

Service of Worship

+Please stand where indicated if it is comfortable for you.  
All are welcome in this place of worship.  
As you are seated, please silence your cell phones.

We Gather Around the Word

Prelude

7:00 In Dulci Jubilo Fred Eyrich, trumpet  
(BWV 751) Bach, arr. Rondeau  
9:00 Infant Holy, Infant Lowly Traditional Polish Carol  
Arr. Tom Fettke

Welcome and Announcements

Chiming of the Trinity

+PROCESSIONAL HYMN #234

“O Come, All Ye Faithful” Adeste Fidelis

+OPENING PRAYER

Almighty God, you have given your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and to be born this day: Grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through our Lord Jesus Christ to whom with you and the same Spirit be honor and glory, now and forever Amen.  
Amen.

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Reverend Matthew M. and Joy Williams

(The Liturgy and reading are presented. Then the congregation will join the response. )

Isaiah 9: 2-7

And so we offer this mysterious prayer:

Lord Jesus, quickly come.

We Hear the Word

Epistle Lesson Titus 2: 11-14 Pew Bible NT Page 202-203  
The Word of the Lord  
Thanks be to God

+HYMN OF PREPARATION #245

“The First Noel” vs. 1-3 The First Noel

The Gospel is processed to the center of the congregation to signify that it is central to the church, our faith, and our lives.

+Gospel Lesson Luke 2: 1-20 Pew Bible NT Page 54  
The Word of God for the People of God  
Thanks be to God

+Hymn of Preparation #245

“The First Noel” vs. 4-5 The First Noel

Homily A Feast of Light Reverend Matthew M. Williams

Special Music “O Holy Night” Jackie Allen, Soloist

We Respond to the Word

+Affirmation of Faith A Christmas Affirmation

I believe in Jesus Christ and the beauty that began in Bethlehem.  
I believe in him whose spirit glorified a little town; of whose coming only the shepherds saw the signs, and for whom the crowded inn could find no room.  
I believe in him whom the kings of earth ignored and the proud could never understand; whose paths were among the common people, whose welcome came from the people of hungry hearts.  
I believe in him who proclaimed the love of God to be invincible: whose cradle was a mother’s arms, whose home in Nazareth had love for its only wealth, who looked at men and women and made them see what God’s love saw in them; who by God’s love brought sinners back to purity, and lightened human weakness up to meet the strength of God.  
I confess my everlasting need of God: the need of forgiveness for my greed and selfishness, the need of life for empty souls, the need of love for hearts grown cold.  
I acknowledge the glory of all that is like Christ: The steadfastness of friends, the blessedness of homes, the beauty of compassion, the miracle of hearts made kind at Christmas, and the courage of those who dare to resist all passion, hate, and war. I believe that only by love expressed shall the earth at last be purified.

And I pray that redemption might begin in me. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Lord, in your mercy.  
Hear our prayer.

Offertory Prayer

Offertory The Birthday of a King with Away in a Manger  
Neidlinger/Murray, arr. Tom Fettke

Prayer of Consecration

Communion Meditation

Lo, How A Rose E’er Blooming Michael Praetorius

Thanksgiving and Communion

The United Methodist Church has an open communion. All are invited to partake despite denominational or religious affiliation. At the direction of the ushers, please come forward and take a wafer, dip it into the cup, and partake. You are welcome to kneel at the altar for prayers following receiving communion.

The Great Thanksgiving for Christmas Eve See insert

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. Amen.

Giving of the Bread and Cup

Carols During Distribuiton

A Communion Hymn for Christmas Clarkson/Fettke  
Adoration Monsell/Fettke  
Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne Elliott/Matthews

Post Communion Prayer See insert

We Bear the Word in the World

+RECESSIONAL HYMN #239

“Silent Night, Holy Night” Stille Nacht

+SHARING OF THE LIGHT

As Silent Night is being sung, the lights will be dimmed, and the minister will light a candle from the Christ Candle. The minister will then light the candles of the ushers who will light the candle of the first worshipper in each pew. The Light will be passed along the pew. Remember to hold the lighted candle upright, and the unlighted candle is tipped to be lighted. Before leaving the pew, worshippers are requested to extinguish their candles. There is a box in the Narthex in which to place your candle.

+Benediction

The offerings from each of the three Christmas Eve services will be shared between three missions of the Lighthouse United Methodist Church

Kid’s Needs of Englewood Inc., is a non-profit 501(3)(c) corporation dedicated to helping school children in our community and their families. The organization collects and distributes gently used and new clothing, school supplies, items for personal hygiene, and much more.

Charlotte County Homeless Coalition, founded in 1989, leads the drive in assisting individuals and families in need. Their clients are not only the chronically homeless, but many families and individuals hit hard by the economy and foreclosure crisis.

