

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

Greeters: **Lewis & Diana Murphy**

Reader: **DiAnn Brown**

Communion Assistants: **Linda Lerum, Kim Bermensolo**

Diana Murphy, Cheryl Swenson, Bev Thomas, Steve Galbraith

Usher Coordinator: **Jim Sahr**

Ushers: **Phil Forbord, Paul Worth**

Counters: **Phil & Tessa Forbord**

Altar Guild: **Jan Galbraith, Ginny Conricode**

Collection Specialist: **Andrew Swenson**

Streaming Technician: **Paul Lerum**

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FELC LEADERSHIP

MINISTERS: **All the Members of FELC**
Senior Pastor: Pastor Mike Knauff..... e-mail: pastormike@firstlc.com
Church Administrator: Liisa Mills..... e-mail: office@firstlc.com
Youth & Family Minister: Heather Catanese e-mail: youth@firstlc.com
Bookkeeper: Greg Stultz e-mail: bookkeeper@firstlc.com
Music Director: Michelle Hanson e-mail: musicdirector@firstlc.com
Choir Accompanist: Heidi Bessette
Praise Band Director: Steve Galbraith
Pastor Emeritus/Minister of Welcome: Larry Cudmore.....
Preschool Director: Barbara Carlson flpreschoolif@gmail.com

Summer Office hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm, Friday Closed
Web Page: www.firstlc.com • Phone: 208-522-9301



Praising Our GOD...
Loving GOD's People!

First Evangelical Lutheran Church

Phone # (208) 522-9301

www.firstlc.com

December 14, 2025

Third Sunday of Advent

Welcome to worship on this third Sunday in Advent. With expectant and joyous hearts, let us prepare ourselves to celebrate the coming of Christ. John, the author of Revelation, ends his work with the words, "Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen." May it be so with each of us.

WORSHIP NOTES:

- ♦ **Bold printed words** indicate the congregation's responses.
- ♦ For families with young children, you're invited to take advantage of our worship activity bags for children located in the lobby. A nursery for children 4 and younger is located in Room #7.
- ♦ If you have a moment, please sign the friendship pad in the pew and pass it to others in your pew.
- ♦ For those with hearing loss, we have hearing devices available at the welcome window; ask an usher for assistance.
- ♦ For those with eyesight issues, we have large print bulletins; ask an usher for one.

WE PREPARE OURSELVES FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Michelle Hanson

Please observe silence in preparation for worship.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

WE LIFT OUR PRAYERS AND PRAISE TO GOD

GATHERING SONG

#240

"Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah" vv. 1-3

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: The Candle of Joy
Our thanks to *Chris & Tami Henvit* for leading us today in the devotions and lighting of the advent candle.

BRIEF ORDER OF CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Let us pray...Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination...

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for you, and for his sake God forgives you all your sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ he gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

WE LISTEN TO GOD'S WORD

FIRST LESSON (*Pew Bible p. 578*)

Isaiah 35:1-10

Our first scripture reading is from the Old Testament, the book of the prophet Isaiah, chapter thirty-five, beginning with verse one.

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;

THIS WEEK AT FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Today 12/14/2025	
9:00 am	Christmas Pageant Rehearsal - Fellowship Hall
9:00 am	Adult Forum - Library
9:00 am	Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary
10:15 am	Worship - Sanctuary
11:30 am	Fellowship Hour - Fellowship Hall
11:30 am	King's Men Rehearsal - Sanctuary
12:00 pm	Executive Committee Meeting - Library
4:30 pm	Christmas Celebration
Monday 12/15/2025	
10:00 am	Staff Meeting - Library
7:00 pm	Council Meeting - Fellowship Hall
Tuesday 12/16/2025	
9:00 am	Preschool
9:00 am	Happy Stitchers
1:00 pm	Preschool
6:00 pm	Girl Scout Troop #930 - Fellowship Hall
Wednesday 12/17/2025	
9:00 am	Preschool
1:00 pm	Preschool
5:00 pm	Praise Band Rehearsal
6:30 pm	Advent Soup & Bread
7:15 pm	Advent Worship
Thursday 12/18/2025	
9:00 am	Preschool Christmas Program
9:00 am	Men's Bible Study
10:00 am	Kaffeeklatsch
1:00 pm	Preschool Christmas Program
7:00 pm	Stephen Ministry Team Meeting
Friday 12/19/2025	
10:00 am	Friends in Stitches - Fellowship Hall
Saturday 12/20/2025	
Sunday 12/21/2025	
9:00 am	Christmas Pageant DRESS Rehearsal - Sanctuary
8:50 am	Adult Forum - Library
9:00 am	Choir Rehearsal - Fellowship Hall
10:15 am	Christmas Pageant - Sanctuary
11:30 am	Fellowship Hour - Fellowship Hall
11:30 am	King's Men Rehearsal - Sanctuary
4:00 pm	Round About Brass Practice

