

**WELCOME**



**PEACE**  
**LUTHERAN**

*come grow with us*

**Peace Lutheran Church**  
**Fourth Sunday of Advent**  
**December 22, 2024**

## **Introduction to the day**

Cradle and cross are inextricably connected on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Between a lovely tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and Mary's magnificent song of praise, the letter to the Hebrews reminds us in no uncertain terms that Christ's advent is for "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." It is the kind of tension in which the church always lives as when in holy communion—with high delight—"we proclaim the Lord's death."

## **GATHERING**

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

## **WELCOME**

## **PRELUDE**

## **THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

Today we light the candle of Faith.

In our world where churches lie empty, doors are shut, and people struggle with their faith, God, we call upon you to come. In our world where so many claim not to believe in you, we call upon you, El Shaddai, God Almighty to come. In this season of Advent, we wait for your presence to be felt in the lives of all of your children. We await the birth of Jesus, the Savior of All, who comes into our lives in a new way.

Light the last blue candle.

Let us pray,

**Dear God, we pray that our faith may be renewed each day, with each new sunrise, and may we relive the wonder of your love in our lives. In the name of Jesus the Christ, we pray. Amen.**

**THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE** *Light One Candle To Watch  
For Messiah Verse 4*

**Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah**



1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.  
2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.  
3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.  
4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.  
He shall feed the flock like a shep - herd, gent - ly lead them home - ward.  
Lift your heads and lift high the gate - way for the King of glo - ry.  
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954  
Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune  
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**ADVENT CALL TO WORSHIP: Luke 1:46b-55**

- <sup>46b</sup> My soul proclaims the greatness | of the Lord,  
<sup>47</sup> my spirit rejoices in | God my Savior,  
<sup>48</sup> **for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your | lowly servant.**  
**From this day all generations will | call me blessed:**  
<sup>49</sup> you, the Almighty, have done great | things for me  
and holy | is your name.  
<sup>50</sup> **You have mercy on | those who fear you,**  
**from generation to | generation.**  
<sup>51</sup> You have shown strength | with your arm  
and scattered the proud in | their conceit,  
<sup>52</sup> **casting down the mighty | from their thrones**  
**and lifting | up the lowly.**  
<sup>53</sup> You have filled the hungry | with good things  
and sent the rich | away empty.


54 **You have come to the aid of your** | servant **Israel,**  
**to remember the prom-** | ise of **mercy,**  
 55 the promise made | to our forebears,  
 to Abraham and his chil- | dren forever.

**GATHERING SONG** *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (ELW 257) Verses 1,4,5,6


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

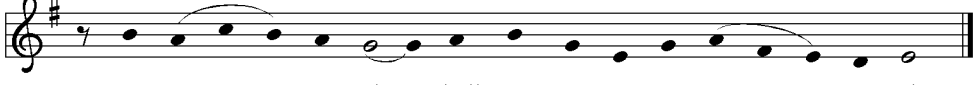


Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here  
 far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;  
 Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law  
 tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,



*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.

- 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*
- 6 O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;  
 O Sun of justice, now draw near.  
 Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
 and death's dark shadow put to flight. *Refrain*
- 7 O come, O King of nations, come,  
 O Cornerstone that binds in one:  
 refresh the hearts that long for you;  
 restore the broken, make us new. *Refrain*
- 8 O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
 and ransom captive Israel,  
 that mourns in lonely exile here  
 until the Son of God appear. *Refrain*

Text: *Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. composite  
 Music: VENI, EMMANUEL, French processional, 15th cent.  
 Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

## 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.**

## CANTICLE OF PRAISE *Blessed Be the God of Israel* (ELW 250)

### Blessed Be the God of Israel



1 Blessed be the God of Is - ra - el who comes to set us free  
2 With prom - ised mer - cy will God still the cov - e - nant re - call,  
3 My child, as proph - et of the Lord you will pre - pare the way,



and rais - es up new hope for us: a Branch from Da - vid's tree.  
the oath once sworn to A - bra - ham, from foes to save us all;  
to tell God's peo - ple they are saved from sin's e - ter - nal sway.



