

THE PARISH CONNECTION



**Tri-County Lutheran Parish
Issued on December 15, 2020**

Fourth Sunday in Advent

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From Pastor Sam

Advent Greetings!

At this stage in Advent, I daresay, we are all finding this season very different from years past. We may be unable to physically participate in certain events or activities. We may not feel the "spirit" of the season or feel motivated at all. It is all too easy to compare this year to previous years. We may judge our Advent preparations in light of this. Hopefully, we are finding some positive experiences as well!

Speaking for myself, I put a lot of unrealistic pressure on myself to create new memories for my family and deliver meaningful messages to you. I think it is important for all of us to take a deep breath, consider our circumstances and adjust our expectations. Psychologists will tell you that we are all in a collective stage of trauma and grief - and that takes a toll on everyone. We are in the midst of a pandemic. We have lost loved ones, opportunities, our sense of normalcy. Our country is experiencing political incivility. Our patience with all these circumstances is wearing thin.

And yet, we are still trying our best! We are generously donating to food pantries and providing gifts to those in need. We are making snugly blankets to keep children warm. We are reaching out to check on our neighbors. We are caring for others in the way we are called to. Does it look and feel the same? Maybe not, but I assure you, we are doing what is required of us.

Lutheran pastor and martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, *"Who will celebrate Christmas correctly? Whoever finally lays down all power, all honor, all reputation, all vanity, all arrogance, all individualism beside the manger."*

Jesus came into the world in the most humble of circumstances. It's ok for us to celebrate in our own humble ways. Mary and Joseph were dealing with unforeseen circumstances when they found no room at the inn, and they did the best they could. Mary knew what would be in store for her baby. I am certain she felt so many mixed emotions on that first Christmas. It's ok if you do, too.

Peace and abundant blessings,
Pastor Sam

News and Information

Please feel free to reach out to Pastor Sam (whiteginger20@gmail.com) or Pastor Beth (chellman4557@gmail.com) should you have a pastoral care concern. If you would like to reach both pastors at the same time, please email clergy@tclparish.org.

- If you have a congregational concern, please contact your council president.
- If you have a parish concern, please contact TCLP board president Harry Avery (harryavery@yahoo.com).
- If you have an HR concern, contact Phyllis Keeler or Jeannette Wilber at: hr@tclparish.org.

December Holiday Time

Please note....

Pastor Sam will be on vacation from December 26, 2020 to January 2, 2021.

We hope everyone has a happy and healthy Christmas Season!

December Worship Schedule (all on Zoom)

December 20: Sunday Worship, 10 am
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7700997419>

December 23: Wednesday Midweek Service, 6 pm; Book Study at 7 p.m.
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7700997419>

Christmas Eve!

Christmas Eve worship is packed with honored traditions that we all love and look forward to each year. We sing carols, light candles, sing Silent Night, and enjoy the sanctuary decked out with decorations and lights. We see people we haven't seen since Easter! But this year is different. To hold our honored worship will put many people at risk this year.

So, let's think about our Christmas Eve worship. It focuses on the birth of Jesus and how that birth impacts each of us. Then we leave for home and those living around the church building are left wondering what we were all doing in there for the past hour! This is the perfect opportunity to change that. Let's bring our worship to our communities!

Pastor Sam, Pastor Beth, and Vicar Care will have a full worship service available for you online. We will send you the link for that on Christmas Eve. You will be able to view it at a convenient time. But there is more we can do! Each congregation will gather outside at their church buildings. We will have a 15-minute service of Gospel reading, prayer, and singing! What better way to announce the birth of Christ to our communities than outside of our buildings singing praises?

You are welcome to wait in your cars if it is cold. Some locations have parking lots so you may be able to participate from your car. Please dress appropriately for the weather. Bring a lawn chair if you need one and a flashlight or battery candle for when we sing "Silent Night". We will then head to our cars singing "Joy to the World".