Report of First Evangelical Lutheran Church

Year to date Income thru November \$300,812; Year to date Expenses thru November \$312,893

Year to date net Cash Flow thru November -\$12,081

Last Week's in Worship Attendance: 148, Live Stream: 69



HOW CAN WE PRAY FOR YOU?

If you have a prayer request, please fill out a purple prayer request card and drop it in the offering plate or you can email office@firstlc.com. All requests remain confidential - only with permission are individual names placed on the written prayer list below.

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING:

Geri Magnuson would like to thank everyone for their prayers. She is feeling sooo much better!

OUR CHRISTIAN SYMPATHIES TO:

Friends and family of Heidi Ibach. Heidi's sister-in-law, Ursula Frieda Noack passed away on November 26th.

PRAYERS FOR THOSE WHO ARE ILL, RECOVERING, OR GOING THROUGH A DIFFICULT TIME:

Cathy Abreu; Donna Amundson; Sharon Bauman; Ray Bauer; Tina Bean; Betty Benjamin (Lisa Mullinix's mother); Andrew Bessette; Dean & Carla Benson; Peggy Buhr; Dale Clements; Tracy Coburn; Wendy Cudmore; Dayna Dabauras; Joan Douglas; Bernadette Farrington (Annick Dixon's mother); Josephine Fife (Julie Reinwald's mother) Sharon Gilbert; Scottie Grace; Al Glissendorf; Diane Hackman; Steve Hammon; Bill Hayes; Jack Heier; Mark Holland (Cara Dahlberg's father); Beverly Hudman (Larry Hudman's mother); Larry Hudman; Ann Hurley; Jeff Hustad; Mackenzie & Zane Igor; Vickie John; Lynn Parshall Kinghorn (Alecia Coburn's former mother-in-law); Mary Krippner; Steven Krippner; Andy Kruckeberg; Bud Langerak; Bill Lockman; Allan Magnuson; Mike Martin; Rochelle Mason; Adara McClure (Jeannie Campbell's daughter); Tim Metcalf; Dick Mitchell; Wendy Morgan (Larry Hudman's sister); Don Newman (Richard Magnuson's cousin); Heidi Peoples; Carol Miller Pisher (Cal Miller's daughter); Priscilla Rainey; Bob Scarr; Laura Schoonmaker; Julie Sundberg; Scot Swenson (Vernal & Jackie Swenson's son); Kathy Tauscher; Deborah Vavra; Marie Warwick; Chris Weaver; Daniel & Sarah Young.

PRAYERS FOR FRIENDS AND FAMILY SERVING IN THE MILITARY:

Craig Bukowski; Adam Craig; Keith Evans; Eric Gratzke; Alton Helm; Jack Hogan; Syllas Jackson; TJ Litteer; Garrett Marchington; Andrew Mitchell; Mike Monroe; Mike Stultz; Brianna Townsend; Jody Townsend.

like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and shouting.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.

³ Strengthen the weak hands
and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
"Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God.

He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.

He will come and save you."

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;
⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert;

⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸ A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God's people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

⁹ No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.

¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

This is God's word.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM (Pew Bible pg. 8.32)

Luke 1:46-55

The book of Psalms was used as a “hymnal” for Jewish worship. The psalmists’ poetry was often put to tunes as songs for worship. FELC like many Christian communities continues that practice of reading or singing Psalms for worship. There are several New Testament passages that have been identified as Psalm-like or “song passages”: Zechariah’s song (Luke 1:68-79), Simeon’s Song (Luke 2:25-38), “The Christ Hymns” (Colossians 1:15-20 & Philippians 2:6-11), “Creedal Chorus-es” like 1 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Timothy 2:11-13, and “the Lamb songs” of Revelation found in 5:9-13, 15:3-4, and 19:6-8.