So have the proph - ets long de - clared that with a might - y arm  
that we might wor - ship with - out fear and of - fer lives of praise,  
Then shall God's mer - cy from on high shine forth and nev - er cease



God would turn back our en - e - mies and all who wish us harm.  
in ho - li - ness and righ - teous - ness to serve God all our days.  
to drive a - way the gloom of death and lead us in - to peace.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944, based on Luke 1:68-79

Music: FOREST GREEN, English folk tune

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## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

**Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## WORD

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

### **FIRST READING: Micah 5:2-5a**

A reading from Micah.

<sup>2</sup> But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,  
who are one of the little clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for me  
one who is to rule in Israel,  
whose origin 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 brought forth;  
then the rest of his kindred shall return  
to the people of Israel.

<sup>4</sup> And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD,  
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.  
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great  
to the ends of the earth;

<sup>5a</sup> and he shall be the one of peace.

Holy wisdom, Holy word.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **SECOND READING: Hebrews 10:5-10**

A reading from Hebrews.

<sup>5</sup> Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,

“Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; <sup>6</sup> in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.

<sup>7</sup> Then I said, ‘See, God, I have come to do your will, O God’  
(in the scroll of the book it is written of me).”

<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, “See, I have come to do your will.” He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. <sup>10</sup> And it is by God’s will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Holy wisdom, Holy word.

**Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *He Came Down* (ELW 253) Verse 4

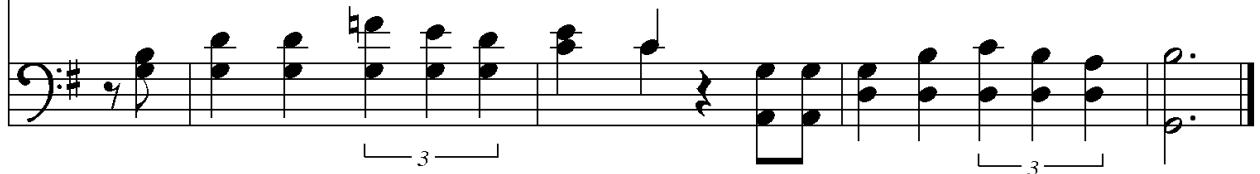
## He Came Down



- 1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;
- 2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;
- 3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;
- 4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;



he came down that we may have love;  
he came down that we may have light; hal-le-lu-jah for-ev-er-more.  
he came down that we may have peace;  
he came down that we may have joy;



Text: Cameroon traditional

Music: HE CAME DOWN, Cameroon traditional; arr. John L. Bell, b. 1949

Arr. © 1986 Iona Community, GIA Publications, Inc., agent. 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.

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**GOSPEL: Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]**

The holy gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>39</sup> In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup> where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup> When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup> and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup> And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup> For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child 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 by the Lord."

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**YOUTH MESSAGE**

**MESSAGE** - Pastor Neil Brady



HYMN OF THE DAY *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came* (ELW 265)

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came



1 The an - gel Ga - bri - el from heav - en came,  
2 "For know a bless - ed moth - er thou shalt be,  
3 Then gen - tle Mar - y meek - ly bowed her head;  
4 Of her, Em - man - u - el, the Christ, was born



with wings as drift - ed snow, with eyes as flame:  
all gen - er - a - tions laud and hon - or thee;  
"To me be as it pleas - eth God," she said.  
in Beth - le - hem all on a Christ - mas morn,



"All hail to thee, O low - ly maid - en Mar - y,  
thy son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told,  
"My soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy God's ho - ly name."  
and Chris - tian folk through - out the world will ev - er say:



most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."  
most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."      Glo - ri - a!  
Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy,  
"Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."