Here is the schedule:

Hudson - 3pm. Spread out on the sidewalk

Oak Hill - 5pm. Gather in the post office parking lot

Stuyvesant Falls - 6pm. Gather in the triangle

Athens - 7pm. Spread out on the sidewalk

Castleton - 7pm. Gather in the front yard

Chatham - 7:30pm. Spread out on the sidewalk

East Schodack - 9pm. Gather in the parking lot

Valatie - 10pm. Gather in the front yard

Worship service videos can be found on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8kJUJTm_PrA-l1qlv8PJ-g

Did you know the Tri-County Lutheran Parish is creating an Outreach Team? The purpose of this team is to share resources, brainstorm ideas and assist one another in congregations' outreach programs. Have you been interested in outreach? Curious about the different kinds of outreach? Wondering how you can help your congregation grow? Join us! Email Pastor Beth and Pastor Sam to let us know you are interested in joining the team!

The Parish Prayer Group is meeting the first and third Tuesdays at 4PM via Zoom. If you would like to join, please contact Pastor Sam.

Also – Pastor Sam has been hearing some thoughts around to start **an all-parish Sunday School** (likely on Zoom, due to distance/Covid). To make this happen **we need volunteers to teach and lead**. Do you have a gift for teaching and like to work with kids? Please let Pastor Sam know so we can try to get something started!

If you need food, necessities, masks, or help of any kind, please reach out to one of us. We have plenty of resources available to us in our parish and we are excited to be God's hands and feet for each other!

Opportunity to Help!!! Columbia County Meals on Wheels program is looking for volunteers. Most volunteers do one or two days a week. Most routes take about an hour to an hour and a half at the most. The volunteers do not enter the individual's home, they place the meal on a table or chair outside the door, knock, back up 6 feet and wait for the individual to answer the door. Anyone interested in

becoming a volunteer should contact Amy Anderson,
Nutrition Program Coordinator @ 518-672-5323.

Pr. Sam's MMC (Mutual Ministry Committee)

Do you have any comments, questions, or constructive critiques concerning Pr. Sam? Perhaps you really enjoyed the way she did something, or perhaps you have a suggestion. Your feedback is very much desired and appreciated. You may either contact her directly, or if you wish to remain anonymous you may contact the MMC using this email distribution list: mmcps@tclparish.org, which will automatically send an email to the entire team (except Pr. Sam.)

OR you may contact individual members:

Anne Philipp annie2919@gmail.com (C) 518-610-1335

Patty Bervy pbervy@yahoo.com (C) 518-598-7609

Karen Schubert kara3215@juno.com (H) 518-731-6751

Duane Keeler oneservantofgod@gmail.com (C) 518-610-0164

A Note from your Parish Admin, Sharon Smith

Send me your prayer additions, questions, Parish Connection updates, and anything else you may need to ask me to the new email: parishadmin@tclparish.org. Please submit for the bulletins and the Parish Connection as soon as possible, however by Monday, noon is preferred.

My hours are: 9 am - 3:45 pm. My lunch time is 1pm -2 pm and I will not be available during this time. You can however, always leave a voice mail at: (518) 758-6526 or send an email to: parishadmin@tclparish.org

Should I have to leave the office for any reason, I will leave a note as to when I will be back. Peace, Sharon

From Vicar Care –

Our midweek services continue in December on Wednesdays at 6PM on Zoom. I am starting a new Anti-Racism book study on December 2nd. We will be reading and discussing "I'm Still Here" by Austin Channing Brown. We meet every Wednesday at 7:00pm on Zoom. If you are interested in attending, please use the following Zoom ID: 880 9165 9945.

TCLP Board for 2020

Harry Avery	President	harryavery@yahoo.com
Jackie Menagh	Vice Chair	jamspirit@hardsdisk.net
Duane Keeler	Recording Secretary	oneservantofgod@gmail.com
Chuck Race	Treasurer	ctracejr@tclparish.org

If you have additions, deletions, changes, etc. for the Parish Connection, bulletins, etc., please either call the Parish office at 518- 758-6526 or email: parishadmin@tclparish.org.

