



**Christ
Lutheran**
CHURCH

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Season of Advent
December 10, 2023

We Welcome You to Christ Lutheran Church! We are a community of people sharing God's love through Christ and growing together in faith.

We celebrate all the ways we are made in the image of God, seeking to see God in everyone. We honor and respect each person's age, ethnicity, family composition, gender identity, gender expression, life history, mental well-being, physical ability, relationship status, sexual orientation, skin color, and socioeconomic standing. Together, we strive to love and serve our neighbor and all creation, including working toward racial and social justice. We would love to walk with you on this creative adventure* of faith, grace, and love.

** The first sermon ever preached at Christ Lutheran was titled "A Call to Creative Adventure."*

YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

At Christ Lutheran people of all backgrounds and experiences gather to worship because we all share a common hope: the life, death, and resurrection of Christ makes all things new, even us.

You will find everything that happens in worship printed in this bulletin, with hymns found in the red hymnals ("ELW") in the seats in front on you.

If you have a prayer request, the yellow cards in the seatback holders have a place for them; the other side is for any information you would like about Christ Lutheran. Please feel welcome to remain seated as necessary during the service.

CHILDREN ARE ALWAYS WELCOME IN CHURCH!

God's people come in all shapes and sizes – it is a gift to the whole community when the smallest of us are present! Sitting with parents and learning to treasure times of worship is the foundation for helping build a growing faith in a child's life. There's some noise and movement that we expect from little ones - feel free to make use of the **activity bags, doodle pads, bookshelf in the overflow area and cry room at the back of the sanctuary** as needed. Whatever sacrifice of energy and effort you make to include your children in worship is multiplied as the good news of God's love takes root in their lives!

WHEN NURSERY CARE IS NEEDED DURING WORSHIP

A fully equipped and staffed Nursery is available for both infants and toddlers during all services. The Nursery is located west of our gathering area in **Room 110**.

RESTROOMS

Men's and women's restrooms off the Gathering Area and Church Hall have changing tables, as does the all-gender restroom near the nursery. A second all-gender restroom is through the Vestry off the East hallway, past the Welcome Center.

HOLY COMMUNION

Holy Communion is the family meal of God's people, to which we come at Jesus' invitation. The body and blood of Christ, in the bread and wine, are his real presence with us and offer the gift of forgiveness because of his death and resurrection. Drawn together and strengthened by this meal, we are given a taste of the fullness of God's coming kingdom, and are equipped to be the hands and feet of God's love in the world. All baptized Christians are always welcome at the Lord's table.

Our services are on video, and occasional photographs are taken for our website and e-mail news.

If you have concerns, please speak to a church staff member.

Hearing assistance devices are available to those who need help with listening to the service and are located at the entrance to the sanctuary, or please see an Usher for assistance.

A Reminder: Please turn off all cell phones during worship services.

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

PRELUDE

An Advent Celebration

Ingram

WELCOME

If you are joining us for the first time, welcome! We'd love to meet you, or if there's anything you'd like to know about the ministry of Christ Lutheran Church, please consider [filling out a Connection Card online](#) (you can point your phone at the graphic to the right) or using a yellow Connection Card in the pew holders.



***Prayer requests** can be posted to the livechat or use a yellow Prayer Request (on the backside of the Connection Card) and give them to an usher.*

*If you are worshipping with us via livestream, consider **preparing your space for Communion**: light a candle (if appropriate and safe), and have a plate with bread/cracker/tortilla and a cup for wine or grape juice (or an empty cup as a sign Jesus is sufficient in one or both elements).*

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather today.

It is time to worship!

We listen for God.

It is time to hear!

We receive God's grace.

It is time to be loved!

We leave in peace.

It is time to serve others!

As we wait for Jesus' arrival,

Emmanuel, God-with-us,

is already here in this time and place.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

People of God, when we think that we have nowhere left to turn,
we can always turn to God.

Whether we feel frozen or are rushing with no time to rest,
whether it feels like life is happening to us too quickly
or like our lives will never change,
God is with us.

For God, there is always time for forgiveness.
We trust God, and we confess our sins together.

Time for reflection.

Holy One,

We have not stayed awake.

**We have missed you when you appeared
in our neighbors,**

**in strangers half a world away,
in the suffering planet.**

**We have wasted the time and the skills that you gave us
and assumed we were powerless to mend
the breaches in our world.**

**Sometimes, we even gave up
on your mercy, justice, and love.**

God, is it too late for us?

Speak tenderly to our anxious hearts.

