

*The Third Sunday in Advent*

**Sunday, December 13, 2009**

*The Day of Lucy, Martyr (d. 304)*

*Christmas Program*

*Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Setting Five*



**First Lutheran Church**

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

211 Eighth Street SW  
Church Phone: (330) 878-5581  
Church FAX: (330) 878-5286  
Pastor's Residence: (330) 878-7444  
Pastor's Cell Phone: (330) 447-9545

Strasburg, Ohio 44680

Church Email: [first-lutheran-stras@juno.com](mailto:first-lutheran-stras@juno.com)  
Pastor's New Email: [revrevwoyen@gmail.com](mailto:revrevwoyen@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.first-lutheran.net](http://www.first-lutheran.net)

The Rev. Steven Woyen  
Ruth Patrick  
Tim Whitman  
Chris Wood

*Pastor*  
*Organist*  
*Choir Director*  
*Office Secretary*

## INTRODUCTION



*The presence of the Lord "in your midst" in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the Lord in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of one "more powerful" than John, even with his winnowing fork in his hand, is good news--and cause for exultation--for us who are being saved. Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent.*

### **Lucy, martyr, died 304**

*Lucy was a young Christian of Sicily who was martyred during the persecutions under Emperor Diocletian. Her celebration became particularly important in Sweden and Norway, perhaps because the feast of Lucia (whose name means "light") originally fell on the shortest day of the year.*

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## GATHERING

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The GATHERING MUSIC:

### The BLESSING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

*The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of Holy Baptism  
In the Name of the Father, and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*

**Amen**

As our nights grow longer and our days grow short,  
we look on these earthly signs—light and green branches—  
and remember God's promise to our world:  
Christ, our Light and our Hope, will come.  
Listen to the words of Isaiah the prophet:

*The people that walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
on those who lived in a land as dark as death  
a light has dawned.  
You have increased their joy  
and given them gladness;  
They rejoice in your presence  
as those who rejoice at harvest,  
as warriors exult when dividing spoil. [Is. 9:1-2]*

*The first, second, and third candles are lit. The devotion at the wreath concludes with the following:*

Let us pray...  
O God of rejoicing,  
we remember the promise of your Son.  
As the lights burn from these candles,  
may the blessing of Christ come upon us,  
brightening our way  
and guiding us by his truth.  
May Christ our Savior bring life

into the darkness of our world,  
and to us as we wait for his coming.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The GATHERING HYMN

**“Awake, awake and greet the new morn!”**

**ELW 242**

The GREETING

*The Pastor greets the assembly with the following words:*

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.**

The KYRIE

ELW pp. 156-157

The PRAYER OF THE DAY

*The assembly is seated*

ELW p. 159

**WORD**

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The FIRST READING

Zephaniah 3:14–20

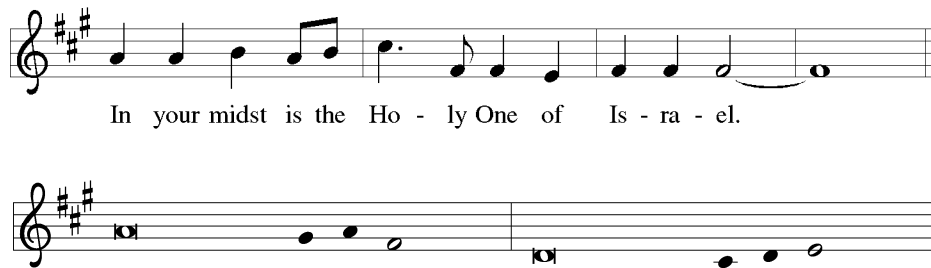
- <sup>14</sup>Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;  
shout, O Israel!  
Rejoice and exult with all your heart,  
O daughter Jerusalem!
- <sup>15</sup>The LORD has taken away the judgments against you,  
he has turned away your enemies.  
The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;  
you shall fear disaster no more.
- <sup>16</sup>On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:  
Do not fear, O Zion;  
do not let your hands grow weak.
- <sup>17</sup>The LORD, your God, is in your midst,  
a warrior who gives victory;  
he will rejoice over you with gladness,  
he will renew you in his love;  
he will exult over you with loud singing
- <sup>18</sup>as on a day of festival.  
I will remove disaster from you,  
so that you will not bear reproach for it.
- <sup>19</sup>I will deal with all your oppressors  
at that time.  
And I will save the lame  
and gather the outcast,  
and I will change their shame into praise  
and renown in all the earth.