Thank you!

Congregation Announcements

For all congregations: We will be having worship on Zoom only.

Time of worship is 10 a.m.

Use this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7700997419>

EMANUEL, STUYVESANT FALLS

Contact -- Duane Keeler oneservantofgod@gmail.com

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Duane Keeler	President	
Leslie Dumont	Vice-President	
Linda Frick	Co-Treasurer	
Dick Frick	Co-Treasurer	Not on council
Chuck Albertson	Secretary	Not on council
Pr. Sam	Ex Officio member	
Pr. Beth	Ex-Officio Member	
Karen Albertson	Harry Avery	

Committees

OUTREACH (Joint committee with St. Luke's) Teresa Avery, Karen Albertson
WORSHIP (Joint committee with St. Luke's) Phyllis Keeler
PARISH SPECIAL WORSHIP SERVICES TEAM Karen Albertson, Duane Keeler
(Chair)

ST. LUKE'S, VALATIE

Contact -- Kara Udvary Karap1969@aol.com

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Kara Udvary, President	518-821-0437 Karap1969@aol.com
Barbara Slater, <u>Corresp.</u> Secretary	518-392-7798
Ken Schomaker, Treasurer	518-758-1246
Linda Dickson, Financial Secretary	518-610-8056
Ethan Race	518-209-7829
Tim McGlaufflin	518-756-4644
Mike Schunk	518-610-8201
Janis McGlaufflin	518-828-1857

Want to see how the St. Luke's Council works? Do you want to make a difference? We have an opening for a Council member! Contact Kara Udvary at 518-821-0437 or email her at Karap1969@aol.com

Committees

Education	Ethan Race	
Outreach	Kara Udvary, Linda Dickson, Janis McGlaufflin	
Parish Care	Janis McGlaufflin	
Property	Larry Eleby	518-929-1432
Safety and Security	Sharon Smith	518-929-9765
	Chuck Race	518-917-3547
Stewardship & Finance	Ken Schomaker, Linda Dickson, Tim McGlaufflin	
TCLP	Tim McGlaufflin, Jon Strodl	
Worship & Music	Ted Fiebke	518-794-779
	Janis McGlaufflin, Kara Udvary	

EMANUEL/ST. JOHN'S

Contact -- Richard Fitzgerald rfatbellspond@yahoo.com

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Pat Brundage	President
Dick Fitzgerald	<u>Treasurer</u> (not a Council Member)
Debra Garrison	Secretary
Linda Baker	
Kirk Dixon	Sexton

ZION, ATHENS

Contact -- Gethen Proper gethen7@gmail.com

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

William Darling	President	518-943-4293
Tim Mercer	Vice President	518-859-1356
Bob O'Leary,	Treasurer	845-797-6084
Gethen Proper	Church & Financial Secretary	518-755-8395
Carol Serazio		518-731-9050
Karen Schubert		518-731-1190
John Wais		518-719-5754
John Van Valkenburg		518-945-1184

The many outreach projects of Zion are made possible in large part by grants from Thrivent Financial Every Thrivent member is eligible to apply for 2 action team grants per year. These are easy to apply for, and if you need help please ask Carrol Mercer Or Christine Wanek. If you are not a Thrivent member, but would still like to help apply for a grant, you can become a Thrivent Associate Member.

Associate Membership is \$19.95 and with that membership you are able to apply for a one-time Thrivent grant for \$250.00 for our congregation's outreach projects.

Contact Thrivent either by Phone at 845-849-1267, or at Thrivent.com.

Five Loaves Project -- MEALS FOR THE HUNGRY AND THOSE IN NEED Thursday's @ 4:30 pm

ST. PAUL'S, OAK HILL

Contact – Jackie Menagh jamspirit@hardsdisk.net 518-256 2496 (cell)

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Jackie Menagh President 518-634-2026 home -- leave a message
(TBA) Treasurer
Sally Lord Secretary

A Big Thank You to all those who have been sending their Offerings in by mail or dropping them off at the church. We really appreciate your faithfulness. The work of the Church and God continues and in this time of crisis, is more important than ever.