Tear open the heavens and heal what we have done. Amen.

People of God,

God's judgment is certain
and God's forgiveness is lightning fast.

Hear this good news:

in the name of † Jesus Christ, all your sins are forgiven.

Forgiveness gives us the courage we need.

Wherever we wait for God's time to come,
we will witness wonders.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN ELW #264

Prepare the Royal Highway

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 may 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 will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
 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!

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.

Children: This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

The assembly is seated.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

“The grass withers; the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass.” (Isaiah 40:7)

Let us pray.

Everlasting God,
we are changeable.

We change our minds and our passions.

We grow and expand.

We age and fade.

Yet through all our changes,
you are constant.

You never leave us.

As we light another candle on this wreath,
lend us your patience and stability,
that we will know peace in all the changes of this life.

Amen.

SONG

Out of Time



1. Out of time, out of space, now we hope for bet - ter days, keep - ing
2. Time flows fast; make it slow, give more time for all we love. Time grows
3. When the earth yearns for peace and the peo - ple cry for bread with a



watch when the wait - ing wears us down. Drawn out thin, pulled in tight, search - ing
long; turn our wait - ing to its end. In our years, in our days, God, your
hun - ger that you a - lone can fill, we will pray, we will work, we will



for the break of day, will we ev - er find you draw - ing near?
good - ness is at work. Can it be you might be draw - ing near?
all pre - pare the way, and in time we find you draw - ing near.

Refrain



You come to us from just be - yond, you call to us from out of time,



you tear the heav - ens op - en wide, shin - ing love a - cross the star - lit sky.

WORD

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

When children read, they may read a version that is appropriate to their reading level and voice, which may vary from the printed texts.

CHILDREN'S TIME

Children come forward for a time together.

HANDBELL ANTHEM

Savior of the Nations, Come

arr. Austin

READING: Isaiah 40:1-11

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.
11 He 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

The congregation is invited to sing the psalm refrain when indicated (R). Verses will be chanted alternately by the leader and the people.

Refrain

Righ - teous - ness shall pre -
pare a path - way for God.

Psalm Tone

- 1 You have been gracious to your | land, O LORD;
you have restored the good for- | tune of Jacob.
- 2 **You have forgiven the iniquity | of your people
and blotted out | all their sins.**
- 8 I 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. R**
- 10 Steadfast 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 be- | fore the LORD
and peace shall prepare for | God a pathway. R**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The assembly stands to welcome the Gospel.



Al-le-lu - ia, al - le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia.



Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

HOLY GOSPEL: Mark 1:1-8

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.

The Holy Gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O 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

The assembly is seated. Time for reflection follows the sermon.

HYMN OF THE DAY ELW #266

All Earth is Hopeful

The assembly stands to proclaim the Word of God in song.



To - da la tie - rra es - pe - ra al Sal - va - dor
1 All earth is hope - ful, the Sav - ior comes at last!
2 Peo - ple of Is - rael, you heard the proph - et tell:
3 Moun - tains and val - leys will have to be pre - pared;
4 We first saw Je - sus a ba - by in a crib.



y el sur - co_a - bier - to, la ob - ra del Se - ñor; es el
Fur - rows lie o - pen for God's cre - a - tive task; this, the
"A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em - man - u - el"; she con -
new high - ways o - pened, new pro - to - cols de - clared. Al - most
This same Lord Je - sus to - day has come to live in our



mun - do que lu - cha por la li - ber - tad, re -
la - bor of peo - ple who strug - gle to see how
ceived him, "God with us," our broth - er, whose birth re -
here! God is near - ing, in beau - ty and grace! All
world; he is pres - ent, in neigh - bors we see our



cla - ma jus - ti - cia y bus - ca la ver - dad. dar - nos li - ber - tad.
God's truth and jus - tice set ev - 'ry - bod - y free.
stores hope and cour - age to chil - dren of this earth.
clear ev - 'ry gate - way, in haste, come out in haste!
Je - sus is with us, and ev - er sets us free.

- 2 *Dice el profeta al pueblo de Israel:*
"De madre virgen ya viene Emmanuel,"
será "Dios con nosotros," hermano será,
con él la esperanza al mundo volverá.
- 3 *Montes y valles habrá que preparar;*
nuevos caminos tenemos que trazar.
Él está ya muy cerca, venidlo a encontrar,
y todas las puertas abrid de par en par.

4 *En una cueva Jesús apareció,*
pero en el mundo está presente hoy.
Vive en nuestros hermanos, con ellos está;
y vuelve de nuevo a darnos libertad.