<sup>20</sup>At that time I will bring you home,  
at the time when I gather you;  
for I will make you renowned and praised  
among all the peoples of the earth,  
when I restore your fortunes  
before your eyes, says the LORD

*The reading concludes*

The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**



<sup>2</sup>Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid,  
for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might,  
and has become my salvation.

<sup>3</sup>**With joy you will draw water  
from the wells of salvation. Refrain**

<sup>4</sup>And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the LORD, call on God's name;  
make known the deeds of the LORD among the nations;  
proclaim that this name is exalted.

<sup>5</sup>**Sing praises to the LORD, who has done gloriously;  
let this be known in all the earth.**

<sup>6</sup>Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion,  
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel. **Refrain**

## The SECOND READING

Philippians 4:4-7

<sup>4</sup>Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. <sup>5</sup>Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup>Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

*The reading concludes*

The Word of the Lord  
**Thanks be to God.**

*The assembly stands*

## The GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW p. 160

## The HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 3:7-18

<sup>7</sup>John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup>Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>9</sup>Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

<sup>10</sup>And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" <sup>11</sup>In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." <sup>12</sup>Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they

asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" <sup>13</sup>He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." <sup>14</sup>Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

<sup>15</sup>As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, <sup>16</sup>John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup>His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

<sup>18</sup>So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

## The CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

*Silence for reflection*

*The assembly stands to proclaim the Word of God in song.*

The HYMN OF THE DAY

**"My soul proclaims your greatness"**

**ELW 251**

The CREED

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**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;  
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.**

**We 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.  
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**

The PRAYERS & PEACE

ELW p. 143

The SENIOR CHOIR???

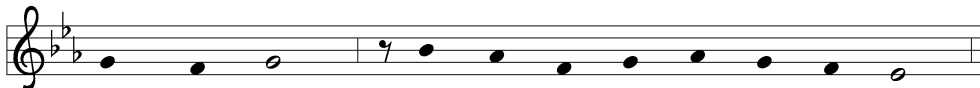
## MEAL

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### Creator of the Stars of Night



1 Cre - a - tor of the stars of night, your peo - ple's ev - er -  
2 When this old world drew on toward night, you came; but not in  
3 At your great name, O Je - sus, now all knees must bend, all  
4 Come in your ho - ly might, we pray, re - deem us for e -  
5 To God the Fa - ther, God the Son, and God the Spir - it,



last - ing light, O Christ, re - deem - er of us all,  
splen - dor bright, not as a mon - arch, but the child  
hearts must bow: all things on earth with one ac - cord,  
ter - nal day; de - fend us while we dwell be - low  
Three in One, praise, hon - or, might, and glo - ry be



we pray you hear us when we call.  
of Mar - y, bless - ed moth - er mild.  
like those in heav'n, shall call you Lord.  
from all as - saults of our dread foe.  
from age to age e - ter - nal - ly. A - men.

Text: Latin hymn, 9th cent.; tr. *Hymnal* 1940, alt.  
Music: CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM, plainsong mode IV  
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The GREAT THANKSGIVING

ELW p. 161



The THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE (III)

Holy One,  
The beginning and the end...*The prayer continues*

...Let us proclaim the mystery of faith



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

*The prayer continues...*We look with hope for his coming.

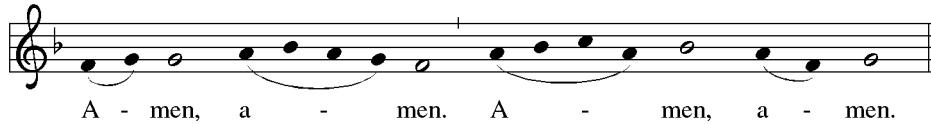
**Come, Lord Jesus.**

*The prayer continues...*Bring the gift of peace on earth.

**Come, Holy Spirit.**

*The prayer continues and concludes...*

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



A - men, a - men. A - men, a - men.

