



COMMUNITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Sunday, December 6, 2020
Second Sunday of Advent
Online Edition

WELCOME

We welcome you to our worship service this morning. We pray that you will leave refreshed by the hearing of God's Word and the fellowship of this community.

Introduction to the day

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.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

We praise you, O God, for this circle of light that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, kindle within us the fire of your Spirit, that we may be light shining in the darkness.

We light this candle in hope. *Light the first candle.*

We light this candle for peace. *Light the second candle.*

Let us pray. God of hope, Prince of Peace, you speak peace into the world in the coming of the Christ child. Help us to live as peacemakers that we may be called children of God.

God of hope, God of peace, come into our darkness with your light. Amen.

SONG *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (ELW 257), Verses 3&4*

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things
3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on
4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's

Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;
Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law
tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,

Refrain
un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joice! Re-joice!
in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.
and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.

Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever.
Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God, we confess that we are held captive by sin. In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray. We have not welcomed the stranger; we have not loved our neighbor; we have not been Christ to one another. Restore us, O God. Wake us up and turn us from our sin. Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, hear this glad news: by God's boundless grace your sins are forgiven. May you be strengthened in God's love, + comforted by Christ's peace, and filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

GATHERING SONG: *Fling Wide the Door* (ELW 259)

Fling Wide the Door

1 Fling wide the door, un - bar the gate; the King of glo - ry
 2 He is the rock of our be - lief, the heart of mer - cy's
 3 Oh, hap - py towns and bless - ed lands that live by their true
 4 Come, Lord, our Sav - ior, Je - sus Christ; our hearts are o - pen

comes in state; the Lord of lords and King of kings, the
 gen - tle self. His king - ly crown is ho - li - ness; his
 king's com - mands. And bless - ed be the hearts he rules, the
 wide in trust. Oh, show us now your love - ly grace, up -

Sav - ior of the world who brings his great sal - va - tion
 scep - ter is his love - li - ness; he brings our sor - rows
 hum - ble plac - es where he dwells. He is the right - ful
 on our sor - rows shine your face, and let your Ho - ly

to the earth. So raise a shout of ho - ly mirth and
 to an end. Now glad - ly praise our king and friend, and
 Son of bliss who fills our lives and makes us his, cre -
 Spir - it guide our jour - ney in your grace so wide. We

praise our God and Lord, Cre - a - tor, Spir - it, Word.
 wor - ship him with song for sav - ing us from wrong.
 a - tor of the world, our on - ly strength for good.
 praise your ho - ly name, from age to age the same!

Text: Georg Weissel, 1590–1635; tr. Gracia Grindal, b. 1943
 Music: MACHT HOCH DIE TÜR, J. A. Freylinghausen, *Geistreiches Gesangbuch*, 1704; arr. hymnal version
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GREETING

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

Blessed are you, Lord, the God of Israel,
you have come to your people and set them free.
You have raised up for us a mighty Savior,
born of the house of your servant David.
Through your holy prophets, you promised of old to save us from our enemies,
from the hands of all who hate us,
to show mercy to our forebears,
and to remember your holy covenant.
This was the oath you swore to our father Abraham:
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
free to worship you without fear,
holy and righteous before you, all the days of our life.
And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,
to give God's people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of their sins.
In the tender compassion of our God
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The presiding minister leads the prayer of the day.

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

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.

Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-11

A reading from Isaiah.

In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. God will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for the sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of God.

¹Comfort, 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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

¹You have been gracious to your land, O LORD;
you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

²**You have forgiven the iniquity of your people
and blotted out all their sins.**

⁸I will listen to what the LORD God is saying;
for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.

⁹**Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you,
that your glory may dwell in our land.**

¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together;
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

¹¹**Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth,
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.**

¹²The LORD will indeed grant prosperity,
and our land will yield its increase.

¹³**Righteousness shall go before the LORD
and shall prepare for God a pathway.**

SECOND READING: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

A reading from 2 Peter.

This short letter deals with pressing concerns regarding the final advent of Jesus, especially concerns that could arise over its apparent delay. The author of the letter calls on Christians to anticipate the promised coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.

⁸Do 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; ^{15a}and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL: Mark 1:1-8

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.

¹The 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.

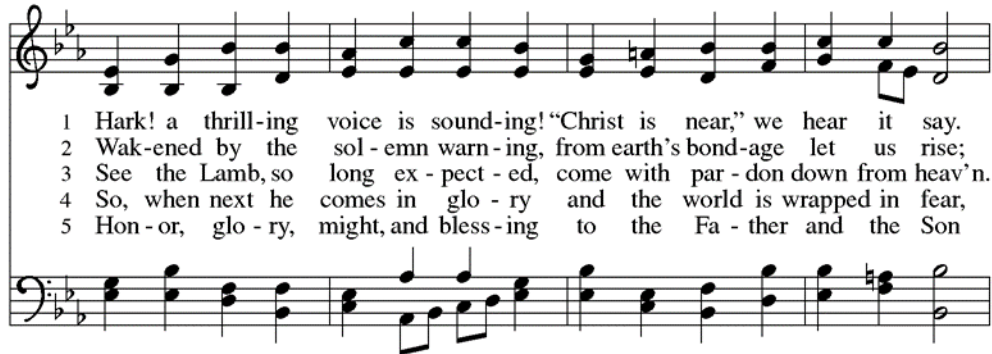
⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, “The 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.”