Samaritan Fund, are funds that are used at the pastor’s discretion in order to provide assistance and aid to those in need.

Connect Card

Welcome! We’d like to help you get connected.  
Please fill out this card & place it on the offering plate.

Let us know how we can reach out to you!

Name

Address

City

Zip Phone

Email

How long have you attended LH Church?

1st time guest 2nd time guest  
guest from out of town  
regular attendee member

I am interested in:

Having the Pastor Contact Me  
Youth and Families  
Small Groups  
Missions  
United Methodist Women  
Men’s Prayer Group  
Strawberry Festival Volunteer  
Stephen Ministry  
Greeting and Ushering  
Communion Stewardship  
Fellowship Hour Hospitality

## PRAYER REQUESTS

In everything by prayer...  
Let your requests be made known  
unto God.

*Philippians 4:6*

Please write your request here  
and place it in the offering plate or  
hand it to an usher.

Please pray for

Requested by

***Prayer requests are honored until  
notification is received otherwise.  
Please update us at 941-964-2479***

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

☐

I would like someone to  
contact me to pray over  
more confidential  
matters.

## CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness - on them a light has  
shined” (Isaiah 9:2).

We all experience darkness in our lives. If you have read any of  
the headlines in the news lately then you will understand that we  
also experience darkness in our world as well. From a biblical  
perspective, darkness is a metaphor suggestive of evil, sin, suf-  
fering, distress, and death. In our world we also still experience  
war, violence, torture, prisoner abuse, terrorism, sexism, and  
the wrongful use of power, resulting in injustice.

People of the Christian faith believe that Jesus Christ is the  
“great light” that shines in the darkness. Through the mystery of  
the incarnation, God was born into the world in Jesus the Christ.  
The Prophet Isaiah foretold that the child Jesus would be called  
Emmanuel - God With Us.

What is overwhelming about the Christmas Story is that Jesus  
Christ, in the incarnation, came to dwell among us amidst every-  
thing that we experience. Christ is the Light of God. In the midst  
of darkness, Christ shines through - providing a pathway of  
peace on earth.

We have hope because the light of Christ dispels the darkness.  
In our world today, Jesus indeed hears the cries of the children  
of Aleppo. He hears the prayers of those caught in the pangs of  
war. He hears the distress of those who are malnourished and  
aching. He hears the pain of those who are subject to racism,  
inequality, and prejudice. He hears the longing for those who  
want a better world. He hears you, because He is Emmanuel -  
He is with you!

The gift of Christmas is that each of us has an opportunity to  
receive the Light, be the Light, and share the Light of Jesus  
Christ. Let us allow it to expel the darkness within us. Let us  
allow it to forge a way for us to see that in Christ there can be  
peace on earth and goodwill to all people. In Christ, there is no  
darkness at all.

Following this beautiful night we will awaken to the dawning of a  
new day. I pray that each of you will recognize the Light of Je-  
sus Christ and allow it to lead you in all that you do. I am re-  
minded of these beloved words of hope by Howard Thurman:

*When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the kings and princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with their flock,  
The work of Christmas begins:  
To find the lost,  
To heal the broken,  
To feed the hungry,  
To release the prisoner,  
To rebuild the nations,  
To bring peace among people,  
To make music in the heart.*

("The Work of Christmas" in *The Mood of Christmas & Other  
Celebrations* (1985)

God Loves You and so do I.

Merry Christmas,  
Reverend Matthew M. Williams

## SPECIAL THANKS FOR SERVING IN THE LORD’S HOUSE TODAY!

**Ushers:** 7:00-Carol & Henry Elwood

9:00-Jim Cooper & Bo Hamrick

**Acolyte and Cross Bearer:** Hannah Amen & Abigail Turner

**Audio Visual Technology:** Liam Hugger and Grant Reecher

**Communion Stewards:** 7:00-Ed & Beth Paxton,

9:00-Lindy & Kathi Hustedt



**Lighthouse United Methodist Church**

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**941-964-2479**

**www.bglighthouseumc.com**



A Stephen Ministry  
Congregation



**www.facebook.com/bglighthouseumc**

## CONTACTS

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David Hamblin, Director of Music

Philip Eyrich, Assistant Organist



— B O C A G R A N D E —  
**Lighthouse Church**  
A United Methodist Congregation

**December 24, 2016  
Christmas Eve**

**RECEIVING THE LIGHT, BEING THE LIGHT, SHARING THE LIGHT**



Christmas is the festival at which Christians cele-  
brate the birth of the Christ Child in Bethlehem  
over 2000 years ago. This fragile infant, long await-  
ed and yet still surprise, is the incarnation of God  
on earth. As we share gifts with our friends and  
families this season, we seek to capture the joy and  
wonder of the original gift of Christmas: God, out  
of his lavish abundance, comes into a broken world  
to dwell among us and draw us to him.