The LORD'S PRAYER (Sung)

ELW p. 163

The BREAKING OF THE BREAD

This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Happy are we who are called to his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I shall be healed.**

*The assembly is seated*

The LAMB OF GOD

ELW p. 164

The DISTRIBUTION

*Believing in the Real Presence of Christ, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America practices Eucharistic Hospitality. Admission to the Sacrament is by invitation of the Lord, presented through the Church to those who are baptized. **The Sacrament is distributed by coming up the center aisle and moving to the far end of the rail. Please kneel as you are able.** Those who do not wish to receive the Sacrament may approach with their arms crossed to receive a blessing.*

MUSIC DURING DISTRIBUTION

**“Come, we that love the Lord”**

**ELW 625**

**“What feast of love”**

**ELW 487**

*The assembly stands.*

**The POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ  
strengthen and keep you in his grace.

**Amen**

Let us pray... Almighty God, in the Eucharist you cleanse us from our  
sins and prepare us for the coming of your Son. Make us  
ready always to welcome him into our hearts as we receive  
your Holy Sacrament; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**SENDING**

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**The SOLEMN BLESSING FOR ADVENT**

May Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior Christ  
came among us in great humility, sanctify you with the light  
of his blessing and set you free from all sin.

**Amen.**

May He whose second Coming in power and great glory we  
await, make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and  
constant in love.

**Amen.**

May you, who rejoice in the first Advent of our Redeemer,  
at his second Advent be rewarded with unending life.

**Amen.**

And the blessing of Almighty God, the Father, the + Son,  
and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you  
forever.

**Amen.**

**The SENDING HYMN**

**“Blessed be the God of Israel”**

**ELW 250**

**The SENDING**

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

**Thanks be to God.**

**The SENDING MUSIC**

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**Acknowledgements**

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**WORSHIP LEADERS**

Assisting Minister

??

Lector

??

Acolyte:

??

Ushers:

??

Altar Guild:

??

**PRAYER CONCERNS**—Judy Himes, Vivian Barr, Cathy Hattery, Ruth Schram and all  
nursing home residents.











## Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

December 7, 2009



### **ELCA Presiding Bishop Addresses Variety of Subjects in Town Hall Forum**

CHICAGO (ELCA) -- The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) hosted a "Town Hall Forum" here Dec. 6, fielding a variety of questions on topics such as leadership, mission, evangelism, anti-racism and racial justice matters, funding, churchwide staff reductions and actions of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly.

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson responded to 19 questions -- posed by a live audience and members watching online -- during the hour-long forum. Carlos Peña, ELCA vice president, Galveston, Texas, introduced Hanson and posed questions from viewers.

Hanson had said he wanted to use the forum to speak directly to members about priorities for the 4.6 million-member ELCA, look forward and share stories about mission. He also promised to host similar forums in the future.

ELCA Communication Services, which managed the forum along with ELCA Information Technology staff and others, reported the online video player for the forum was launched 3,148 times, with 2,205 unique viewers. Top viewership was in Minnesota, Illinois and Florida. Viewers in several foreign countries also watched, the report said.

The forum was held as some ELCA congregations are considering leaving the denomination or withholding finances as a response to the actions of the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

That assembly directed changes to ministry policies, creating the possibility for people in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as clergy and professional lay workers. The directive has caused some disagreement in the ELCA.

Hanson asked members to continue to discuss the assembly's actions and include those with differing opinions in those conversations; respect other points of view; and remain united as the ELCA.

He addressed congregations that are redirecting or withholding funds to register disagreement with the assembly's actions.

"Let me tell you when that line is cut, mission and ministry is diminished throughout the world and throughout this church," he told the forum audience.

He said the ELCA is a church where all people "can teach and preach" with the integrity of their convictions on sexuality matters. The ELCA is also welcoming people who "are coming to faith or being renewed in their faith" because of the assembly's actions, Hanson said.

"We can be faithful Lutheran Christians and live with that tension in the same church body. Wouldn't it be wonderful if that became our witness?" he said.

He said the concept of "bound conscience" remains a question for many, and there should be an "open" conversation about it. He added that "we live under the authority of Scripture," but members must keep asking each other "What does that mean?"

Hanson also commented on other topics:

+ Leadership: He urged leaders to focus on the complete picture of the ELCA through "a wide-angle lens" versus focusing on human sexuality issues. ELCA leaders and members need to encourage each

other in their ministries, Hanson said.