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.

**Or, "he descended into hell," another translation of this text in widespread use.*

PRAYERS

With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

A brief silence.

Send forth your faithful people with words of promise and forgiveness. Teach your church to be bold in revealing your good news in word and in deed.

Hurry, God. Hear our prayers.

Tear the heavens and come down.

Reveal your majesty in mountain peaks, flowing rivers, and blossoming wilderness roads. Heal the earth where it longs for renewal. Bring wholeness to the earth and all its creatures.

Hurry, God. Hear our prayers.

Tear the heavens and come down.

Turn the hearts of the nations toward righteousness and peace. Increase cooperation for justice between countries, commonwealths, political parties, and diplomatic leaders. In times of prosperity, direct leaders to be generous for the sake of all. In Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, strengthen those recovering from violence and environmental disasters and encourage churches in their witness.

Hurry, God. Hear our prayers.

Tear the heavens and come down.

Comfort your people with tender words of love and healing. Surround all who are grieving, all who know depression or anxiety, or all who feel lonely or forgotten. Be a steadfast presence when all else feels uncertain.

Hurry, God. Hear our prayers.

Tear the heavens and come down.

Grant holy patience to all who are waiting this season. Give hope to those seeking employment. Bring reassurance to people awaiting new diagnoses or treatments. Protect expectant parents. Watch with those who keep bedside vigil.

Hurry, God. Hear our prayers.

Tear the heavens and come down.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

With you a thousand years is like a day. Bless the memory of the saints from ages past and the anticipation of saints yet to be born. With Lucy and John of the Cross, inspire us to live with faith as we await your new heaven and new earth.

Hurry, God. Hear our prayers.

Tear the heavens and come down.

Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

*We invite those worshiping by livestream to share a sign of peace in the chat, and for those in person we turn to offer them our greeting of peace before sharing a sign of peace with one another: **Peace be with you!***

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

OFFERING

*This congregation serves our neighbors, community, and the world through the participation and support of its members and guests. Because offerings are never just about us, this month we are sharing a portion of your gifts with **Bethel Lutheran Church**, a diverse, urban ELCA congregation in the Miller neighborhood of Gary, Indiana (part of NW Indiana Conference of I-K Synod) <http://bethelmiller.org> and <http://facebook.com/bethelmillerbeach>.*

If you wish to give electronically, browse to our secure on-line portal at clcvalpo.org/give or use [our CLC app](#) (download at clcvalpo.org/app).



OFFERTORY ANTHEM (8:00 am):

A Shoot Shall Come Forth

Horn

A shoot shall come forth out of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of life shall be with him, the spirit of wisdom and truth. Then the lamb shall lie down with the leopard, and the lion eat straw with the ox, for the hand of a child shall lead them to the peaceable kingdom of God. From out of the wells of salvation will he draw us the water of life; his waist shall be girdled with justice, the heart of his heart shall be love. He'll come from the end of his heaven, and the earth shall be torn from its place; Our lives shall be filled with his radiance as floodwaters cover the sea.

(Based on Isaiah 11 & 32: 18)

OFFERTORY (10:30 am):

A la Venue de Noel

Balbastre

OFFERING PRAYER

The assembly stands as the gifts are brought forward.

Loving God,

For the time we have, we say:

Thank you.

For the gifts we offer, we say:

Thank you.

For the chance to help others, we say:

Thank you.

For the people whose lives will be better because of these gifts, we say:

Thank you.

For the ways you are changing the world, we say:

Thank you.

We pray in the name of Jesus, who appears wherever people need our help.

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.

TABLE PRAYER

...and so, with joyful hearts, we join the angels in their song:

(An ancient practice invites us to make the sign of the cross in honor of Jesus at the words "Blessed is the one.")



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and



God of might, heav - en and earth are full of your



glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.



Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of the



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



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

...we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

...into your kingdom of perfect mercy, justice, and love.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Children: The Spirit makes us one. We pray as Jesus taught us:



Our Fa-ther in heav-en, hal-lowed be your name,
your king-dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heav-en.
Give us to-day our dai-ly bread. For-give us our sins as we
for-give those who sin a-against us. Save us from the time of tri-al
and de-liv-er us from e-vil. For the king-dom, the pow'r,
and the glo-ry are yours, now and for-ev-er. A-men.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

The time is now! Taste and see God's goodness!

Thanks be to God.

DISTRIBUTION

The assembly is seated.

