



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



4th Sunday of Advent

December 19, 2021

10:30 Service of the Word

Our Advent journey continues in today's worship service. Our gospel reading is the story of the birth of John the Baptist. Then we will have the Sunday school children's program, which picks up right where the birth of John the Baptist story leaves off. Before we get to that though we light the Advent wreath. We've been singing O Come O Come Emmanuel as each additional candle is lit. Today we follow that hymn with the "O Antiphons" upon which it is based.

Welcome to worship today!

Please observe social distancing and remain conscious of the need to prevent the spread of infectious disease. In this bulletin is an insert that will be used to determine today's attendance. It will also help to identify who was here if contact tracing is necessary. Please fill it out and place it in the offering plate.

† GATHERING †

Prelude and Announcements

Gathering Hymn Prepare the Royal Highway
(For music turn to Hymn 264 in the Red Hymnal)

1. Prepare the royal highway;

**The King of kings is near!
Let ev'ry hill and valley
A level road appear!
Then greet the King of glory,
Foretold in sacred story:**

Refrain **Hosanna to the Lord,
For he fulfills God's Word!**

2. God's people, see him coming:

**Your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before him!
Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you!
No more shall doubt assail you! *Refrain***

3. Then fling the gates wide open

**To greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation
Its tribute too may bring.
All lands will bow before him;
Their voices join your singing: *Refrain***

4. His is no earthly kingdom;

**It comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom
And justice, truth and love.
So let your praise be sounding
For kind-ness so abounding: *Refrain***

Text: Frans Mikael Franzen, 1772-1847; Music: Swedish folk tune, 14th century

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)

P: In the beginning was the Word,

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

P: In the Word was life,

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

P: 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 your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

† WORD †

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

A: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. In your Son, Emmanuel, you have shown us your light and saved us from the power of sin. Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath. Increase our longing for your presence, that at the celebration of your Son's birth his Spirit might dwell anew in our midst, for he is our light and our salvation. Blessed be God forever.

C: Amen

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

O Come, O 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.**

3. O come, O come, O Lord of might,

**as to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times you gave the law
in cloud and majesty and awe. Refrain**

**4. O come, O Branch of Jesse, free
your own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save,
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave. Refrain**

**5. O come O Key of David, come,
and open wide our heav'nly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery. Refrain**

Readings: The "O Antiphons"

B: O Wisdom,
proceeding from the mouth of the Most High,
pervading and permeating all creation,
mightily ordering all things:
Come and teach us the way of prudence.

D: O Adonai and ruler of the house of Israel,
who appeared to Moses in the burning bush
and gave him the Law on Sinai:
Come with an outstretched arm and redeem us.

B: O Root of Jesse,
standing as an ensign before the peoples,
before whom all kings are mute,
to whom the nations will do homage:
Come quickly to deliver us.

D: O Key of David and scepter of the house of Israel,
you open and no one can close,
you closed and no one can open:
Come and rescue the prisoners who are in darkness
and the shadow of death.

B: O Dayspring,
splendor of light everlasting:
Come and enlighten those who sit in darkness
And in the shadow of death.

D: O King of the nations, the ruler they long for,
The cornerstone uniting all people:
Come and save us all, whom You formed out of clay.

B: O Emmanuel,
Our king and our Lord,
The anointed for the nations and their Savior:
Come and save us, O Lord our God.

Gospel Acclamation (Luke 1:78)

C: Alleluia. By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us. Alleluia.

Gospel Reading Luke 1:57-80

The gospel is announced:

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

C: Glory to you O Lord.

⁵⁷Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. ⁵⁸Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. ⁵⁹On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. ⁶⁰But his mother said, "No; he is to be called John." ⁶¹They said to her, "None of your relatives has this name." ⁶²Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. ⁶³He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And all of them were amazed. ⁶⁴Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. ⁶⁵Fear came over all their neighbors, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. ⁶⁶All who heard them pondered them and said, "What then will this child become?" For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.

⁶⁷Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy:

⁶⁸"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.

⁶⁹He has raised up a mighty savior for us
in the house of his servant David,

⁷⁰as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,

⁷¹that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all
who hate us.

