



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



2nd Sunday of Advent

December 10th 2023

10:30 Service of the Word

John calls people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing gets in the way of the Lord's coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: the assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, "See, your God is coming!" We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in a world in need of justice and peace.

-from Sundays and Seasons 2024

Welcome to worship today!

If you are visiting with us we invite you to sign the Guest Book in the back of the sanctuary.

Large print bulletins are available on the usher's stand.

† GATHERING †

Prelude and Announcements

Gathering Hymn Light the Candle
(For music turn to Hymn 57 in the Songbook binder)

- 1. Light the candle as a symbol
of the Light that leads the way;
For each candle is a symbol
of the hope that's ours to-day.
As we strike the match
and light the wick,
come Spirit shine bright.
Grant that all may see from the darkness
Your Gift, Your Truth, Your Light.
Emmanuel, son of the Father,
Come to us now, Savior and Lord.**
- 2. Light the candle as a symbol
of the Light that leads the way;
For each candle is a symbol
of the peace that's ours today.
As we strike the match
and light the wick,
come Spirit shine bright.
Grant that all may see from the darkness
Your Gift, Your Truth, Your Light.
Your Gift, Your Light.**

Text and music: Maureen Griepentrog; Copyright 1991 Treble C Music; CCLI #2982867

Greeting (2 Corinthians 13:13)

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

Gathering Dialog (John 1)

A: In the beginning was the Word,

C: and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

A: In the Word was life,

C: and the life was the light of all people.

A: The Word became flesh and lived among us,

C: and we have seen his glory, full of grace and truth.

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray...

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

† WORD †

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

A: Praise to you, O God, who gives us courage to start again.

You fasten righteousness around your waist
and baptize with the Holy Spirit's fire.

Bless us as we mirror your mighty fire in these simple flames,
and teach us to mirror your justice in the paths we prepare.

We ask that peace abound,
until none hurt or destroy over all the earth.

C: Amen

As the second candle on the wreath is lit we sing:

Oh Come, Oh Come, Emmanuel

(For music turn to Hymn 257 in the Red Hymnal)

**1. Oh come, Oh come Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.**

**Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel.**

**2. Oh come, oh, come, great Lord of might,
who to your tribes on Sinai's height**

**in ancient times once gave the law
in cloud, and majesty, and awe. Refrain**

First Reading Isaiah 40:1-11

B: Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the Lord's hand
double for all her sins.

³A voice cries out:
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

⁵Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

⁶A voice says, "Cry out!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"

All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.

⁷The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.

⁸The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand forever.

⁹Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
"Here is your God!"

¹⁰See, the Lord God comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.

¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

After the reading the reader may say: The Word the Lord

C: Thanks be to God!

Scripture Poetry Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

(read responsively: W – Women, M - Men)

M: Lord, you loved your land,
brought Jacob back,

W: forgot our guilt,
forgave our sins.

M: I listen to God speaking;

“I, the Lord, speak peace,

W: peace to my faithful people
who turn their hearts to me.”

M: Salvation is coming near,
glory is filling our land.

W: Love and fidelity embrace,
peace and justice kiss.

M: Fidelity sprouts from the earth,
justice leans down from heaven.

W: The Lord pours out riches,
our land springs to life.

M: Justice clears God’s path,
justice points the way.

Second Reading 2 Peter 3:8-15a

D: But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day.

⁹The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

¹¹Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God,

because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? ¹³But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. ¹⁴Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; ¹⁵and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

After the reading the reader may say: The Word the Lord

C: Thanks be to God!

Gospel Acclamation (Luke 3:4,6)

C: Alleluia. Prepare the way of the Lord. All flesh shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia.

Gospel Reading Mark 1:1-8

The gospel is announced:

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark the 1st chapter.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.’”

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

After the reading:

P: The Gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you O Christ.