CHRIST OUR EMMANUEL, CHATHAM

Contact – Jeanette Wilber tam20kfw@aol.com

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Jeanette Wilber President
Kurt Hoelter Vice President
Heidi Brennan Recording and Corresponding Secretary
Cate MacPherson
Richard Mac Donald (Mac)
Henry Bartel

Did you know there is a new way to send your offering? We have an online donation portal! Please visit our website at www.chathamLutheran.org to get started!

ST. STEPHENS, E. SCHODACK

**Contact – Alice Senrick Asenrick29@gmail.com
518-479-0819 or 518-852-1504**

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Alice <u>Senrick</u>	President	
Charles <u>Senrick</u>	Treasurer (Non-Voting member)	
Cathy Teeter	Secretary	
Brian Schell	Vice President	
Deborah Deerfield	Diane Middleton	Charles <u>Mayrer</u>

St. Stephen's has a collection basket for non-perishable foods, that are given to the Anchor in Castleton, and Doors of Hope in Sand Lake, to help people in need.

TRINITY, CASTLETON

Contact – Nicole Gardner scullynik@yahoo.com

Zoom worship 10 a.m.

Council Members

Anne Philipp	President		
Eric <u>Knodler</u>	Vice President		
Rik Cosgrave	Treasurer (not on Council)		
Nicole Gardner	Secretary		
Mike Wiley	Flo Ball	Joseph Fahd	Lois Bult

The Castleton Girl Scouts are still collecting bottles and cans and will continue to collect them until July of 2022. They can reach out to Nicole Gardner with questions or to make arrangements for pick up. She can be reached at 518-336-4077 (home) 518-312-8603 (text) or via email scullynik@yahoo.com.

Financial Secretary Needed Wondering how you can help your church. A Financial Secretary is needed. Training is available. if interested please see Rik Cosgrave or anyone on the council.

What would you like to see in “The Parish Connection?” Drop a line to the TCLP office at parishadmin@tclparish.org

Parish Administrator OFFICE HOURS: 9 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Monday through Friday. Lunch is from 1-2 pm Call any time!

If you have questions regarding the Tri County Lutheran Parish or for any other church issues or pastoral concerns, please call Sharon at 518-758-6526 or email her at: parishadmin@tclparish.org and she can help direct you to the right person!

CONTACT US:

Tri-County Lutheran Parish, PO Box 158, Valatie, NY 12184

Phone: (518) 758-6526

Pastor Samantha Perret (*Parish*) Phone – 518-229-4128

E-mail: whiteginger20@gmail.com

Pastor Beth George (*Parish*) Phone – 717-364-4557

Email: chellman4557@gmail.com

Pastor Dan Hahn, (*Intern Supervisor*) Phone – 518-281-8127

E-mail --pastordanhahn@gmail.com

Vicar Carolyn Lawrence E-Mail: Carolyn.Lawrence@LSTC.edu

TCLP Website: <https://www.tclparish.org>

CHATHAM WEBSITE: [_ https://www.chathamlutheran.org](https://www.chathamlutheran.org)

VALATIE/STUYVESANT FALLS PARISH WEBSITE: <https://www.slelc.com>

Devotions and Prayers for the Fourth Week of Advent

Grace and peace to you all!

For our final devotions in this Advent season, Pastors Sam and Beth have written their thoughts and reflections on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, which are fast approaching!

May their words reveal a hint of the divine word in this special season where we celebrate the Word becoming flesh for us and with us.

