

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Blessed Is the Fruit of Mary's Womb

December 22 & 23, 2018

5:00pm & 9:00am

AS WE GATHER

In the Holy Gospel, Mary, already pregnant with Jesus, meets with her aunt Elizabeth. Elizabeth is pregnant with the one who will be called John the Baptist. Still in his mother's womb, John recognizes Jesus at the voice of His mother. Jesus' incarnation is so profound that it reaches even the unborn. Likewise, Jesus' resurrection is so powerful that it reaches even the dead. All human creatures, no matter in what stage of humanity, are loved by this Jesus. And He is coming soon.

9:00 PRE-SERVICE BELL ANTHEM "Sing We Now of Christmas"

WELCOME

"Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn."
Isaiah 60:1,3

HANDSHAKES & HUGS

✠ PREPARATION ✠

OPENING HYMN #384 "Of the Father's Love Begotten" *Rise last stanza*

Of the Father's love begotten Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending He,
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see Evermore and evermore.

Oh, that birth forever blessed, When the virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving, Bore the Savior of our race,
And the babe, the world's Redeemer,
First revealed His sacred face Evermore and evermore.

This is He whom seers in old time Chanted of with one accord,
Whom the voices of the prophets Promised in their faithful word.
Now He shines, the long expected;
Let creation praise its Lord Evermore and evermore.

O ye heights of heav'n adore Him; Angel hosts, His praises sing.
Pow'rs, dominions, bow before Him And extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent,
Ev'ry voice in concert ring Evermore and evermore.

(Rise) Christ, to Thee, with God the Father, And, O Holy Ghost, to Thee
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving And unending praises be,
Honor, glory, and dominion,
And eternal victory Evermore and evermore. Amen.

INVOCATION & OPENING SENTENCES

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: Alleluia! Christ is coming soon!

People: He is coming soon indeed! Alleluia!

Pastor: Blessed is the fruit of Mary's womb!

People: He shall stand and shepherd His flock in the strength of the Lord!

Pastor: His flock shall dwell secure.

People: And He will be their peace.

Pastor: My soul magnifies the Lord,

People: and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

Pastor: Alleluia! Christ is coming soon!

People: He is coming soon indeed! Alleluia!

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Pastor: On the four Sundays in Advent, we light a new candle each week.
We mark the four candles with these four words: hope, peace, joy,
and love. Jesus Christ is the hope of the nations.

People: We wait for the Lord, and in His Word do we hope.

Pastor: Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace.

People: We wait for the Lord, and in His Word do we rest.

Pastor: Jesus Christ is the source of all joy.

People: We wait for the Lord, and in His Word do we rejoice.

Pastor: Jesus Christ is the Lord of love.

People: We wait for the Lord, and in His Word His love finds us.

HYMN **“The King Shall Come to Bring Us Love”**

The King shall come to bring us love, To share His life and light!
He came, a child from heav'n above. He'll come again in might!

We light this candle filled with awe At all the Lord has done!
Since we could never keep God's Law, Christ kept it as the Son.

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CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

Pastor: In the season of Advent we prepare for Jesus to come. Sometimes in our preparations we lose sight of God's grace. Sometimes we are so desperate for God's approval we think we can earn His favor by doing more, by being better, or by scheming in just the right way. Despite God's unconditional love, we still try to earn our way into security and salvation. We turn to the Lord for forgiveness.

Silence for reflection.

Pastor: Heavenly Father,

People: **we confess that we have not trusted your Word of forgiveness, life, and salvation. We have questioned if we are truly forgiven. We have doubted the new life we now live. At times, we have even doubted your way of salvation. Restore us, O God. Let your face shine, that we may be saved!**

Pastor: God's ways are not our ways. Despite our continued failures and our inability to trust as we ought, Christ's death and resurrection for your forgiveness remains effective, and it always will. Hear these words of forgiveness for they are from Christ Himself: As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen. We have been sanctified through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**

SALUTATION & PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Let us pray. Stir up your power, O Lord, and come and help us by your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by your grace and mercy; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

(Be seated)

✠ WORD ✠

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Micah 5:2-5a* (The ruler of Israel shall come from Bethlehem.) But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. And he shall be their peace.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE *Hebrews 10:5-10* (“We have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”) Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, “Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.’” When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), then he added, “Behold, I have come to do your will.” He does away with the first in order to establish the second. And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

5:00 CHOIR ANTHEM *“Comfort, Comfort, Ye My People”* Howard Helvey

9:00 BELL ANTHEM *“He is Born the Divine Christ Child*

(Rise)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the first chapter.

People: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

HOLY GOSPEL *Luke 1:39-56* (Mary visits Elizabeth.) In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord

should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.” And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.” And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Be seated)

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

SERMON HYMN #357 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” Stanzas 1-5

O come, O 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 thee, O Israel!

O come, Thou Wisdom from on high, Who ord’rest all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show, And teach us in her ways to go. **Refrain**

O come, O come, Thou Lord of might, Who to Thy tribes on Sinai’s height
In ancient times didst give the Law In cloud and majesty and awe. **Refrain**

O come, Thou Branch of Jesse’s tree, Free them from Satan’s tyranny
That trust Thy mighty pow’r to save, And give them vict’ry o’er the grave. **Refrain**

O come, Thou 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**

SERMON “*The Song of Salvation*” **Luke 1:39-56**

HYMN #357 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” Stanzas 6 & 7
O come, Thou Dayspring from on high, And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, And death’s dark shadows put to flight.

Refrain

O come, Desire of nations, bind In one the hearts of all mankind;
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease, And be Thyself our King of Peace. **Refrain**

(Rise)

NICENE CREED I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And he will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

(Be seated)

OFFERING As your offering is collected, **please sign our attendance book** located at the end of the pew. If you are a visitor, please leave your address and phone. After you are finished, please pass the book along to others in your pew, and return the book to the center aisle. You may check the register to see the names of those to greet after the service.

