



***Welcome to
St. Paul Lutheran Church
Child Development Center and Pre-School
Rev. Dr. George R. Qualley, D.R.S., Ph.D., Pastor***

December 22, 2024



Mary Visits Elizabeth

Luke 1:39 – 45



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ADVENT

PREPARE for CHRIST

WELCOME

WE'RE GLAD YOU JOINED US



lcmmc

Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ



lcmc
Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ

**Brunch will resume
in January**

INTRODUCTION

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."

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATHE PRAYER – Fourth Sunday of Advent

Praise to you, O God, who lives with us, sharing our flesh and bones. As Mary waited and Joseph dreamed, so we dream and wait for you. Bless us and let your face shine upon us, more radiant than these candles, and more dear than all else we seek. Restore us when we fail to refuse the evil and choose the good, and banish all our fears. We pray in the name of Emmanuel, your promised child and our Savior.

Amen.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,
alive in the world,
reviving creation,
arriving soon.

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of mercy,

we confess that we have sinned.

We trust earthly powers and human authority alone.

We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

God of might,

we confess that we have sinned.

We have turned away from our neighbors.

We have trusted false promises.

God in our midst,
we confess that we have sinned.
We plead: come to us.
Bring your mercy to birth in us.

A righteous branch springs forth:
it is Christ the Lord, our Savior,
in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy.
By the power of the Holy Spirit,
receive the grace and forgiveness of God
through + Christ Jesus,
whose day draws near.
Amen.

Gathering Hymn

“Hark, the Glad Sound”

Hymn # 239

**¹ Hark the glad sound!
The Savior comes,
the Savior promised long;
let ev'ry heart prepare a throne
and ev'ry voice a song.**

Hymn # 239

**2 He comes the pris'ners
to release,
in Satan's bondage held.
The gates of brass before Him
burst, the iron fetters yield.**

Hymn # 239

**3 He comes the broken
heart to bind,
the bleeding soul to cure,
and with the treasures of his
grace to enrich the humble
poor.**

Hymn # 239

**Final Our glad hosannas,
Prince of Peace,
your welcome shall proclaim,
and heav'n's eternal arches
ring with your beloved name.**

Hymn # 239

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.

Kyrie

Kyrie eleison

Lord, have mercy.

Christe eleison

Christ, have mercy.

Kyrie eleison

Lord, have mercy.

Glory To God

*Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest,
glory to God, glory to God,
and peace to God's people on
earth.*

*Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you
thanks, we praise you for your
glory.*

[Refrain]

[Refrain]

*Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest,
glory to God, glory to God,
and peace to God's people on
earth.*

*Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the
Father, Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us; you are seated
at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.*

[Refrain]

[Refrain]

*Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest,
glory to God, glory to God,
and peace to God's people on
earth.*

*For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord
you alone are the Most High, Jesus
Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the
glory of God the Father. Amen.*

[Refrain]

[Refrain]

*Glory to God, glory to God,
glory to God in the highest,
glory to God, glory to God,
and peace to God's people on
earth, and peace to God's people
on earth.*

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

FIRST READING: Micah 5:2-5a

The prophet Micah, having pronounced judgment upon Judah, speaks of a future shepherd-king who, like David, will come from the small town of Bethlehem. (Ephrathah refers to the area around Bethlehem.) This king will restore Israel and bring peace. New Testament writers understood this passage to be referring to Jesus.

²But 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.

³Therefore 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. ⁴And 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; ^{5a}and he shall be the one of peace.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: PSALMODY: Luke 1:46b-55

You, Lord, have lifted up the lowly. (Luke 1:52)

^{46b} My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,

⁴⁷ my spirit rejoices in | God my Savior,

⁴⁸ **for you, Lord, have looked with favor
on your lowly servant.**

**From this day all generations will call
me blessed:**

⁴⁹ you, the Almighty, have done great things for me
and holy is your name.

⁵⁰ **You have mercy on those who fear
you,
from generation to generation.**

⁵¹ You have shown strength with your arm
and scattered the proud in their conceit,

⁵² **casting down the mighty from their
thrones
and lifting up the lowly.**

53 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 promise of mercy,**

55 the promise made to our forebears,
to Abraham and his children forever.

SECOND READING: Hebrews 10:5-10

The author of Hebrews uses the image of religious sacrifice to convey the significance of Christ's coming. Through obedient acceptance of God's will, Christ allows his own body to become the greatest sacrifice of all, one through which we are made a holy people.

⁵Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; ⁶in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. ⁷Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God' (in the scroll of the book it is written of me)." ⁸When 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),

⁹then he added, "See, I have come to do your will."
He abolishes the first in order to establish the
second. ¹⁰And it is by God's will that we have been
sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus
Christ once for all.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia.