In Christ's Peace,

Vicar Carolyn

Luke 2:1-10

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were

terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

Reflection by Pastor Sam

For most of my formative years, my family celebrated Christmas the same way each year, with the big focus on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day was a time of rest and relaxation. My siblings and I would awake on Christmas Eve with Dad playing DJ with ALL the Christmas records. We would spend time playing games, coloring, and helping Mom with dinner. We ate early dinner, then went to worship at 6PM, followed by snacks and visiting at my aunt's home. After, we would come home and open all the presents one by one, savoring the experience. Then the baby Jesus would be placed in the manger of the nativity scene, and all was right in the world.

One year, when I was about 13 years old, something different happened. My oldest brother who was in the Air Force could only come home for a few days the weekend before Christmas. We adapted and adjusted and celebrated even earlier (on the 22nd, I believe). We did wait until the 24th to put the baby Jesus in the manger, though, and once again, we found that in that moment, all was right in the world.

This year, for the first time ever, I will likely not be able to celebrate Christmas in person on any day with my parents. And perhaps you find yourself in that position as well. We will have to adapt and try something new. But when you think about it, that is what Christmas is - it's something new. Jesus was something completely new in a weary world. A new way for God to show love and connection to

God's people. A new hope for the children of God. The world had never known anything like the birth of Jesus!

We may not be able to celebrate in our traditional ways, but I know, when we celebrate baby Jesus in the manger on December 24th, that all will be right in the world.

Isaiah 52:7-10

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!" Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy. When the Lord returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes. Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the Lord has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.

Reflection by Pastor Beth

A child has been born! In today's world we proclaim the gender, weight, and length of the child. We all have expectations when given these particulars, but there is one constant. That little bundle of joy needs care and protection. The child must be fed, cleaned, comforted, carried to safety, kept warm, and most important be given lots of love.

The Isaiah reading in verse 10 says that the Lord will lay bare his holy arm. This is language to speak of God's power. It makes me think of someone flexing a bicep muscle. It is a show of strength and power. God shows God's power so everyone will see the salvation of our God. Since it is Jesus that brings about our salvation, then the holy arm this reading is speaking of is Jesus!

This tiny, defenseless baby cradled in Mary's arms is the power that brings us salvation. This is such a contradiction to what we normally deem as powerful. No army. No weapons. Just the love a child brings to us and brings out of us. Isaiah tells us to lift up our voices and sing for joy. Sing out this day for the gift of a little baby that brings about the salvation of the universe!

Advent 3 Sermon (12/13/20) delivered by Pastor Sam.

Based on John 1: 6-8,19-28

Who are you?

This is the question the Jewish priests and Levites have of John in Bethany. They know he has been baptizing and they want to know who he is and especially whether or not he has authority to do this. Baptizing the way John is doing it does not sit well with the Jewish authorities. John is not performing a ritual cleansing in the Jewish tradition. Rather, his methods are more like the style of the Gentiles.

"Who are you," they ask.

Before John tells them who he is, he begins by telling them who he is **not**. He is not the Messiah. He is not Elijah. He is not the prophet. Even as he gives them these non-answers, he still points them in the direction of Jesus, the light.

Finally, John tells them, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord.'" Again, this answer points to Jesus. He is not Jesus, but he is the voice announcing the coming of Jesus. He prepares the people by baptizing them with water for the repentance of sins.

“Why are you baptizing,” they ask, but what they really mean is, “Who do you think you are?”

And again, John answers by drawing attention away from his deeds and to the awesome love and redemptive power of Jesus. One is coming after me who will change the world. One is coming who will be a light for all people.

Through everything John says and does, he testifies to the light. In his speech, he proclaims the imminent arrival of Jesus, he brings attention to Jesus. He preaches repentance and baptism to prepare people for Jesus. John has this one job - and he does it so well! His entire identity is connected to his testimony about Jesus.

Who are **you**?

When people ask us this question, we can have a variety of answers. Perhaps we offer our name or maybe our vocation. We might explain who we are by our familial relationships. For instance, I am a mother, a wife, a daughter, a sister, and an auntie. We might describe who we are based on our country of origin or our values and beliefs.

Who are you?