Text: Basque carol; para. Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834–1924  
Music: GABRIEL'S MESSAGE, Basque carol

## **THE CREED.**

Please join as we together profess our faith using the words of the 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**

As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

God our sovereign, Mary proclaims a new way of life that lifts up the lowly and fills the hungry with good things. Instill in all of your children the desire to care for all who are overlooked and ignored. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God our guide, shepherd the leadership of this congregation. Bless the council and staff in discerning future ministry and open their hearts to the voices of the community. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Healing God, bless those who are ill and under doctors' care with your continued presence. Grant all your strength, healing, and love. We especially remember in our prayers \_\_\_\_\_ and all who we name aloud or in the silence of our hearts. Be with your children in their time of need. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God our life, you remember the promises you have made to your people. In gratitude for those who have died, especially Walt Hayward who was laid to rest this past week. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We remember in our prayers those who join us in the ministry and in the proclamation of the Word of God, especially our Prayer Partners, Rev. Kenneth Babcock, and the people of St. John's Lutheran Church in Baroda, Michigan. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

### **PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.  
**And also with you.**

### **MEAL**

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

### **OFFERING**

This morning, during our offering, the choir will be singing.

**CHOIR ANTHEM** "The Advent of Our God," by Richard Shephard.

### **OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray,

**Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars,  
and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine.  
Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of  
your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,



heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho-san - na in the high - est.



Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -



san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

## LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

God feeds us with tender mercy.  
Come to the table.

## O LAMB OF GOD



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;  
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;  
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.  
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.  
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

# COMMUNION HYMN *My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness* (ELW 251)

## My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness

1 My soul pro-claims your great-ness, Lord; I sing my Sav - ior's praise!  
2 To all who live in ho - ly fear your mer - cy ev - er flows.  
3 To Is - ra - el, your ser - vant blest, your help is ev - er sure;

You looked up - on my low - li - ness, and I am full of grace.  
With might - y arm you dash the proud, their schem - ing hearts ex - pose.  
the prom - ise to our par - ents made their chil - dren will se - cure.

Now ev - 'ry land and ev - 'ry age this bless - ing shall pro - claim—  
The ruth - less you have cast a - side, the low - ly throned in - stead;  
Sing glo - ry to the Ho - ly One, give hon - or to the Word,

great won - ders you have done for me, and ho - ly is your name.  
the hun - gry filled with all good things, the rich sent off un - fed.  
and praise the Pow'r of the Most High, one God, by all a - dored.

Text: *With One Voice*, 1995, based on the Magnificat  
Music: KINGSFOLD, English folk tune; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872–1958  
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Outside USA: Arr. from *The English Hymnal*, © Oxford University Press 1906. All rights reserved.

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## **POST COMMUNION BLESSING**

Sisters and brothers, may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ continue to strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray,

**Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name. Amen.**

## **SENDING**

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

## **PASTOR'S PRAYER**

Sisters and brothers, this morning's Gospel speaks to our core – and it addresses our faith. I pray we hold steadfast in our faith as we journey together, knowing we have been blessed as children of the Most High.

## **BLESSING**

May God give you strength and courage to keep watch for the One who is coming.

May God give us to one another so we remember we are not alone.

May God give us to the world to prepare the way for the coming kingdom.

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

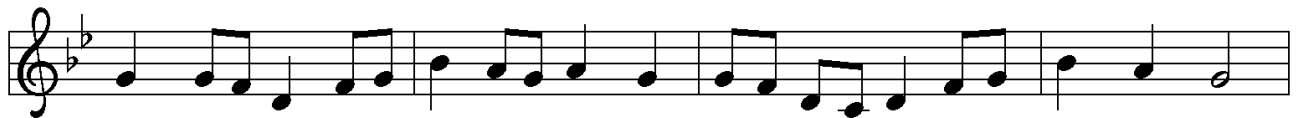
**Amen.**

**SENDING SONG** *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* (ELW 254)

**Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus**



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;  
2 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.  
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,  
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long-ing heart.  
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788  
Music: JEFFERSON, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**