



Encouraging and strengthening faith in Jesus, and sharing the joy of God's love.

December 24, 2018 Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Eve 5:30pm

The Rev. Robert G. Schaefer, Pastor

# **FAMILY CHRIST MASS**

# Gathering

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

#### INTRODUCTION

On a long winter evening we gather to proclaim the coming of the light. Isaiah announces that the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Paul reminds us that the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all. In the familiar account of Christ's birth, the evening sky is bright with the heavenly host singing, "Glory to God in the highest." Amid our broken world we proclaim that the Prince of peace is born among us. God comes to us in human flesh—in Christ's body and blood—so that we may be bearers of divine light to all the world.

#### **CHOIR PRELUDE**

#### **CALL TO WORSHIP** Based on Psalm 98

The assembly stands and turns to face the baptismal font. The presiding minister leads this call to worship, the assembly responding:

Sing to God something brand new! For God has done wonderful things!

God has not forgotten to love us all!

Even the ends of the earth have heard!

Make a joyful noise! **Break forth in song!** 

With strings and horns, sing praise to the Holy One!

With the roaring sea and everything in it! With all the land and everything in it!

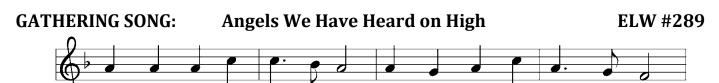
The floods clap their hands. **The hills sing for joy.** 

Thank God! God is coming to set everything right: **Justice for everyone, everything fair.** 

Sing to God something brand new!

For God has done wonderful things!

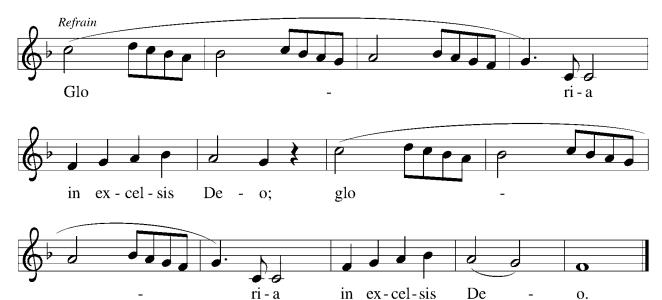
The assembly remains standing to sing, turning to the altar as the cross passes by.



- 1 An gels we have heard on high, sweet ly sing ing o'er the plains,
- 2 Shep-herds, why this ju bi-lee? Why your joy ous strains pro-long?
- 3 Come to Beth le hem and see him whose birth the an gels sing;



and the moun-tains in re-ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains. What the glad-some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song? come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.



Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, The Crown of Jesus Music, 1864

Music: GLORIA, French carol

#### **GREETING**

P: May the grace and truth of Christ, born of Mary be with you all.

C: And also with you.

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept, then the presiding minister leads the prayer.

P: Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

The assembly sits.

## Word

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

#### FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7

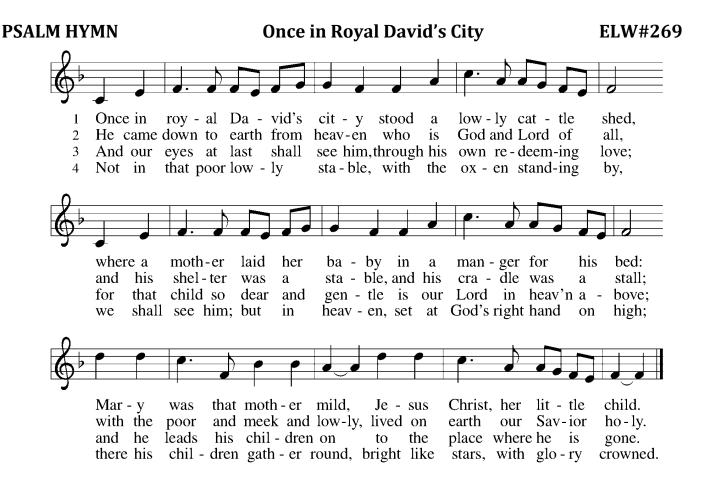
A reading from Isaiah.