Children’s Sermon

Sermon

Hymn of the Day All Earth Is Hopeful
(for music, please turn to Hymn 266 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **All earth is hopeful, the Savior comes at last!
Furrows lie open for God's creative task:
this, the labor of people who struggle to see
how God's truth and justice set ev'rybody free.**
2. **People of Israel, you heard the prophet tell:
"A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel";
she conceived him, "God with us," our brother, whose birth
restores hope and courage to children of this earth.**
3. **Mountains and valleys will have to be prepared;
new highways opened, new protocols declared.
Almost here! God is nearing, in beauty and grace!
All clear ev'ry gateway, in haste, come out in haste!**
4. **We first saw Jesus a baby in a crib.
This same Lord Jesus today has come to live
in our world; he is present, in neighbors we see
our Jesus is with us and ever sets us free.**

Text and music: Alberto Taule, tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, arr. Skinner Chavez-Melo; Text and music copyright 1972 Alberto Taule, admin. Virgil C. Funk; Tr. Copyright 1995 Madeliende Forell Marshall, admin. Augsburg Fortress; Arr. Copyright Estate of Skinner Chavez-Melo

Response to the Word

P: In Christ you have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

C: We believe in him and are marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit.

P: Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,**

**he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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.**

P: Build yourselves up on your most holy faith;

C: pray in the Holy Spirit. (Jude 20)

P: Keep yourselves in the love of God;

C: look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Jude 21)

P: If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation:

**C: Everything old has passed away;
behold, everything has become new!** (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Prayer of the Church

“It Would Be Easier to Pray if I Were Clear” from *Guerillas of Grace* by
Ted Loder

Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us share that peace with one another.

The congregation may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

‡ THANKSGIVING ‡

Special Music

Hymn of Thanksgiving *As the offering is brought forward:*

Lord Let My Heart Be Good Soil

For music turn to Hymn 713 in the Blue Hymnal

Lord, let my heart be good soil,

open to the seed of your Word.

Lord, let my heart be good soil,

where love can grow and peace is understood.

When my heart is hard, break the stone away.

**When my heart is cold, warm it with the day.
When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.
Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart,
Lord, let my heart be good soil.**

Text and music: Handt Hanson, b. 1950, Copyright 1985 Prince of Peace Publishing/Changing Church, Inc.

Thanksgiving Prayer

P: Let us pray: Savior of the nations, come.

C: Make your home here in us. Feed us with your love, that our faith shine ever new and our lives reveal your light. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

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

**C: 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.**

† SENDING †

Blessing

P: God the eternal Word,
who dwells with us in Jesus,
and holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn Bethlehem Highway

(For music turn to Hymn 45 in the Songbook binder)

**Chorus: There is hope on Bethlehem highway
for the ones who will journey there.
And the hope is the child in a manger**

bringing us love beyond compare

**1. It's a lifeline for the needy,
It's sight to those who can't see.
It's a freedom for the faithful
in a child of prophecy. *Chorus***

**2. Let the an-gels go before us.
Let the darkness become light.
Now the savior lives among us.
Now truth has come to life. *Chorus***

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Dismissal

**P: Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.
C: God's Work. Our Hands.**

ABOUT JOHN'S
WARDROBE AND
DIET...



HE'S IN THE WILDERNESS, ON THE
EDGE OF SURVIVAL, ANTICIPATING
THE COMING OF SALVATION.



AND SHOPPING
LOCAL!



Worship assistants TODAY:

Greeters and Ushers Linda Flood
Acolyte Alyssa Young
Counters John and Linda Thompson
Coffee Hour

Worship assistants for next Sunday, December 17, 2023

Greeters and Ushers Tom and Carol Urbanic
Acolyte Thomas Bullwinkle
Altar Care Linda Thompson
Communion Assistant Mary Zuege
Counters Babette Huber and Burdie Gillern
Coffee Hour Cupcakes

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St. John's Lutheran Church
888 County Road 9, Victor, NY 14564
stjohnsvictor.com (585) 924-5192
The Rev. Jonathan Deibler, Pastor
William Shi, Pianist