward more daylight, remind us that even in the deepest nights, you are there. Comfort the lonely and bereaved. Hold closely the frightened, anxious, depressed, and ill. We pray especially for: Analee & Johnathan, Pat, Linda, Marjorie, Jackie, Ed, Judi, Ron, Carolyn M, Larry & Barb, Tom, Evelyn, Esther, Judy, Kathi, Pr. Karen & Dave, Don & Donna and prayer request from Little Library friends.

Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God our guide, shepherd the leadership of this congregation. Bless the council and staff in discerning future ministry and open their hearts to the voices of the community. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God our life, you remember the promises you have made to your people. In gratitude for those who have died. We praise you for your faithfulness throughout history. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Please be seated

New Member Installation

This person, Paul Mirone, desires to make public affirmation of his Baptism as a member of Abiding Hope Lutheran Church.

Dear friend, we rejoice to receive you, a member of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church, into our fellowship in the Gospel.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Brother in Christ: In Holy Baptism our Lord Jesus Christ received you and made you a member of his Church. In the community of God's people, you have learned from his Word God's loving purpose for you and all creation. You have been nourished at his holy table and called to be a witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Now, therefore, I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the Church, the faith in which we baptize.

Do you renounce all the forces of evil, the devil, and all his empty promises?

I do.

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.*

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**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**

You have made a public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in Holy Baptism: to live among God's faithful people, to hear his Word and share in his supper, to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, to serve all people, following the example of our Lord Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

Let us pray. Gracious Lord, through water and the Spirit you have made Paul your own. You forgave him of all his sins and brought him to newness of life. Continue to strengthen him with the Holy Spirit, and daily increase in him your gifts of grace: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

Amen

PRAYER SHAWL PRESENTATION

WELCOME

We joyfully welcome you Paul and celebrate your membership into our Abiding Hope Community. Peace be with you.

PEACE

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

Please be seated

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING and PRESENTATION of GIFTS

OFFERING ~ Choir: Come, Emmanuel

OFFERTORY HYMN ~ What We Offer

O - pen our lives to the needs of our neigh-bors.
Dare us to shoul - der the bur - dens of strang - ers. We
give up these gifts to let go — of our lives.
Take what we of - fer as our liv - ing sac - ri - fice.
Take what we of - fer as our liv - ing sac - ri - fice.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Holy God, the one who was and is and is to come,
we praise you, we bless you, we thank you for your presence among us in
your Son Jesus, the bringer of peace. Hear us when we cry. Make all things
new. Heal the nations. Widen and deepen the imagination of our hearts.
Give us rest in you.

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.

Place in our hearts the thrill of hope, O God, you who are Alpha and Omega,
beginning and end, that we may all know your restoration and love
in this world and the next, now and forever. Amen.

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

Therefore, O God, with this bread and cup we remember the life our Lord
offered for us. And, believing the witness of his resurrection, we await his
coming in power to share with us the great and promised feast.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit, that we who share in Christ's body and
blood may live to the praise of your glory and receive our inheritance with all
your saints in light.

Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Join our prayers with those of your servants
of every time and every place, and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of
our great high priest until he comes as victorious Lord of all. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

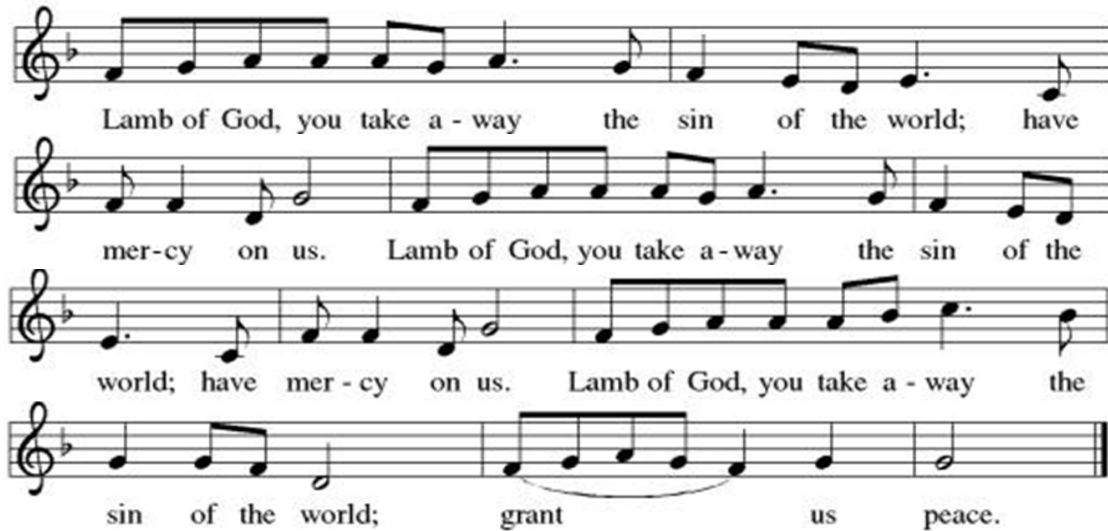
**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom
come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our
daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who
trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us
from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Please be seated

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to the table.