<sup>2</sup>The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them light has shined. <sup>3</sup>You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. <sup>4</sup>For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.

<sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. <sup>6</sup>For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup>His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.



Text: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818–1895 Music: IRBY, Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805–1876

#### **SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14**

## A reading from Titus.

<sup>11</sup>The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, <sup>12</sup>training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, <sup>13</sup>while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup>He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

After a brief silence, the assembly stands to welcome the gospel.

# GOSPEL ACCLAMATION & PROCESSION Hark the Herald Angels Sing ELW#270 (Verses 1 & 2)



Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.

Music: MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–1847; arr. William H. Cummings, 1831–1915

#### GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-14

A call and response between the reader and the assembly is placed throughout the gospel reading. Each time the reader announces to us is born a Savior, the assembly responds: **Jesus Christ our Lord**.

P: The Holy Gospel, according to Luke.

## C: Glory to you, O Lord.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. To us is born a Savior.

## Jesus Christ our Lord.

Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. To us is born a Savior.

## Jesus Christ our Lord.

While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. To us is born a Savior.

## Jesus Christ our Lord.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. To us is born a Savior.

## Jesus Christ our Lord.

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." To us is born a Savior.

## Jesus Christ our Lord.

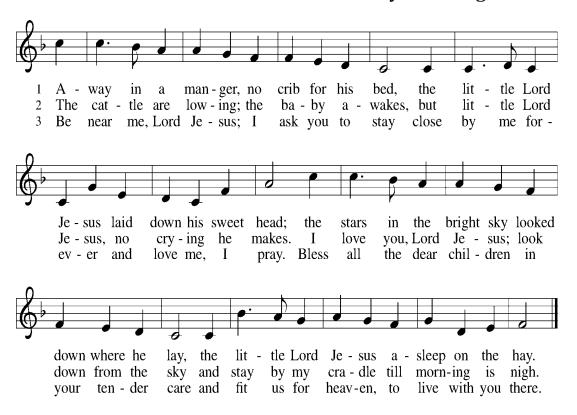
And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" To us is born a Savior.

Jesus Christ our Lord.

P: The Gospel of the Lord. C: Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.





Text: North American, 19th cent.

Music: AWAY IN A MANGER, James R. Murray, 1841-1905

## The presiding minister blesses the Nativity.

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. With Mary and Joseph, with the angels and shepherds, and with the animals in the stable we gather around your Son, born for us. Bless us, and fill us with joy and wonder as we look upon this manger scene. May Jesus be born in our lives, that we might share his love with all the world, for he is our light and our salvation. Blessed be God forever. **Amen.** 



#### CHILDREN AND FAMILY MESSAGE

The Rev. Robert Schaefer

Silence for reflection follows the sermon. The assembly stands to proclaim the word of God in Song.

#### **HYMN OF THE DAY:**

## **Infant Holy, Infant Lowly**

**ELW # 276** 



- 1 In fant ho ly, in fant low ly, for his bed a cat tle stall;
- 2 Flocks were sleep-ing, shep-herds keep-ing vig il till the morn-ing new



ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know-ing Christ the child is Lord of all. saw the glo - ry, heard the sto - ry, tid - ings of a gos - pel true.



Swift-ly wing-ing, an - gels sing-ing, bells are ring-ing, tid - ings bring-ing: Thus re-joic-ing, free from sor-row, prais-es voic-ing, greet the mor-row:



Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

Text: Polish carol; tr. Edith M. G. Reed, 1885–1933, alt. Music: W ŻŁOBIE LEŻY, Polish carol

#### **NICENE CREED**

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We 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, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human.

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.

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

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

#### PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: As heaven and earth rejoice, let us pray for the needs of the church and all the world.

A brief silence.
Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's people on earth.

Blessed are you, Prince of peace. You rule the earth with truth and justice. **Send your gift of peace to all nations of the world.** 

Blessed are you, Son of Mary. You share our humanity. Have mercy on the sick, the dying, and all who suffer this day.