Today as we prepare to celebrate Christ’s incarnation we use a New Testament song (psalm) from the Gospel of Luke. This is the song of praise that came from Mary upon receiving the news from the Angel Gabriel that God had chosen her as the mother of his chosen messiah, Jesus. It is found in the Gospel of Luke, chapter one beginning with verse forty-six. I invite the congregation to read it aloud with me.

**My soul magnifies the Lord,
47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
48 for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.
Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,
49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name;
50 indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
51 He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
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 come to the aid of his child Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
55 according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.**

This is God’s word.
Thanks be to God.

SECOND LESSON (Pew Bible p. 982)

James 5:7-10

Our second lesson comes from the New Testament, the letter of the Apostle James, chapter five, beginning with verse seven.

THE ADVENT SEASON BEGINS **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30TH**

“It’s beginning to look a lot like **Advent.**” Perhaps that’s not how the world looks at the weeks leading up to Christmas. Yet, for us Lutherans, we view the weeks leading up to Christmas day as a time of preparing our hearts and homes for the promised Messiah of old and the victorious Messiah’s return.

We are in the season of waiting and watching, preparing and praying that is the Advent season. And while it looks much different from the chaotic way the world leads up to Christmas, in many ways it’s better. Instead of a preoccupation with getting, we can focus on giving. Instead of having to do a thousand things, Christians try during this time of year to whittle down to doing the important things. And it’s important to remember to “keep Christ in Christmas.” FELC hopes to help you “keep Christ in Christmas” by offering meaningful **Sunday Advent services** as well as **midweek Advent worship**.

FELC ADVENT DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET

Many members have said they’ve shared this booklet with neighbors and family to help explain Advent as well as share the encouraging advice regarding various ways for families to make meaningful traditions that keep “Christ in Christmas.” Additionally, the readings for the lighting of each of the Advent candles can be found in the back of the booklet. These booklets are free and are at the Welcome Window.

FAMILIES NEEDED FOR THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

We’ll once again be **lighting the Advent Wreath** for each worship service, and this means **we’ll need volunteers to help read and light the candles.** We still need a family for the 5:00 pm Christmas Eve Service. If your family is willing to help, the sign-up sheet will be at the Welcome Window. We’ll be using the readings for the Scandinavian tradition of the Advent Wreath: The Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love candles.

Our remaining midweek services this year will be held on:

Wednesday, December 17th

6:30 pm Soup & Bread

7:15 pm Holden Evening Prayer Service

- The Grinch Who Stole Christmas & Joy to the World

**The Advent Worship service offerings will go to support the
Community Food Basket - Idaho Falls.**

keep wound-up kids and exhausted parents engaged long enough to enjoy some Christmas joy. The service ends with the sharing of communion followed by the traditional candlelight ceremony of singing “Silent Night.”

The later Christmas Eve worship service will be at 7:30 pm. It will feature a more “traditional” message, as well as feature one of our musical groups, along with the sharing of communion and traditional candlelight ceremony of singing “Silent Night.” Invite a friend, bring your out-of-town family and guests to our “no judgement zone” Christmas celebration. The more celebrating Christ’s birth, the merrier.

Speaking of out-of-town families, Christmas Eve worship is one of those times members and friends who haven’t seen each other for a while can reconnect. We were hoping to provide a small reception in the narthex with punch and cookies following the late service. If you have a few homemade Christmas goodies you’d like to share (*avoid the extra calories*) for our Christmas eve reception, please let the office know.

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

The winter Red Cross Blood Drive will be held on Thursday, January 22nd in the Fellowship Hall. It will be held from 12:30 pm to 5:30 pm. Signup information will be in the narthex or you may contact Cathy Abreu at 916-216-6904 or redcrossblood.org

⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

This is the word of God.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand, as you are able, for the reading of the Gospel.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

p. 188



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THE HOLY GOSPEL (*Pew Bible p. 792*)

Matthew 11:2-11

The Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew, chapter eleven, beginning with verse two.

Glory to you, O Lord.

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” ⁴ Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is

written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.’

¹¹ “Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen
greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven
is greater than he.”

The Gospel of our Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SONG OF THE DAY

“He Shall Reign Forevermore”

In the bleak mid-winter all creation groans
for a world in darkness, frozen like a stone.
Light is breaking in a stable for a throne.

And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore.
And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore.
Unto us a Child is born, the King of kings and Lord of lords.
And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore.

If I were a wise man, I would travel far.
If I were a shepherd, I would do my part.
But, poor as I am, I will give to Him my heart.

And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore.
And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore.
Unto us a Child is born, the King of kings and Lord of lords.
And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore.

