

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Faith Lutheran Church

We Are Waiting and at Peace

December 24, 2023



AS WE GATHER: Advent is the season of waiting! Soon and very soon our waiting and planning for Christmas celebrations will come to their close, and we will rejoice in Christ's coming to save us. Such waiting and planning for Christmas can also guide us as we prepare for Christ's final advent, His ultimate coming, when He returns on the Last Day. Until that glorious

Day, when all portions of God's plan for our salvation will be accomplished, we are blessed with the peace "which surpasses all understanding" (Philippians 4:7). Such peace is an amazing gift that the Lord gave to the virgin Mary, the mother of our Lord, when she received God's Word from the angel Gabriel and then carried our salvation in her womb, delivering Jesus into the world. "Let it be to me according to your word," she said (Luke 1:38). May we say the same as we gather this day and, like Mary, receive the peace that God alone can give.

PREPARATION

Advent Video: Love

Sharing of Peace: We greet one another with the peace of Christ.

Opening Hymn Great Is Thy Faithfulness #809 sts. 1, ref, 3

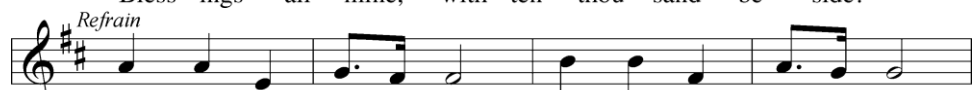
1 Great is Thy faith - ful - ness, O God my Fa - ther;
3 Par - don for sin and a peace that en - dur - eth,
There is no shad - ow of turn - ing with Thee.
Thine own dear pres - ence to cheer and to guide;



Thou chang - est not: Thy com - pas - sions, they fail not;
Strength for to - day and bright hope for to - mor - row,



As Thou hast been, Thou for - ev - er wilt be.
Bless - ings all mine, with ten thou - sand be - side!



Refrain

Great is Thy faith - ful - ness! Great is Thy faith - ful - ness!



Morn - ing by morn - ing new mer - cies I see;



All I have need - ed Thy hand hath pro - vid - ed;



Great is Thy faith - ful - ness, Lord, un - to me!

Text: Thomas O. Chisholm, 1866–1960. Tune: William M. Runyan, 1870–1957. Text: Public domain
Tune: Public domain

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

All four Advent candles are lit.

Hymn O Come, O Come, Emmanuel #357 sts. 1, ref, 2–4



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, And ran - som
2 O come, Thou Wis - dom from on high, Who or - d'rest
3 O come, O come, Thou Lord of might, Who to Thy
4 O come, Thou Branch of Jes - se's tree, Free them from

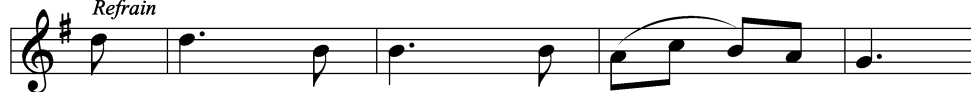


cap - tive Is - ra - el, That mourns in lone - ly
 all things might - i - ly; To us the path of
 tribes on Si - nai's height In an - cient times didst
 Sa - tan's tyr - an - ny That trust Thy might - y



ex - ile here Un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 knowl - edge show, And teach us in her ways to go.
 give the Law In cloud and maj - es - ty and awe.
 pow'r to save, And give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.

Refrain



Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el



Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

Text: Latin, c. 12th cent.; Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum, 1710, Köln; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–66, alt.
 Tune: French, 15th cent. Text and tune: Public domain.

P Let us pray.
 O Lord, let the lighting of these candles signify that You are the light that shines in all the darkness of our lives. As we wait, watch, hope, and pray, guide us all to reflect Your light and let it shine; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

Opening Sentences

Psalms 37:7a, 34a; Isaiah 30:18

P Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him.

C Wait for the LORD and keep His way.