***Holy Communion** is the family meal of God's people, to which we come at Jesus' invitation. The body and blood of Christ, in the bread and wine, are his real presence with us and offer the gift of forgiveness because of his death and resurrection. Drawn together and strengthened by this meal, we are given a taste of the fullness of God's coming kingdom, and are equipped to be the hands and feet of God's love in the world. All baptized Christians are always welcome at the Lord's table.*

*The pastor invites those worshipping via **livestream** to commune:*

The body of Christ, given for you.

Amen (receive the bread)

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen (receive the cup)

In-person distribution: When indicated by the ushers, come up the right-hand ramp to approach the altar rail. When finished you may leave individually without being dismissed. **WINE** is lighter-colored, and **GRAPE JUICE** is dark; they are received via individual cups in the trays. The **COMMON CUP** is available for anyone who wishes. **USED GLASSES** are placed in the basket located near the ramp. **GLUTEN-FREE BREAD IS AVAILABLE**, please indicate to the server that you require this. Also, if you unable to come up to the altar, let the usher know so that pastor can bring communion to you.

LAMB OF GOD



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the



world; grant us peace, grant us peace.



1 There's a voice in the wil - der - ness cry - ing, a
 2 O Je - ru - sa - lem, her - ald good tid - ings, as -
 3 But the word of our Sav - ior is faith - ful, the



call from the ways un - trod: Pre - pare in the des - ert a
 cend to the heights and sing! Pro - claim to a des - o - late
 arm of our God is strong, who stands in the midst of the



high - way, a high - way for our God!
 peo - ple the com - ing of their king.
 na - tions and soon will right the wrong.



The val - leys shall be ex - alt - ed, the
 Like flow'rs of the field we per - ish, like
 Lord, feed your flock like a shep - herd, the



loft - y hills brought low; make straight all the crook - ed
 grass our works de - cay; the pow'r and the pomp of
 lambs so gent - ly hold; in pas - tures of peace now



plac - es where God, our God, may go!
 na - tions shall pass like a dream a - way.
 lead them, and bring them to your fold.

Text: James Lewis Milligan, 1876-1961, alt.
 Music: ASCENSION, Henry Hugh Bancroft, 1904-1988
 Music © Estate of Eldred Bancroft, B. Burrows, Executor.

ELW #249 *On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry*

1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an - nounc - es
 2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; make straight the
 3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our ref - uge
 4 Stretch forth your hand, our health re - store, and make us
 5 All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, whose ad - vent

that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,
 way for God with - in, and let us all our
 and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we
 rise to fall no more; oh, let your face up -
 has our free - dom won, whom with the Fa - ther

for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings!
 hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.
 waste a - way like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.
 on us shine and fill the world with love di - vine.
 we a - dore, and Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.

Text: Charles Coffin, 1676-1749; tr. composite
 Music: PUER NOBIS, European tune, adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571-1621

After all have returned to their places, the assembly stands as the minister continues.
The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Blessed be your name, O God, for we have feasted on your Word, Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts. Strengthened by this food, send us to gather the world to your banquet, where none are left out and all are satisfied. In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

INVITATIONS

Brief invitations are shared, especially those related to the assembly's participation in God's mission in the world.

SENDING CHARGE

As you leave this place, remember:
whether you feel patient or have no patience at all,
God is already ahead of you.
Keep alert; trust God; seek peace.

BLESSING

God our Creator, who made the starlit sky, blesses you.
Jesus ✠ our Redeemer, who arrives at just the right time, blesses you.
The Holy Spirit our Enlivener, who sparks hope for the hopeless, blesses you.
You are blessed in the name of God the Three in One.
Amen.

SENDING HYMN ELW #244 *Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers*

1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear;
 2 The watch - ers on the moun - tain pro - claim the bride - groom near;
 3 The saints, who here in pa - tience their cross and suf - f'ings bore,
 4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;

the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, and dark - er night is near.
 go forth as he ap - proach - es with al - le - lu - ias clear.
 shall live and reign for - ev - er when sor - row is no more.
 a - rise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this be - night - ed sphere.

The bride - groom is a - ris - ing and soon is draw - ing nigh.
 The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the gates wide o - pen stand.
 A - round the throne of glo - ry the Lamb they shall be - hold;
 With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see

Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; at mid - night comes the cry.
 A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the bride - groom is at hand.
 in tri - umph cast be - fore him their di - a - dems of gold.
 the day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple free!

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660–1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823–1907
 Music: HAF TRONES LAMPA FÄRDIG, Swedish folk tune

Children join the pastors to send us in mission

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Wait for the Lord.
Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Rejoice, Rejoice Believers

Manz

As worship concludes we move to the Gathering Place, where we are invited to greet one another and share in fellowship.