Blessed are you, Son of God. You dwell among us as the Word made flesh. Reveal yourself to us in word and sacrament that we may bear your light to all the world.

P: Into your hands merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Christ, our Lord.

C: Amen.

#### PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

The people may greet each other with a sign of Christ's peace and may say: Peace be with you.

#### **MEAL**

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

#### **OFFERING**

The assembly stands as the gifts of bread, wine and money are presented at the altar.

#### **MUSICAL OFFERING:**

#### What Child is This?

**ELW #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;



Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898

Music: GREENSLEEVES, English ballad, 16th cent.

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

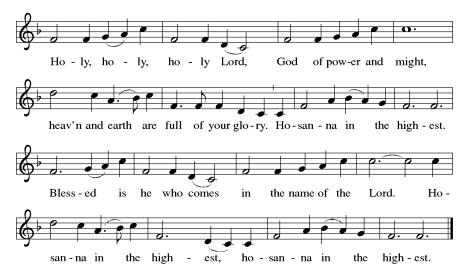
Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



The presiding minister continues to give thanks:

Holy God, Creator of all and Source of life,...

...Let us proclaim the mystery of faith.

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

... both now and forever. Amen.

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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.

## Communion

P: This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. God fills the hungry with good things. Taste and see that the Lord is good.

The bread is broken for the communion. The assembly is seated.

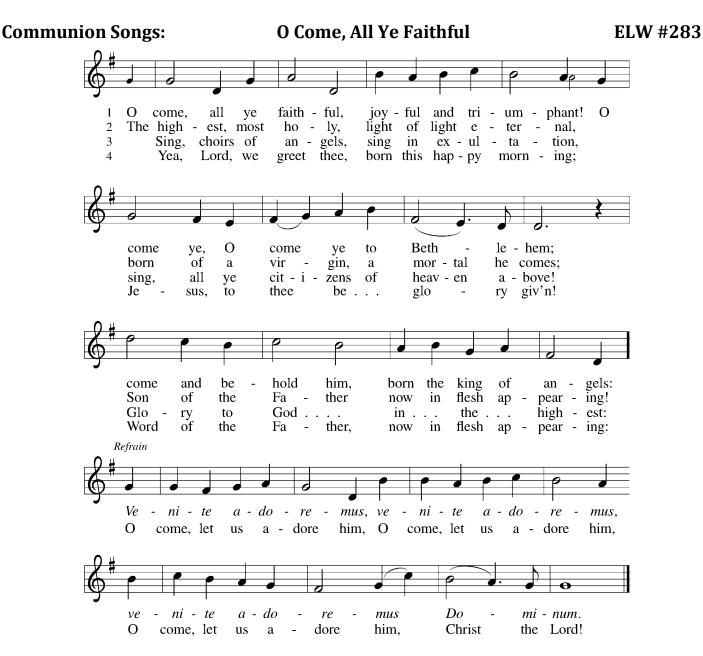
All baptized Christians are invited to participate in the celebration of holy communion. Those who are not baptized and children not yet communing may come forward for a blessing, please cross your arms on your chest if you desire a blessing.

At St. Stephen we receive Holy Communion by receiving the bread and then either drinking directly from the cup or by intinction: That means that you may **receive the bread in your hand and then dip bread in the wine**.)

Gluten free bread is available on the right side. (please ask)

Alcohol free wine is available on the right side. (please ask)

The body of Christ, given for you. *Response:* **Amen.** The blood of Christ, shed for you. *Response:* **Amen.** 



Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711–1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–1880, sts. 1, 3–4; tr. unknown, st. 2 Music: ADESTE FIDELES, attr. John Francis Wade