⁷²Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,

and has remembered his holy covenant,
⁷³the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,
to grant us ⁷⁴that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,
might serve him without fear, ⁷⁵in holiness and righteousness
before him all our days.
⁷⁶And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
⁷⁷to give knowledge of salvation to his people
by the forgiveness of their sins.
⁷⁸By the tender mercy of our God,
the dawn from on high will break upon us,
⁷⁹to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.”
⁸⁰The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the
wilderness until the day he appeared publicly to Israel.

After the reading:

P: The Gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you O Christ.

Children's Christmas Program

Hymn of the Day O Little Town of Bethlehem
(For music see Hymn 279 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;
yet in the dark street shineth
the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.**
2. **For Christ is born of Mary,
and, gathered all above
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the king,
and peace to all the earth!**
3. **How silently, how silently**

**the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming;
but, in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.**

- 4. O holy child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
oh, come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Immanuel!**

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893, Music: Lewis H. Redner, 1831-1908

Apostles' Creed

B: 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.

D: 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.

B: Build yourselves up on your most holy faith;

C: pray in the Holy Spirit.

(Jude 20)

D: Keep yourselves in the love of God;

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

B: 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)

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God,
who alone does wonders,
who lifts up the lowly,
who fills the hungry with good things.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God.

Silence for reflection and self-examination

P: God for whom we wait,

**C: in the presence of one another,
we confess our sin before you.**

We fail in believing that your good news is for us.

We falter in our call to tend your creation.

We find our sense of self in material wealth.

We fear those different from ourselves.

**We forget that we are your children
and turn away from your love.**

**Forgive us, Blessed One,
and assure us again of your saving grace.**

Amen.

P: God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you!

Through the power of the Holy Spirit,
your sins are forgiven.

You are children of the Most High,
inheritors of the eternal promise,
and recipients of divine mercy.

God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace.

C: Amen.

Peace

P: Sisters and brothers, rejoice. Mend your ways, encourage one another, agree with one another, live in peace. (2 Corinthians 13:11)

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.

✠ PRAYER ✠

Special Music

Prayers of Intercession

P: With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

The pastor will begin the prayer with a petition and then invites the congregation to add additional petitions and thanksgivings. Please conclude your petition with: Lord in your mercy,

The congregation will respond: **Hear our prayer.**

The pastor concludes the prayer:

P: Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: 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: The God of hope
fill us with all joy and peace in believing,
so that we may abound in hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
through Christ Jesus for whom we wait.

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn Fling Wide the Door
(For music see Hymn 259 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **Fling wide the door, unbar the gate;
the King of glory comes in state;
the Lord of lords and King of kings,
the Savior of the world who brings
his great salvation to the earth.
So raise a shout of holy mirth
and praise to God and Lord,
Creator, Spirit, Word.**

2. **He is the rock of our belief,
the heart of mercy's gentle self.
His kingly crown is holiness;
his scepter is his loveliness;
he brings our sorrows to an end.
Now gladly praise our king and friend,
and worship him with song
for saving us from wrong.**

3. **Oh, happy towns and blessed lands
that live by their true king's commands.
And blessed be the hearts he rules,
the humble places where he dwells.
He is the rightful Son of bliss
who fills our lives and makes us his,
creator of the world,
our only strength for good.**

4. **Come, Lord, our Savior, Jesus Christ;
our hearts are open wide in trust.**

**Oh, show us now your lovely grace,
upon our sorrows shine your face,
and let your Holy Spirit guide
our journey in your grace so wide.
We praise your holy name,
from age to age the same!**

Text: Georg Weissel, 1590-1635; tr. Gracia Grindal, b. 1943, text copyright 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship, admin. Augsburg Fortress. Music: J.A.Freylinghausen, *Geistreiches Gesengbuch*, 1704; arr. hymnal version, arrangement copyright 2006 Augsburg Fortress

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

C: God's Work. Our Hands.



Thanks to Dad Hengeveld (See Luke 2:1-16)

12-20-2001

**SORRY FOLKS, WE'RE BOOKED SOLID ... GOD
HIMSELF COULDN'T GET A ROOM HERE TONIGHT**

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