P The LORD waits to be gracious to you.

C He exalts Himself to show mercy to you.

P For the LORD is a God of justice;

C blessed are all those who wait for Him.

Confession and Absolution

P When God first created man, Adam and Eve were God's friends; they could see His love and were spiritually alive with faith. After man sinned, this friendship with God was lost—not only for them, but for all their descendants, including you and me. From that time on, all were dead in their trespasses and sin. We come now before God and confess our sin.

G **Father, we are sorry for our sin. We are sorry for changing Your world of harmony and peace into a world of disharmony and chaos. We are sorry for the changes our sin has caused in our relationships with our friends, our family, our neighbours. We ask Your forgiveness, that You may change us again. Renew us, O Lord, as You restore to us the joy of Your salvation.**

P God's love is great. He loves you and forgives all of your sin, bringing you forgiveness through Jesus Christ, who gave His life in death to pay for sin. All who believe will not perish, but have everlasting life. Even now, He claims you as His friend. You are free from your sin in the name of the Father and the ✠ Son and the Holy Spirit.

G **Amen.**

WORD

Introit

Psalm 19:1, 4c, 5–6; antiphon: Isaiah 45:8a, b

P Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain down righteousness;

G **let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may bear fruit.**

P The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims His handiwork.

G **In them He has set a tent for the sun,**

P which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber,

C and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy.

P Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them,

C and there is nothing hidden from its heat.

Glory be 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.

P Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain down righteousness;

C let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may bear fruit.

Kyrie

LSB 204

C Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

Salutation

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray.

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might,

C that we may experience the peace of knowing all things are possible with You;

P for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Old Testament Reading 2 Samuel 7:1–11, 16 (“Your throne shall be established forever.”)

¹Now when the king lived in his house and the LORD had given him rest from all his surrounding enemies, ²the king said to Nathan the

prophet, “See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent.” ³And Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that is in your heart, for the LORD is with you.”

⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, ⁵“Go and tell my servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD: Would you build me a house to dwell in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling. ⁷In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?”’” ⁸Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. ⁹And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. . . . ¹⁶And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.’”

L This is the Word of the Lord.

G **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle *Romans 16:25–27* (“To the only wise God be glory forevermore.”)

²⁵Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring

about the obedience of faith— ²⁷to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Verse

Matthew 1:23a

P Alleluia. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,

C and they shall call His name Immanuel. Alleluia.

Holy Gospel *Luke 1:26–38* (God reveals His eternal plan of salvation to the virgin Mary.)

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

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" ²⁹But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

³⁴And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

³⁵And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. ³⁶And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Nicene Creed

C 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.

Sermon Hymn Prepare the Royal Highway #343



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; The King of kings is near!
2 God's peo - ple, see Him com - ing; Your own e - ter - nal king!
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen To greet your prom-ised king!
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; It comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley A lev - el road ap - pear!
 Palm branch-es strew be - fore Him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
 Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion Its trib - ute too should bring.
 His rule is peace and free - dom And jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of Glo - ry Fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
 God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
 All lands, bow down be - fore Him! All na - tions, now a - dore Him!
 So let your praise be sound - ing For kind - ness so a - bound - ing:

Refrain



Ho - san - na to the Lord, For He ful - fills God's Word!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. Lutheran Book of Worship, 1978, alt. Tune: Swedish, 17th cent. Text: © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110006139. Tune: Public domain

Sermon

Offering and Hymn “My Soul Rejoices” #933



1 My soul re - joic - es, My spir - it voic - es— Sing the
 2 His arm now bar - ing, His strength de - clar - ing— Sing the



great - ness of the Lord! For God my Sav - ior Has shown me
 great - ness of the Lord! The proud He scat - ters, Their rule He



fa - vor— Sing the great - ness of the Lord! With praise and
 shat - ters— Sing the great - ness of the Lord! Op - pres - sion



bles - sing, Join in con - fess - ing God, who is sole - ly Might - y and
 halt - ed; The meek ex - alt - ed. Full are the hun - gry; Emp - ty, the



ho - ly— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord! His mer - cy
wealth-y— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord! Here is the



sure - ly Shall rest se - cure - ly On all who fear Him,
to - ken All that was spo - ken To A - br'ham's off - spring



Love and re - vere Him— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord!
God is ful - fill - ing— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord!