+ Mission: Every synod should convene leaders to study how "vibrant ministries can happen in congregations," he said. Directors of evangelical mission are being placed in synods to help congregations grow as centers for mission, he said.

+ Anti-racism education and racial justice: Hanson said two full-time churchwide positions will be combined into one. That doesn't diminish the churchwide organization's commitment in this area, he said. He invited the audience to advise him on the new job description. Hanson also said that the churchwide organization is building groups to oversee churchwide anti-racism work, and to work with synods and congregations.

+ Multicultural and ethnic-specific ministries: Hanson reported that 13 new congregations will be planted in 2010 in multicultural, ethnic-specific communities throughout the ELCA. The ELCA Mission Investment Fund provided grant funds to make this possible, he said. Hanson also said the ELCA cannot use multicultural, ethnic-specific communities as "pawns" in a struggle over sexuality. He said the ELCA "needs to sustain these vibrant ministries."

+ ELCA restructuring: A task force has been appointed to study church structures and relationships throughout the ELCA, and changes that have taken place since the church was formed in 1988. Hanson said he was less concerned about structure than he is about mission. "We're in that study now. I can guarantee you that it will not be a top-down decision. It will be a conversation to which we invite the church."

+ Ecumenical and global relationships: The presiding bishop said that since the churchwide assembly, the ELCA has been working specifically to tend relationships with other churches in the United States and globally.

Hanson said he hopes that in the next eight years, the ELCA can train 1,000 evangelists to help the church grow, informed by global companion churches. He also urged congregations to study the ELCA's social statements alongside real-life social challenges, such as health care.

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Video of the "Town Hall Forum" is at <http://www.elca.org/townhall> on the ELCA Web site.



## **Evangelical Lutheran leader suggests Bible not the final authority**

Associated Press - 12/7/2009 7:20:00 AM

CHICAGO - The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is suggesting that the Bible isn't the last word on homosexuality.

In a town hall meeting Sunday, Bishop Mark Hanson said, "the understanding we have of homosexuality today does not seem to be reflected at all in the context of the biblical writers." Therefore, he said, Lutherans should consider more modern views on sexual orientation.

At its churchwide convention in August, the ELCA lifted its ban on partnered gay and lesbian clergy, prompting some traditional congregations to withhold funds and begin forming a separate denomination.

But Hanson insisted the ELCA can accommodate both views. In his words, "God is still speaking to us."

He also suggests that more homosexual-friendly policies may help the denomination grow.

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## **Lutheran leader was quoting others on homosexuality**

Associated Press - 12/9/2009 7:05:00 AM

CHICAGO - The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America says that in a town hall meeting Sunday, its presiding bishop was presenting the views of some within his denomination rather than his own views on the Bible and homosexuality.

A questioner asked Bishop Mark Hanson, "Where is there anything other than rejection of homosexual conduct within the Bible?"

Hanson responded that while some Lutherans cite those scriptures, there are others who say "the understanding we have of homosexuality today does not seem to be reflected at all in the context of the biblical writers, so let us bring our understanding of sexual orientation that has been opened up to humankind over the years to this conversation."

ELCA spokesman John Brooks says Hanson was citing that view without espousing it.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST LUTHERAN (Week of 12/13—12/20)

Sunday	<b><u>The Third Sunday in Advent</u></b> 9 AM—Beach City Service of the Word 10:15 AM—Beach City Christian Education  9:15 AM—Strasburg Christian Education 10:30 AM—Strasburg Holy Communion Children’s Christmas Program 11:30 PM—Catechism
Monday	No Scheduled Activities
Tuesday	9 AM—Strasburg Quilters
Wednesday	10 AM— <i>The Book of Concord</i> (Beach City)
Thursday	7 PM— <i>The Book of Concord</i> (Strasburg)
Friday	No Scheduled Activities
Saturday	No Scheduled Activities
Sunday	<b><u>The Fourth Sunday in Advent</u></b> 9 AM—Beach City Holy Communion 10:15 AM—Beach City Christian Education  9:15 AM—Strasburg Christian Education 10:30 AM—Strasburg Holy Communion 11:30 PM—Catechism

*All ministry is open to disciples in both Strasburg and Beach City congregations. The names “Strasburg” or “Beach City” denotes location*