I wonder what it would look like if we answered this question, “I am a beloved child of God” or “I am a follower of Jesus Christ.” Would that be challenging for us? Maybe. We may even feel like John, crying out in our own wilderness. Being a lone quiet voice among the unlistening or uncaring masses, begging for our message to be heard.

Are there other ways we can point to Jesus and draw attention to him? Certainly, in the way we care for one another and in the way we speak to one another. When we sacrifice comfort, convenience, and preference so another may be cared for -in this way, we show the world that we are disciples of Jesus.

And even though it can be challenging at first, there are some ways to verbally proclaim our faith. When someone asks, "who are you?" we can say, "I am a member of the Lutheran Church." We can tell them about the church activities we are passionate about: our support of food pantries and feeding ministries, Maritime Ministries, Hands and Hearts Mission, St. Paul's Center, Bible Study, and donations to mitten trees.

In this way, like John, you can testify to the light.

Who are you? In addition to everything else that makes you *you*, You are a sinner and a saint.

You are called to love God and love one another.

You are never ever alone because the Holy Spirit guides and inspires you.

You are deeply loved.

You are redeemed by Jesus Christ.

And you are a beloved child of God.

Amen.

Tri-County Lutheran Parish
December 20, 2020, Fourth Sunday in Advent
Based on the ELW, Setting 1. Worship Leader: Vicar Carolyn
Lawrence

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7700997419>

Announcements

Call to worship

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

Confession and Forgiveness

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation. C: Amen.

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

C: Jesus, who comes as new birth, we have prepared for you with comfortable traditions and humble requests. We have memorialized your birth as if it was a past act and not the bold declaration of a living God. We have rested in the safer hope of your work, abandoning our call as co-creators of the Beloved Community, harming your children with our ill-informed action and comfort-catering inaction. All this we humbly confess. Help us remember in this season of anticipation that we prepare not only for you, but because of you. Challenge us to examine our intentions, and to hold sacred both the act of preparing, and the transforming justice love of the one who comes. Amen

L: God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. **C: Amen.**

Hymn Awake, Awake and Greet the New Morn **ELW 242**



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for
 2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
 3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when
 4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing. Sing out your joy, for
 man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is
 all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
 dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.
 qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;
 qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.
 crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -
 mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -
 Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in
 Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and
 kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to
 won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and
 sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
 shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.
 weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
 bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

Greeting

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

Advent Hymn

Light One Candle

ELW 240



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!

Advent Prayer

Prayer of the Day

L: Let us pray.

C: Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

¹Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a

tent.” ³Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.”

⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live 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 and a tabernacle. ⁷Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders 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 to 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 live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers 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. ¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

R: The Word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: Luke 1:46b-55

^{46b}My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, ⁴⁷my 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:**

⁴⁹you, 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.**

⁵¹You 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.**

⁵³You 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,**

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

Second Reading: Romans 16:25-27

²⁵Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—²⁷to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

R: The Word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation

C: Alleluia Lord, to whom shall we go? Alleluia. You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia, Alleluia.

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

L: The Holy Gospel according to Luke in the 1st chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph,

of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him 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 ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel said to 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 holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

L: The gospel of the Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

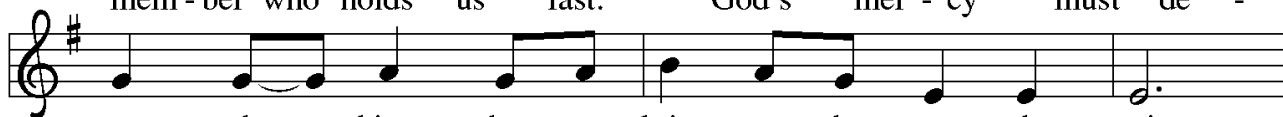
Sermon



1 My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the
 2 Though I am small, my . . . God, my all, you . . .
 3 From the halls of pow'r to the for - tress tow'r, not a
 4 Though the na - tions rage from . . age to age, we re -