Lord, to whom shall we go?

Alleluia.

You have the words of eternal Life.

Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL

The Holy Gospel according to Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]

Glory to you, O Lord.

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

Elizabeth, John's mother, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, are two women filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith. In Elizabeth's inspired greeting and Mary's song of praise we hear of a saving God who remembers, scatters, lifts up, and fulfills all things.

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

⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

[⁴⁶And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

⁵⁰His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.

⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of
their hearts.

⁵²He has brought down the powerful from their
thrones, and lifted up the lowly;

⁵³he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
⁵⁵according to the promise he made to our
ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants
forever."]

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



CHILDREN'S
SERMON

Sermon

Rev. Dr. George R. Qualley



Hymn of the Day

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”

Hymn # 257

**¹ O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.**

[Refrain]

Hymn # 257

[Refrain]

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

Hymn # 257

**2 O come, O Wisdom from on high,
embracing all things far and nigh;
in strength and beauty come and
stay
teach us your will and guide our
way.**

Hymn # 257

[Refrain]

[Refrain]

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

Hymn # 257

**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]

Hymn # 257

[Refrain]

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

Hymn # 257

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

[Refrain]

Hymn # 257

[Refrain]

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

Hymn # 257

**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]

Hymn # 257

[Refrain]

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

Hymn # 257

**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]

Hymn # 257

[Refrain]

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

Hymn # 257

**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]

Hymn # 257

[Refrain]

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

Hymn # 257

**Final O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.**

[Refrain]

Hymn # 257

[Refrain]

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

Hymn # 257

With the whole church let us confess our faith.

CREED

The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and
the virgin Mary and became truly
human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under
Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of
the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to
judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the
Son,
who with the Father and the Son is
worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. 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.

A brief silence.

God our uniter, increase communication and cooperation in our relationships with those of other traditions and religions. Root your church in the radical message of your incarnation, and enable us to pursue your justice in the world. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God our creator, we praise you for the beauty that surrounds us. Awaken in us a renewed sense of care for the wildlife in our communities. Form us into faithful stewards of what you have made. Lord, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

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

God our beacon, as the northern hemisphere begins its slow turn toward more daylight, remind us that even in the deepest nights, you are there. Comfort the lonely and bereaved. Hold closely the frightened, anxious, depressed, and ill (especially). 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.

We pray for all our military, especially those deployed. We keep in our prayers all the Wounded Warriors that have returned home to heal. We pray for our missionaries: for Cheryl Kruckemeyer our missionary in Tanzania, for Shedd & Kris in Ecuador, serving with the World Mission Prayer League, and for our sister congregations at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Taylor, Texas & Evangelical Lutheran Church Of Mankato in Mankato, Kansas. Bless and protect all our local nurses, doctors, healthcare workers and first responders, our students, teachers and school administrators. Lord, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Heavenly Father, thank you for knitting your church together as one body in Christ. We thank you for being a part of our family of churches, Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ. We ask that you bless and protect the work of our association staff ministers: Mike Bradley, Christian Huntley, and Julie Smith. We also celebrate and lift before you the ministry of New Hope in McDade, Texas and their pastor, Ryan Grube. Bless their work for your Kingdom's sake. 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, we praise you for your faithfulness throughout history. 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. Amen.

Canticle of Thanksgiving

Refrain ***Salvation belongs to our God
and to Christ the Lamb for ever and
ever.***

¹ Great and wonderful are your deeds, O God of the universe; just and true are your ways, O Ruler of all the nations.

Who can fail to honor you, Lord, and sing the glory of your name?

Refrain **Salvation belongs to our God
and to Christ the Lamb forever and
ever.**

***2 For you alone are the Holy One,
and blessed is the one whose
name is the Word of God.
All praise and thanks to you, holy
God!***

Refrain **Salvation belongs to our God
and to Christ the Lamb forever and
ever.**

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Let us pray.

O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

Amen.

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

THE 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.**

SENDING

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and † give you
peace.

Amen.

Sending Song

“Joy to the World”

Hymn # 267

**¹ Joy to the world, the Lord is
come!**

**Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room**

Hymn # 267

**and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and
nature sing.**

Hymn # 267

**2 Joy to the earth, the Savior
reigns!**

**Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks,
hills, and plains**

Hymn # 267

**repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding
joy.**

Hymn # 267

**3 No more let sin and sorrow
grow
nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his
blessings flow**

Hymn # 267

**far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is
found.**

Hymn # 267

**Final He rules the world with
truth and grace
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his
righteousness**

Hymn # 267

**and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his
love.**

Hymn # 267

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

Thanks be to God.

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