Text: Stephen P. Starke, 1955. Tune: Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi, c. 1556–c. 1622. Text: © 1991 Stephen P. Starke, admin. Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110006139
Tune: Public domain

Prayer of the Church

Romans 5:1–2; Philippians 4:7; John 14:27; Luke 2:14

P In the peace of Christ, our coming King, let us bring our prayers before our gracious God.

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

C **Through Him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand.**

P For God's amazing plan of salvation to reach into our hearts, that all those for whom Christ Jesus came into this world may know the hope, love, joy, and peace of sins forgiven; for perfect peace to reign in the hearts and minds of all who believe, that we may be the Lord's instruments of peace in a world filled with troubles; in peace, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,

C **will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**

P For the outpouring of the Spirit of peace upon the Church of Christ Jesus, that all who wait for His appearing would be strengthened in their faith and renewed in their boldness to confess His saving name before all the world; for all those who doubt God’s plan for their lives, that like the virgin Mary, the Holy Spirit would make His Word come alive in them, transforming them from the inside out; in peace, let us pray to the Lord:

G **Lord, have mercy.**

P Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you.

G **Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”**

P For the comfort and peace of Jesus to touch the lives of all who experience suffering, [*including . . .*]; for Christ’s peace to dwell among us as we celebrate His coming to save us, looking forward to the ultimate Day in which He will come again in all power and glory; in peace, let us pray to the Lord:

G **Lord, have mercy.**

Other petitions. Let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

P With hearts of gratitude and praise, we join with the hosts of heaven and say:

G **“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!”**

P Into Your hands, O gracious God, we entrust our prayers, through Jesus Christ, our King and Savior, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

G **Amen.**

✠ **A Carol Setting for Holy Communion** ✠

The Preface..... Good King Wenceslas

P May the Lord be with you all.

C **And with you, his servant.**

P Lift your hearts unto the Lord.

C **Lift we hearts most fervent.**

P Let us give our thanks to God, God made man confessing.

C **Good and right it is to do, and it has His blessing.**

The Great Thanksgiving..... Pastor

P Blessing and honour and glory and power be unto you, Almighty God eternal Lord, merciful Father! Long ago, you made us in Your image; and though we shattered it, in Your mercy You sent Your Son to restore Your image in us. Having suffered for us and died our death, He lives and reigns at Your right hand. And so with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise Your name and join in their unending hymn.

The Sanctus..... Angels We Have Heard on High [Tune LSB #368]

C **Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of Hosts, all praise be given!
All Your glory fills the earth, All Your power fills the heavens!
Gloria in excelsis deo!
Blessed is the King who came, Bringing love and light divine!
Blessed is the King who comes In the bread and in the wine!
Gloria in excelsis deo!**

The Lord's Prayer.....Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

[Tune LSB #380]

C **God our Father, God of Fame, Hallow'd be Your saving Name;
Everywhere Your kingdom come, Far away and here at home;
May we to Your will comply As the angels do on high;
Grant each day our daily bread, Thankful that by You we're fed,
Thankful that our care You've planned; All we have is from Your
hand.**

Grant that we, our sins forgiv'n, Follow in the way of heav in;
 May we, even at our worst, Show forgiveness shown us first.
 Guard us from the tempting devil, And deliver us from evil.
 Yours the kingdom, so sing we, Pow'r and glory ever be
 Unto You while ages run. Yea, Amen! So be it done!

