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December 22, 2024

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

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Rev. Ken Bersche

Maggie Kent, Secretary

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## Prelude

## Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

*Matthew 28:19b*

**Amen.**

## Lighting of the Advent Wreath

We light the fourth Advent candle as we prepare for the arrival of the Savior, who would come to His people in human flesh and who promises to come again. In a world of darkness, a light shines. Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

**The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

*John 1:5*

The fourth Advent candle has been known as the angel candle and the candle of love. As our Advent season soon ends, we await the angelic message of the good news of a Savior. We have come to know the love of the one true God this season and always as we have prepared to celebrate His birth. We know God's promises come to fruition in Jesus, who later made known His Father's love in His being born into this world; in His life, ministry, teaching, preaching, healing; and ultimately in His dying and rising. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

*John 3:16*

**The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.**

*John 1:9*

Guided by the light of love, we respond with the psalmist: "Your steadfast love, O Lord, extends to the heavens, Your faithfulness to the clouds.

**Your righteousness is like the mountains of God; Your judgments are like the great deep; man and beast You save, O Lord.**

How precious is Your steadfast love, O God! The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of Your wings.

**They feast on the abundance of Your house, and You give them drink from the river of Your delights.**

For with You is the fountain of life;

**In Your light do we see light."**

*Psalms 36:5-9*

## Processional Hymn *Please Stand*

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

♪ Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;  
With th' angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
~Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

♪ Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
Late in time behold Him come, Offspring of a virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail th' incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel! ~Hark!...

♪ Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with healing in His wings.  
Mild He lays His glory by, Born that man no more may die,  
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth. ~Hark!....

*Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 380 -Text: Charles Wesley 1707-88; Tune: Felix Mendelssohn 1809-47;  
Setting: William H. Cummings 1831-1915; Public Domain; LSBHymnLicense.net #100012386.*

## Confession and Absolution

Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

Our help is in the name of the Lord,

**Who made heaven and earth.**

*Psalm 124:8*

I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

**And You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

*Psalm 32:5*

Almighty God, our maker and redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto You that we are by nature sinful and unclean.

**Restore us, O God of hosts; let Your face shine, that we may be saved!**

*Psalm 80:7*

We have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed.

**Restore us, O God of hosts; let Your face shine, that we may be saved!**

*Psalm 80:7*

Wherefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Restore us, O God of hosts; let Your face shine, that we may be saved!**

*Psalm 80:7*

*A Time of Silence*

O most merciful God, who has given Your only-begotten Son to die for us,

**Have mercy upon us and for His sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by Your Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of You and of Your will and true obedience to Your Word, to the end that by Your grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us and has given His only Son to be born in our flesh, to die for us, and for His sake forgives us all our sins.

**Restore us, O God of hosts; let Your face shine, that we may be saved!**

*Psalm 80:7*

As a called and ordained servant of the Word and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and the Holy Spirit. To those who believe on His name He gives the power to become the children of God and has promised them His Holy Spirit. Those that believe and are baptized shall be saved. Grant this, Lord, to us all.

**Amen.**

## Prayer

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

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.

**Amen.**

### **Hymn of Praise** *Please Be Seated*

“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!

Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 361 -Text: Phillips Brooks 1835-93; Tune: Lewis H. Redner 1831-1908;  
Setting: Service Book and Hymnal 1958; Public Domain; LSBHymnLicense.net #100012386.

### **Old Testament Reading**

Micah 5:2–5a

<sup>2</sup>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.

<sup>3</sup>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.

<sup>4</sup>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.

<sup>5</sup>And he shall be their peace.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **The Epistle**

Hebrews 10:5–10

<sup>5</sup>Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,  
“Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me;

<sup>6</sup>in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.

<sup>7</sup>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.’”

<sup>8</sup>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),

<sup>9</sup>then he added, “Behold, I have come to do your will.” He does away with the first in order to establish the second.

<sup>10</sup>And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Gradual Hymn

“The Advent of Our King”

- ♪ The advent of our King Our prayers must now employ,  
And we must hymns of welcome sing In strains of holy joy.
- ♪ The everlasting Son Incarnate deigns to be,  
Himself a servant’s form puts on To set His servants free.
- ♪ O Zion’s daughter, rise To meet your lowly King,  
Nor let your faithless heart despise The peace He comes to bring.
- ♪ As judge, on clouds of light, He soon will come again  
And His true members all unite With Him in heav’n to reign.
- ♪ Before the dawning day Let sin’s dark deeds be gone,  
The sinful self be put away, The new self now put on.

*Please Stand*

- ♪ All glory to the Son, Who comes to set us free,  
With Father, Spirit, ever one Through all eternity.

Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 331-Text: Charles Coffin 1676-1749; tr. John Chandler 1800-76; Tune: Aaron Williams 1731-76;  
Setting: The Lutheran Hymnal 1941; Public Domain; LSBHymnLicense.net #100012386.

## Holy Gospel

Luke 1:39–56

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

**Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>39</sup>In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah,

<sup>40</sup>and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

<sup>41</sup>And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit,

<sup>42</sup>and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!

<sup>43</sup>And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

<sup>44</sup>For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.

<sup>45</sup>And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.”

<sup>46</sup>And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord,

<sup>47</sup>and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

<sup>48</sup>for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.

For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

<sup>49</sup>for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

<sup>50</sup>And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

<sup>51</sup>He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;  
<sup>52</sup>he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate;  
<sup>53</sup>he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.  
<sup>54</sup>He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,  
<sup>55</sup>as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”  
<sup>56</sup>And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.  
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to You, O Christ.**

## **Apostles' Creed**

### **Children's Message** *Please Be Seated*

### **The Hymn**

“What Child Is This”

- ♪ What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet While shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the king, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The babe, the son of Mary!
- ♪ Why lies He in such mean estate Where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here The silent Word is pleading.  
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through, The cross be borne for me, for you;  
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The babe, the son of Mary!
- ♪ So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh; Come, peasant, king, to own Him.  
The King of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone Him.  
Raise, raise the song on high, The virgin sings her lullaby;  
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The babe, the son of Mary!

Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 370-Text: William C. Dix 1837-98; Tune: English 16<sup>th</sup> cent.;  
Setting: John Stainer 1840-1901; Public Domain; LSBHymnLicense.net #100012386.

### **Proclamation of the Word**

“More than a Legend: It's Restoration”

Psalm 80:3, 7, & 19

### **Offering and Musical Offering**

#### **Prayer of the Church** *Please Stand*

Lord, in Your mercy,

**Restore us, O God of hosts; let Your face shine, that we may be saved!**

### **Benediction**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

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

The Lord look on You with favor and + give You peace.

**Amen.**

*Numbers 6:24-26*

**Recessional Hymn** *Please Be Seated*

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

- ♪ Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright Round yon virgin mother and child.  
Holy Infant, so tender and mild, Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.
- ♪ Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight; Glories stream from heaven afar,  
Heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia! Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!
- ♪ Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light Radiant beams from Thy holy face  
With the dawn of redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

*Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 363-Text: Franz Joseph Mohr 1792-1848; tr. John F. Young 1820-85;  
Tune: Franz Xavier Gruber 1787-1863; Public Domain; LSBHymnLicense.net #100012386.*

**Postlude**