

Christmas 2025 Gifts and Memorials

Altar Christmas Trees are dedicated to the Glory of God and to all members of Friedens by the Merwines.

Christmas Trees in the chancel and lower narthex given in memory of Jack and Peter Otto by Kathryn and family.

Pew Candelabras are lit in memory of Dr. and Mrs. Joe Conrad by family.

Candles in Pew Candelabras are given in honor of loved ones by Jean Morris.

Poinsettias given by...

Ann & Brad, in loving memory of Grandma Kline & Pap (1)

Ann & Brad, in loving memory of Austin & Rick (1)

Family, in honor of Peggy Hand's birthday. (1)

Family, in honor of Pam Merwine (2)

Family, in loving memory of Art & Naomi Hand (1)

Family, in loving memory of Violet & Raymond Rebuck (1)

Family, in loving memory of Anna & Allen Merwine (1)

Jess & Dave, in loving memory of Henry, Lorraine & Ralph (1)

Kathryn Otto, in loving memory of Jack & Peter (1)

Kathryn Otto, in honor of Paislee & family (1)

Pastor Barry & Carol, in memory of loved ones (1)

Loved ones, in honor of Joan Smith (1)

Loved ones, for those who went before us, in the Glory of God (1)

Loved ones, thank you, All the volunteers of Christ (2)

Jean Morris, in memory of Luther, Catharine & Tracy Klinger (1)

Family, in memory of Melvin (Sonny) and Dolores Huntsinger (1)



Friedens Lutheran Church
Christmas Eve Service
December 24, 2025
6:00 PM.

In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

CHRISTMAS EVE

Christmas Carols are in the green hymnal.

*Indicates for the congregation to stand if you are able.

Congregation responses are printed in **bold print**.

PRELUDE

*CHRISTMAS PROCLAMATION – (Isaiah 9:2-7)

*CAROL: 'OH, COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL'

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*PRAYER OF THE DAY:

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. Amen.

You may be seated

PSALM 96 Read responsively

1 Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

2 **Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD; proclaim God's salvation from day to day.**

3 Declare God's glory among the nations and God's wonders among all peoples.

4 **For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised, more to be feared than all gods.**

5 As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; but you, O LORD, have made the heavens.

6 **Majesty and magnificence are in your presence; power and splendor are in your sanctuary.**

7 Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD honor and power.

8 **Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name; bring offerings and enter the courts of the LORD.**

9 Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; tremble before the LORD, all the earth.

10 **Tell it out among the nations: "The LORD is king! The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge the peoples with equity."**

11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

12 **Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O LORD, for you come to judge the earth.**

13 You will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with your truth.

READING Titus 2:11-14

11 The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹² training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus

MESSAGE OF THE TREES

Please observe our Christmas trees closely. They are not merely ornamental, but through their decoration proclaim the message of Christmas, our salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The trees themselves, because they are evergreen, symbolize everlasting life. They are appropriate reminders of God's greatest gift as described in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life."

The tree on the right as you face the altar is symbolic of the greatness of the gift of God to us. The red balls remind us of the sacrifice that God was willing to make that we might have eternal life in him. The balls symbolize the blood Christ shed upon the cross that we might know the love of God and respond in kind to our neighbor, not out of false sense of duty, but out of love strengthened by the Holy Spirit.

The tree on the left as you face the altar is symbolic of everlasting life and happiness; God's gracious gift to those who believe. The white balls represent the purity and sincerity of God's love for us. Because of Jesus, our sins shall be forgiven, as we are again reminded in Is. 1:18, "I will wash you clean as snow." Thirty-three balls are used to remind us of God's presence on earth among us, living a sinless and loving existence.

The white lights on both trees symbolize Christ as the light of the world and the eternal presence of God's love for our earthly human existence, as well as our eternal forgiven existence in everlasting life. "I am the light of the world; he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8:12.

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 us. Christ's presence redeems the whole creation. Our sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad! **Amen.**

***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, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see.

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.

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.

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.**

***LORD'S PRAYER**

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***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

God is now in flesh appearing. Come to the feast of joy!

You may be seated

COMMUNION

***COMMUNION PRAYER**

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.**

***CANDLELIGHT: "Silent Night"**

Silent night, holy night! All is calm all is bright

Round yon virgin mother and child. Holy Infant, so tender and mild,

Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight:

Glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing, Alleluia!

Christ the Savior is born! Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night! Sons of God, loves pure light

Radiant beams from your holy face, With the dawn of redeeming grace,

Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

***BLESSING**

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

Extinguish candles

***CAROL: "JOY TO THE WORLD"**

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***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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Calendar

December 28, Message, Lisa Maurer.

January 4, Pastor Suzanne Elliot.

January 11, Pastor Barry Spatz.

January 18, Pastor Barry Spatz.

January 25, Karen Koppenhaver

Prayer Corner

December 7: Jennifer Waltmeyer.

November 23: Tom Barnhart.

November 16: James Sell.

Change in Address - Dirk Klinger, Room 205, Brookdale South Windsor, 1715 Ellington Road, South Windsor, CT. 06074

Today's Leaders

Service, Service, Pastor Barry Spatz Lector, Ann Miller Lay Assistant,
Julie Klinger, Ron Radel Counters, Ron & Janet Radel Head Usher,
Dave Henninger Usher, Ed Tietsworth, Rick Herring, Ed Hornung
Greeters, Ed & Jane Tietsworth.

Volunteers for 12/28/2025 – Service, Lisa Maurer Counters, Melody
Swartz & Christy Leiter Head Usher, Dave Henninger
Ushers, Larry Klinger, AJ Kline, Ann Miller Greeters, Katie & Jason
Wolfgang.

Christ. ¹⁴ He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

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

GOSPEL (*Children welcome to come forward*) (*Congregation remain seated*)

The holy gospel according to Luke. **Praise to you, O Lord.**

Luke 2:1-14

¹ In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ 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. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ 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 in the guest room.

⁸ Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ 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: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

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

MESSAGE

CAROL: O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

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OFFERING

*OFFERING PRAYER:

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.

*CONFESSON AND FORGIVENESS

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

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

Silence is kept for reflection.