# **Candle Lighting**

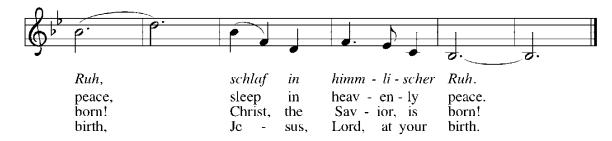
When all have communed, please remain seated while the candles are lit. The ushers will light their candles, and in turn, will share the light with the congregation. When an usher comes to your pew, the person on the end lights their candle from the usher's candle, and each person in the pew lights their candle in turn. Please <u>tip the unlit</u> candle into the lit candle. This will keep wax from dripping. (The wax is hot and will burn your skin, and it is hard to get out of fabric when cooled.) When the hand candles are lit, the assembly stands to sing.



trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge ein sam wacht nur dasPaar. all bright round moth - er and child. is yon vir gin sight; heav - en a - far, the glo - ries from at stream your ho-ly love's pure light ra - diant beams from



Hold - er Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, hcav'n-ly hosts . . . sing, al - lc - lu - ia! with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, schlaf in himm - li - scher
sleep in heav - en - ly
Christ, the Sav - ior, is
Je - sus, Lord, at your





#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A: Let us pray.

God of wonder.

in Jesus we behold the light of the world come near.

As you have come among us now,

send us out in joy, hastening to share

the good news of your love.

We ask this in the name of Jesus,

through the Spirit dwelling among us now and forever.

C: Amen.

# Sending

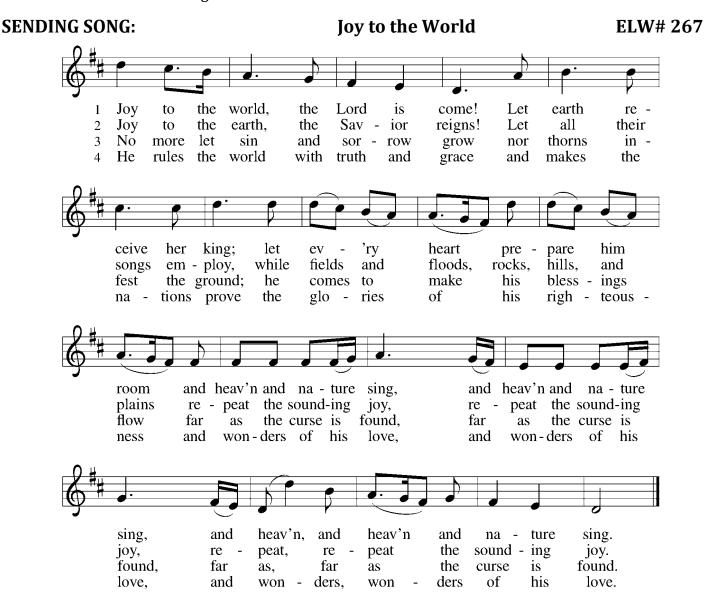
God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

#### **BLESSING**

P: May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ Child. Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.

#### C: Amen.

The hand candles are extinguished.



Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

#### **DISMISSAL**

A: Go in peace. Share the joy of Christ.

C: Thanks be to God.



**WELCOME!** Christmas is the one of the three great celebrations of the Christian year. Whether tradition, duty, curiosity, or faith brought you here, you are most welcome. We are thankful you are here! On behalf of the whole Saint Stephen family, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2019!

**RESPONSE CARDS** are in our bulletin today for members and our guests. Please fill one out and place in offering plate. Thank You.

In response to the amazing love, mercy and grace of God, St. Stephen Lutheran Church is a community that openly welcomes all who are seeking God's divine love and grace. All are welcome in this place regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation or gender identity, economic situation or life situation, marital or relationship status, or your doubts about faith and church. Our unity is in Christ. Your family, children, friends, spouses and partners are welcome. Your diversity and uniqueness enriches and expands our community. We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation.

#### IN OUR PRAYERS...

**In our prayers** today are these members of our homebound and others of our parish family in need of healing: Marsha Kibler, Juliet Crawford, Jimmy Fennelli, Laurel Blake, Kathy Runk, Edith Reichenback, Audrey Shumway, Jim Loggins, Diane Adler, Katie Paff, Roy and Barbara Kaptain, Bob & Jane Reinhold, Shelley Amato, and Antonio Alves.