THE CONSECRATION. Pastor

The Agnus Dei..... Once in Royal David's City [Tune LSB #376]

C Lamb of God, the world's Redeemer, Mercy to Your people give.
 Lamb of God, the world's Redeemer, May we in Your mercy live.
 Lamb of God, we all implore: Grant us peace forevermore.

Distribution Hymns

Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord #352



1 Let the earth now praise the Lord, Who has tru - ly
 2 What the Fa - thers most de - sired, What the proph - ets'
 3 A - bram's prom - ised great re - ward, Zi - on's help - er,
 4 As Your com - ing was in peace, Qui - et, full of



kept His word And at last to us did send
 heart in - spired, What they longed for man - y a year,
 Ja - cob's Lord— Him of two - fold race be - hold—
 gen - tle - ness, Let the same mind dwell in me



Christ, the sin - ner's help and friend.
 Stands ful - filled in glo - ry here.
 Tru - ly came, as long fore - told.
 Which is Yours e - ter - nal - ly.

5 Bruise for me the serpent's head
 That, set free from doubt and dread,
 I may cling to You in faith,
 Safely kept through life and death.

6 Then when You will come again
 As the glorious king to reign,
 I with joy will see Your face,
 Freely ransomed by Your grace.

Text: Heinrich Held, 1620–59; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt. Tune: Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn, 1524, Wittenberg, ed. Johann Walter. Text and tune: Public domain

The Death of Jesus Christ, Our Lord #634



1 The death of Je - sus Christ, our Lord, We cel - e -
 2 He blot - ted out with His own blood The judg - ment
 3 That this for - ev - er true shall be He gives a
 4 His Word pro - claims and we be - lieve That in this



brate with one ac - cord; It is our com - fort
 that a - gainst us stood; For us He full a -
 sol - emn guar - an - tee: In this His ho - ly
 Sup - per we re - ceive His ver - y bod - y,



in dis - tress, Our heart's sweet joy and hap - pi - ness.
 tone - ment made, And all our debt He ful - ly paid.
 Sup - per here We taste His love so sweet, so near.
 as He said, His ver - y blood for sin - ners shed.

5 We dare not ask how this can be,
 But simply hold the mystery
 And trust this word where life begins:
 "Given and shed for all your sins."

6 They who this word do not believe
 This food unworthily receive,
 Salvation here will never find—
 May we this warning keep in mind!

7 But blest is each believing guest
 Who in these promises finds rest;

For Jesus shall in love remain
With all who here His grace obtain.

- 8 Help us sincerely to believe
That we may worthily receive
Your Supper and in You find rest.
Amen! They who believe are blest.

Text (sts. 1–4, 6–8): Haquin Spegel, 1645–1714; (sts. 1–4, 6–8): tr. Olof Olsson, 1841–1900, alt.; (st. 5): composite.
Tune: Sammling alter und neuer . . . Melodien, 1742. Text and tune: Public domain

The Nunc Dimittis..... . Away In A Manger [Tune LSB #364]

- C** Lord, now in Your mercy Your servants release
As Your word has promised, Oh, grant us Your peace.
Our eyes Your salvation and mercy behold,
Prepared for the nations, as prophets foretold,

**A light to the Gentiles, by whom they now see
The glory of Isr'el, the promised one He
Who lives now and ever, the heaven's bright Sun,
With Father and Spirit eternally one.**

Post-Communion Collect

- P** We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

The BenedictionO Little Town of Bethlehem

[Tune LSB #361]

- P** The Lord now bless and keep you all And make His face to shine;
Lift up His face with shining grace And grant you peace divine.
- C** To Father, Son, and Spirit, Eternal Three in One,
All glory be eternally. Amen! So be it done!

Closing Hymn Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus #338



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, 1707–88, alt. Tune: Southern Harmony, 1835, New Haven. Text and tune: Public domain

Acknowledgments

Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series B, Quarter 1.

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