9:00 SPECIAL MUSIC

(Rise)

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their need. Almighty God, we praise you that by your Holy Spirit, Elizabeth greeted Mary as “the mother of my Lord” while the unborn John leaped with joy in the presence of your Son in Mary’s womb.

People: Increase in us your Spirit, that we may rejoice and our faith may bear abundant fruit.

Pastor: Almighty God, we praise you for preparing prophets to proclaim your truth. Even so, we pray that you would prepare servants of the Word today to preach your saving Gospel with faithfulness and power.

People: Grant us ears ready to listen and hearts wide open to embrace your Word of Truth.

Pastor: Almighty God, we praise you for creating new life day by day. Preserve all pregnant women and the children in their wombs. Bring to repentance all who would take the lives of the unborn, and foster the work of crisis pregnancy centers and others who support mothers and their babies.

People: Remember in mercy all who serve in public office in our land, granting them wisdom, courage and integrity as they serve the people and work for the common good.

Pastor: Almighty God, we praise you that you are Father to the fatherless and that you provide for the poor when all others have forgotten them. Graciously watch over the hungry, the poor and the unemployed.

People: Move us to serve you in showing mercy to all those in need, near and far.

Pastor: Almighty God, comfort the grieving, heal the sick and grant faith to the dying. We pray this day especially for Nancy, Don, Barbara, Larry, Marge, Dolores, Bob, Herb, Cliff, Cindy, LuEva, Dick, Nancy, Shirley, Gladys, Russ, Arlene, John, Jack, Arlene, Shirley, Jonathan, Leonard and Sarah.

People: Remind them of your abiding presence with them, heal and restore them in accordance with your will, grant them patience and perseverance, and fill them with hope and peace through faith in the Child born of Mary.

Pastor: Almighty God, we praise you that you feed those who hunger and thirst for righteousness with the body and blood of your dear Son. Grant us all sincere repentance of sin and a strong and steadfast faith in your grace.

People: By your Holy Spirit, prepare us again to receive His Sacrament for the forgiveness of our sins and the strengthening of our service to you and one another.

Pastor: Almighty God, we are soon to celebrate once again the nativity of your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Fill us again with wonder and awe at the mystery of your visitation in human flesh and blood.

People: Fill us again with the joy, the hope, and the peace that comes through believing in the Christ Child, born of a virgin, born to fill our souls with the song of salvation.

Pastor: Into your hands, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

THE PEACE OF THE LORD

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

People: Amen.

HYMN

“O Lamb of God, You Take Away”

O Lamb of God, You take away Each sin that leads our hearts astray.
Have mercy on us, great High Priest, And lead us to Your endless feast.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, Your love is here, O Israel.

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(Be seated)

DISTRIBUTION Those guests who desire to commune who are members of another LCMS congregation may do so; if you are coming from another church background, please see the pastor or an elder first.

HYMN #361 “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.

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!

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.

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;
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!

HYMN #637 “Draw Near and Take the Body of the Lord”

Draw near and take the body of the Lord,
And drink the holy blood for you out-poured;
Offered was He for greatest and for least,
Himself the victim and himself the priest.

He who His saints in this world rules and shields,
To all believers life eternal yields;
With heav’nly bread He makes the hungry whole,
Gives living waters to the thirsting soul.

Come forward then with faithful hearts sincere,
And take the pledges of salvation here.
O Lord, our hearts with grateful thanks endow
As in this feast of love You bless us now.

HYMN #643 “Sent Forth by God’s Blessing”

Sent forth by God’s blessing, Our true faith confessing,
The people of God from His dwelling take leave.
The Supper is ended. O now be extended
The fruits of this service in all who believe.
The seed of His teaching, Receptive souls reaching,
Shall blossom in action for God and for all. His grace did invite us,
His love shall unite us To work for God’s kingdom and answer His call.
With praise and thanksgiving To God ever living,
The tasks of our ev’ry day life we will face.
Our faith ever sharing, In love ever caring, Embracing His children of each
tribe and race. With Your feast You feed us, With Your light now lead us;
Unite us as one in this life that we share. Then may all the living
With praise and thanksgiving Give honor to Christ and His name that we bear.

COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Gracious God, our heavenly Father, you have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of your Son’s body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith as we wait for the day of His coming, that we may, together with all your saints, celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: 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.

People: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN #348 “The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns”

The King shall come when morning dawns And light triumphant breaks,
When beauty gilds the eastern hills And life to joy awakes.

Not as of old a little child, To bear and fight and die,
But crowned with glory like the sun That lights the morning sky.

Oh, brighter than the rising morn When Christ, victorious, rose
And left the lonesome place of death Despite the rage of foes.

Oh, brighter than that glorious morn Shall dawn upon our race
The day when Christ in splendor comes And we shall see His face.

The King shall come when morning dawns And light and beauty brings.
Hail, Christ the Lord! Your people pray: Come quickly, King of kings!



Special Christmas Worship Times

December 24 at 4:00, 6:00

December 24 at 11:00pm (Holy Communion)

December 25 at 9:00am (Holy Communion)

December 29 at 5:00pm (Holy Communion)

December 30 at 8:00 & 10:30am (Holy Communion)

December 31 at 6:00pm (Holy Communion)

Preacher
Liturgist
Lectors
Acolytes
Organist & Bell Choir Director
Choir Director
Special Music

Pastor Harold Bender
Pastor Noah Kegley
Jim Adams, Cassy Barry
Sophia Novotny, Lillia Carson
Michelle Prince
Nancy Hoelke
Anna Carson