Worship Leaders

	<u>8:00 a.m.</u>	<u>10:30 a.m.</u>
Acolyte	Shawn Longacre	Joey Rodeck
Lector	Karl Reichardt	Phil McGuire
Prayer Assistant	Jorunn Scheiderich	Becky Fry
Communion Assistants	Betty Luckett Phyllis Schroeder	Holly Knauff Cindy McGuire
Ushers	Don MacMillan Tim Sutherland	
Sound/Light	Lance Nolting	Tony Reinhold
Video/Livestream	- - - - -	Adam Gibson-Even
Pastors	Rev. Timothy Knauff, Jr. Rev. Erica Gibson-Even	
Director of Music Ministries	Brian Bartusch	
Worship Participants:	Celebration Ringers Sanctuary Choir Madeline Fry, cantor	

Stewardship Snippet

“Let me hear what God the LORD will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.” –Psalm 85:8

Are you listening for what God is saying to you? To your congregation? All of God’s people? It’s hard to hear anything with the anxious noise of the world. Living right, we turn away from the noise and listen for God’s word of peace. And we live it!

COMMEMORATIONS ***Week of December 10***

December 13

Lucy, martyr, died 304

Lucy was a young Christian from Sicily who was martyred during the persecutions under Emperor Diocletian. Her celebration became particularly important in Sweden and Norway, perhaps because the feast of Lucia (whose name means “light”) originally fell on the shortest day of the year.

December 14

John of the Cross, renewer of the church, died 1591

John was a member of the Carmelite monastic order, and worked to reform it. His writings reflect a deep interest in mystical thought and meditation.

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

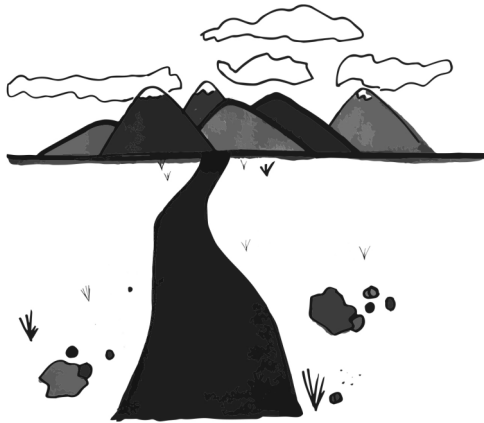
This week we pray for the churches and people of **Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam.**

We are **thankful** for:

- those who have remained in these countries through years of conflict and oppression
- Christians who bear witness in the region even though they are small in number
- the many who have provided for humanitarian assistance and peace-building
- refugees from these countries who are enriching the societies in which they now have made their home

We **pray** for:

- those who continue to bear physical and emotional scars from years of conflict
- victims of monsoons and other disasters in the region
- economic development to improve life for all people and the environment
- political stability amid competing powers



Advent Message

Out of Time

Have you ever had a calendar “push notification” pop up on your phone? When Advent arrives, it’s as though one of those push notifications appears in our collective Christian consciousness: *Jesus is on the way! Would you like to plan something?*

This urgency is not entirely due to our human rhythms of remembering and forgetting. As the church year barrels to its close and then careens into a new beginning, our scripture readings are preoccupied with time—*the day of the Lord, God’s time* versus *our time*, the mysterious scheduling of *the day and the hour*.

This urgency is intensified by the unpredictable way in which the lectionary interacts with time. The gospel lessons skip backward and forward over Jesus’ life like someone trying to find the right track on a vinyl recording: one week, Jesus speaks of a day to come, the next week, John the Baptist speaks of Jesus’ coming.

In Advent, past and future collapse into God’s present, and the lines blur between Jesus’ first and second arrivals.

This is chronologically disorienting in a way that seems intentional. God, who created time and exists beyond it, is busy within, around, and beyond our human experience of time.

Just what is God doing when it comes to time and to us? This Advent, we reflect on how God uses our experience of time to meet us, challenge us, bless us, shape us, and call us into holy endings and new beginnings.

We’ll explore two senses of being *out of time*. Advent thrusts upon us the reality that time is limited. We run out of time to reconcile, to prepare, to make a change. Yet even as *we* are running out of time, *God* is outside of time entirely.

God’s infinite being and infinite patience cut through our fear as God enters human time to dwell with us: *Emmanuel*, God-with-us.

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Portions from *Prayers for an Inclusive Church* by Steven Shakespeare.

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