#### Prayers for Friends of the Church: (Please renew your request every 3 weeks)

♣ Erika Adrean, Judith, Carol, Gene, Chris, Amanda, Nattie, Scott, Sue, for a drug free family, health to the families, and world peace, Lord ♣ Celeste, Juliet, "Pop", Aurea, George, Donna ♣ Aiden, Rebecca, Chandler, Braemen, Cheryl, Robert, Craig, Nettie, Mary, and Jerry. Please remember in your prayers the Sprague family on the passing of Glenn (Rhonda Jones Sprague's father-in-law and very close and dear friend of Larry and Rose Jones).

#### In a facility or homebound:

Audrey Shumway - Willow Wick, Janesville, Wisconsin 53545 Barbara Kaptain - The Atrium Assistant Living at Boca Raton.

1080 NW 15TH Room 215 Boca Raton, Fl. 33486

Jane Reinhold – Platinum Loving Group, P. O. Box 410572, Melbourne, FL 32941

Evelyn Braun – 6152 Verde Trail Room 106 Boca Raton, Fl. 33433

Jim Loggins - John Knox Village - Woodlands

700 SW 4th St, Pompano Beach, FL 33060

# DARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### Feast of St. Stephen, Deacon and Martyr, December 26, 2018

The feast day of the saint whose name this congregation bears is the day after Christmas. Stephen was a deacon and the first martyr of the church. He was one of those seven upon whom the apostles laid hands after they had been chosen to serve widows and others in need. Later, Stephen's preaching angered the temple authorities, and they ordered him to be put to death by stoning.

#### Bible Study Resumes in January: The Book of Acts

Bible study resumes on Sunday, January 6 from 9:15—10am **in the Pastor's Office** (Room 1). We repeat this conversation in the **Luther Room** every **Tuesday from 7—8pm** starting January 8. Acts tells the story of the early church. It traces the growth of the church from a small group of Jewish believers in Jerusalem to a worldwide movement that included both Jews and Gentiles. This book still both gives the church its marching orders and shows how the Holy Spirit will guide us in mission. Bring a bible and a friend and join us Tuesday evenings!

## Wear a Name Tag: A Ministry of Welcome.

As we grow into our future together at St. Stephen, it is important that we all know each other's names as well as those of first time and returning guests. Please pick yours up if you haven't already. If you cannot find a name tag for yourself, there is a sheet on the table for you to print your name the way you want it to appear. Wear your name tag every Sunday and at church functions. They are free. If you would like to make a donation toward the expense, they cost us \$5 each. Any gift is welcome but optional!

#### 2019 Commitment Cards

It is not too late to be part of our LIVE COURAGEOUSLY fall stewardship emphasis. Estimate of Giving cards are in the back and can be placed in the box in the back of the church; brought to the office; or by mail to the church office.

## Offering Envelopes

2019 offering envelopes are available for pick up on the back table. If any other friends of the church who would like offering envelopes, please see Larry Jones or Carol Jacobson.

## Assisting at Our Worship today

	<u>December 24</u> <u>Christmas Eve</u>	
	<u>5:30 PM</u>	<u>7:30 PM</u>
ASSISTING MINISTER	Sera Butz	Sera Butz
ACOLYTE	Carol Jacobson	Carol Jacobson
TORCH BEARERS	Eric Castaneda Pat Belanger	Eric Castaneda Pat Belanger
BOOK BEARER	Katie Paff	Katie Paff
LECTOR	Tom Peterson	Tom Peterson
USHERS –Need 4 to Serve	Lynda Smith Zachary Smith	Pat Engle Rosie Fennelli
Head Usher GREETERS – Need 2 to Serve	Caroline Smith	
SOUND	Dennis Magarrell	Larry Jones
PROJECTION	Dennis Magarrell	Larry Jones

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