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.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you. **Amen**

COMMUNION HYMNS ~ ELW 254 *Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus*
Instrumental Meditation

Please stand

PASTORAL BLESSING

May the body and blood of our † Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray: **Holy one, you have blessed us with your very self. Make us one body in you, living into the mystery of your goodness and mercy, now and forever. Amen.**

BLESSING

May the God of hope guide you, May the way of peace sustain you, May the warmth of joy gather you, In the name of the one who creates, redeems, and sustains us. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN ~ Ready the Way pg. 12

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. live in hope. **Thanks be to God**

POSTLUDE

Ready the Way

Refrain

Read-y the way, read-y the way, read-y the way
of the Lord. of the Lord.

Verse 1

1. Make straight the road, raise the val - leys, and
1. moun-tains make low. Turn-ing from sin, let the bro-ken be whole,
1. and read-y the way of the Lord. to Refrain

Verses 2, 3

2. As we wait for you, give us the strength to walk
3. Let us see your face; in our hearts we pre-
2. in your truth, so we may love more like you
3. - pare a place. Come bring this world your mer - cy and grace
2. and } read-y the way for you, Lord.
3. as we }

PARISH NOTES ~ December 22, 2024

Pastor Karen Parsh ~ 814-881-3266

Office: 814-868-8685 ~ ahadministrator@hotmail.com

FB: [abidinghopelutheranchurch](https://www.facebook.com/abidinghopelutheranchurch) www.abidinghopeerie.org

Please keep these members and friends in your prayers:

Johnathan & Analee Cree, Pat Kerr, Linda Allen, Marjorie Wonner, Jackie Seib, Ed Whitbred, Judi Pacileo, Ron Froess, Sam & Dorothy Elder, Judy Nordin, Carolyn Mariotti, Larry & Barb Ruhlman, Tom Cirillo, Esther Klakamp, Kathi (Cindy Filson's sister), Pastor Karen & Dave, Don & Donna Holder, Evelyn Senger, and prayer requests from our Little Library friends.

Receiving Communion: If it is a challenge for you to come forward to receive communion, please alert the usher and you will be served communion at your seat.

Sunday, December 22: Choir ~ 9:00a & 10:45a Bible Study ~ 10:45a

Sunday, December 29: Festival of Lessons and Carols Worship ~ 9:30a

Sunday, December 29: World Hunger 5th Sunday. A time for members to contribute financial support to help meet the needs of a hungry world. **Envelopes are available in the pews for cash or check donations.** If using a check, make it payable to Abiding Hope, indicating ELCA World Hunger in the memo line, and place your gift in the offering plate. **Thank you for your generosity.**

Monday, January 6: Epiphany of Our Lord, Service of Holy Communion followed by Burning of the Greens at **Faith Lutheran Church, 7:00p.**

KAFP – Special 24 days of Advent Food Collection. Collect a food item each day of Advent to help feed our hungry community. Please **see the list**, on the display table, of needed items. **Return weekly or everything on Epiphany Sunday, January 6.**

Little Free Library/Pantry: There are 25-30 visitors each week for books/food! At this time, we have a good supply of books and bookmarks, however, food is needed. Items recommended for colder months: **oatmeal packets; individual peanut butter/cheese cracker packets; dried fruits; small boxes/cups of cereal; meals & soups (using only hot water) of rice/noodles/couscous etc. Pasta, dried beans, rice, mac and cheese meals; granola bars; small packages of nuts.** Please note we **cannot accept expired foods.** We also **cannot stock any foods in glass or cans** due in colder weather. Thank you for your overwhelming generosity. Your donations are being used to support the needs of many in our community. -Connie Kerr-Vogt

KAFP Project Dignity, December: Dental products. Place in basket on the shelf in the Heritage Room.

Altar Flowers: Anyone who wishes to donate flowers for Sunday worship, a weekly sign-up sheet/request forms are on the table in narthex. \$20.00 for each arrangement. Place the completed form and payment in the offering, or to the office by the Monday prior your chosen Sunday.

Office Hours Christmas week: Monday & Friday, 9:30a-3:30p.

Pastoral emergencies, please contact Pastor Karen at 814-881-3266.



Christmas Eve Service
Sunday, December 24 · 4:30 PM

 *Musical Prelude begins at 4:10*

 *Abiding Hope*
Lutheran Church

November Finances

Income \$13,484.56 Year to Date \$135,976.18
Expenses \$23,566.06 Year to Date \$126,505.67
Difference -\$10,081.50 Year to Date \$ 9,470.51
2024 YTD Budget \$123,367.93

Worship Leaders - December 22, 2024

Videographer	Andy Saska
Greeter/Coffee	Mary Randall
Lector/Prayers	Jeanne Tropper
Assisting Min/Acolyte	Jeanne Tropper
Communion Cups	Carol Korn
Communion Tray	Mary Randall
Presenter	Carolyn Hayes
Presenter	Lois Kuhns
Usher	Andy Saska
Usher	Rick Penn
Counters	Rich & Penny

Annual Congregational Meeting
January 26th following worship service.