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

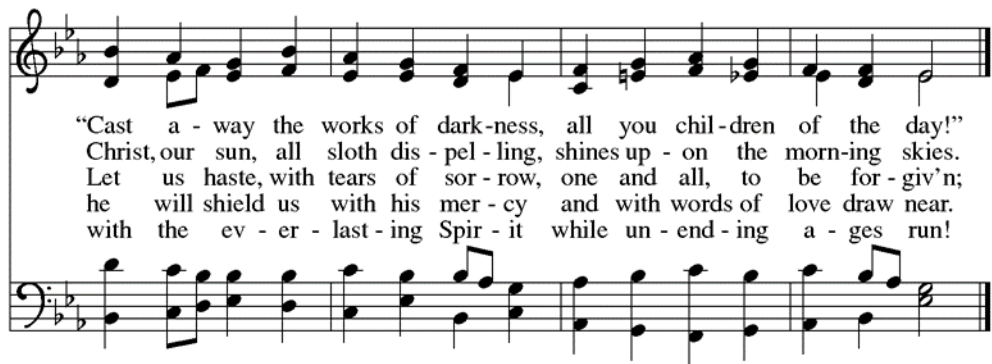
SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding! (MERTON) (ELW 246)*

Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding!



1 Hark! a thrill-ing voice is sound-ing! "Christ is near," we hear it say.
2 Wak-ened by the sol- emn warn- ing, from earth's bond-age let us rise;
3 See the Lamb, so long ex- spect- ed, come with par- don down from heav'n.
4 So, when next he comes in glo- ry and the world is wrapp-ed in fear,
5 Hon- or, glo- ry, might, and bless- ing to the Fa- ther and the Son



"Cast a - way the works of dark-ness, all you chil-dren of the day!"
Christ, our sun, all sloth dis - pel - ling, shines up - on the morn-ing skies.
Let us haste, with tears of sor - row, one and all, to be for - giv'n;
he will shield us with his mer - cy and with words of love draw near.
with the ev - er - last - ing Spir - it while un - end - ing a - ges run!

Text: Latin hymn, 1632; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814-1878
Music: MERTON, William H. Monk, 1823-1889

APOSTLES' CREED

**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.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

God of power and might, tear open the heavens and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

A brief silence.

Faithful God, you teach us to wait for you with faithfulness and patience. Sustain and support us in our doubts and questions. Nurture our faith as we discern and enact your mission. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Loving God, you set the stars in the sky and breathe life into the earth. Renew the face of creation where it is in need of your healing touch. Mend the wounds of environmental damage and restore balance to ecosystems so that all creation can declare your praise. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Steadfast God, you never tire of seeking justice. Where people suffer from discrimination, judgment, and injustice, speak words of truth and comfort. We pray especially for . . . (*current local, national, or international issues of peace or justice may be named*). Lead us toward a world where faithfulness will sprout underfoot and righteousness rain down from above. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Leading God, you ask us to make uneven ground smooth. Make even the disparities between your people. Sustain and support people with physical and intellectual disabilities. Accompany disability advocates who work for a world accessible to all. Teach us to celebrate the great diversity in our midst. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Tender God, you know sorrow and joy alike. We pray for those in our families and congregation who are not joyful in this holiday season. Comfort those who grieve, be a companion to all who are lonely, tend those who are sick or struggling with depression, and gather all people in your healing embrace. We ask your blessing upon (*names on prayer list*), and all others we name now either aloud or in the silence of our hearts. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Eternal God, we give thanks for the saints who have prepared your way in the wilderness and taught us to continue their faithful work (*especially Nicholas of Myra*). Make their generous lives an example for all. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Healing God, it is your will to hold both heaven and earth in a single peace. Let the design of your great love shine on the waste of our wraths and sorrows, and give peace to your church, peace among nations, peace in our homes, and peace in our hearts. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

The Creator of all bless your Advent waiting,
the long-expected Savior fill you with love,
the life-giving Spirit guide your journey. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* (ELW 270) - next page

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord!
Thanks be to God.

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Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king;
 2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
 3 Hail the heav'n - born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righ - teous - ness!

peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled."
 late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
 Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God - head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

with an - gel - ic hosts pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!
 born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

Refrain
 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.
 Music: MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn, 1809-1847; arr. William H. Cummings, 1831-1915