Here within a manger lies the One who made the starry skies,
This baby born for sacrifice: Christ, the Messiah!
Into our hopes, into our fears the Savior of the world appears,
the promise of eternal years: Christ the Messiah!

He shall reign forevermore, forevermore.
And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore.
He shall reign forevermore, forevermore.
And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore.
Unto us a Child is born, the King of kings and Lord of lords.
And He shall reign forevermore, forevermore.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! INVITE YOUR FRIENDS!

Today at 4:30 pm our music ministry will be presenting “**A Christmas Celebration.**” All offerings collected during the event will be give to the Community Food Basket - Idaho Falls.

PENNY POWER

In December, Penny Power will be used to supply Bibles for the Gideons.

WHAT IS THE BETHLEHEM STAR?

The Adult Forum will present the movie “The Bethlehem Star Revealed” on Sunday, December 21 during the Sunday School hour. Since the movie runs 65 minutes, we will need to start a bit early so as not to interfere with the worship service time. Class will begin at 8:50 AM on that Sunday. All are welcome!

CARE & CONCERN HELP NEEDED

The Care & Concern team is looking for volunteers to help their Meals In Crisis team. You would be asked to help provide a meal occasionally to help a family when needed. Please contact Geri Magnuson if you would be willing to help with this ministry.

LIGHT THE WORLD GIVING MACHINE

A giving machine is a vending machine, but rather than candy or snacks for oneself, it allows people to donate to help out nonprofits in the Idaho Falls area. FISH has been one of the nonprofits that has been chosen! Our Family ministry team and our youth will be volunteering on December 20th from 12– 2pm. If you are able, please come and support them! For more information please call the church office or Kären Bateman.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

FELC will have two worship services on Christmas Eve. The first service at 5:00 pm will be “family friendly.” It includes communion and the traditional candlelight ceremony, but Pastor Mike’s message will be “family friendly.” The messages will be based on the Christmas hymn of the “Friendly Beasts.” Pastor will have 3 separate, short children’s messages based on the friendly beasts that were at the first Christmas: a sheep, camel, and donkey. The length of each message, accompanied by quick costume changes, tend to

By Thine all sufficient merit, raise us to Thy glorious throne.

You draw the hearts of shepherds, You draw the hearts of kings.
Even as a baby, You were changing ev'rything.
You called me to Your kingdom before Your lips could speak,
and even as a baby, You were reaching out for me.

And now we are awaiting the day of Your return
when ev'ry eye will see You as heaven comes to earth.
Until the sky is opened, until the trumpet sounds,
the bride is getting ready, the Church is singing out.

Come, Thou long expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free.
From our fears and sins release us. Let us find our rest in Thee.
Come, Thou long expected King.

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THE WORSHIP IS ENDED LET OUR SERVICE TO GOD BEGIN!

THE SERMON

Pastor Mike Knauff

“Expecting the Unexpected”

WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Apostles’ Creed

Gathered as a Christian community let us together confess our faith in our Triune God using the words of the Apostle’s Creed.

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

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.

**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.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

(Each petition will conclude with “Lord in your mercy;” the congregation responds with “Hear our prayer.”)

OFFERING

SPECIAL MUSIC

Praise Band

“Noel”

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OFFERTORY





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WE CELEBRATE OUR LORD'S SUPPER

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth. In mercy for our fallen world you gave your only Son, that all those who believe in him should not perish, but have eternal life. We give thanks to you for the salvation you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ.

Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts, that we may receive our Lord with a living faith as he comes to us in his holy supper.
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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 and 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.

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 and ever. Amen.

DISTRIBUTION

We invite all who are baptized in Christ, and believe in receiving the bread and wine they receive Christ's body and blood and the forgiveness of sins, to join us. Children not receiving communion may come forward for a blessing. Holy Communion will be served at the altar rail this morning. Please come forward at the direction of the ushers. You may choose white grape juice or red wine. The serving station at the center of the altar rail is our hypoallergenic station with gluten-free wafers. Please return to your seats by a side aisle.

SONGS DURING DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

#239 "Hark, the Glad Sound!"

#244 "Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"

#251 "My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness"

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

Now may this body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

THE BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

"Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

Come, Thou long expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free.
From our fears and sins release us. Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth Thou art.
Dear desire of ev'ry nation, joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King.
Born to reign in us forever. Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal spirit, rule in all our hearts alone.