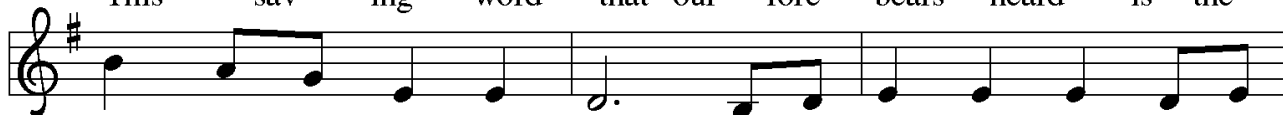
God of my heart is great, and my spir - it sings of the
 work great . . things in me, and your mer - cy will last from the
 stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your
 mem - ber who holds us fast: God's mer - cy must de -



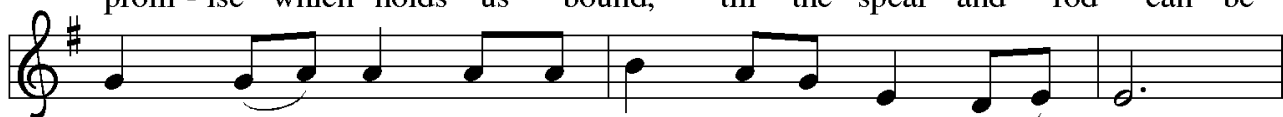
won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
 depths of the past to the end of the age to be.
 jus - tice tears ev - 'ry ty - rant . . . from his throne.
 liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp.



You fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my
 Your ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to
 The hun - gry poor shall . . weep no more, for the
 This sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the



weak - ness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my
 those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the
 food they can nev - er earn; there are ta - bles spread, ev - 'ry
 prom - ise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be

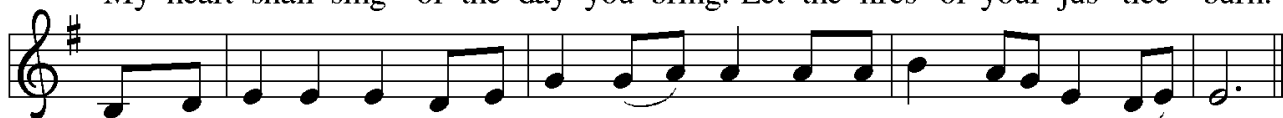


name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?
 strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.

Refrain



My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your jus - tice burn.



Wipe a - way all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn.

L: Let us proclaim our faith using the words of the Apostles Creed.

Apostles Creed

C: 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 into hell; 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

God of power and might, fulfill your promise and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need. ***A brief silence.***

Gracious God, all generations call you blessed. In this holy season we pray for our neighbors of other denominations and faiths (*Nearby churches, mosques, temples, and synagogues may be named*). We pray for our Bishops, Synod Staff, Conference Deans, Pastors, Vicars, Seminarians, Church Musicians, Lay Leaders, and all people who contribute their prayers and talents to public worship Inspire the faith of their people. Cultivate understanding among us and strengthen us in love and service to our community. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Creator God, you scatter the proud. Everything we have belongs first to you. Bless and protect the seas, mountains, plains, forests, skies, and soils that surround us. Give us humility as we tend them. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Righteous God, you humble the powerful and lift up the lowly. We pray for the leaders of all nations, that they amplify the voices of people in need. We pray also for active-duty personnel, especially John Schatzle, Matt White, Aldan Race, Daniel Main, and Angela Silliman. Guide all people entrusted with leadership, to create societies in which everyone can flourish. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Compassionate God, you fill the hungry with good things and send the rich away empty. Nourish those who lack access to adequate food and nutrition. Bless the work of advocates, community organizers, and food pantries. Encourage others to provide for their neighbors in need. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Healing God, you pour out mercy to all who cry out to you. Surround everyone in need of healing in body, mind, or spirit with your tender presence, especially for Katie M., Josefine Payne, Joy, Nadine Davis, Emma Burnett, Michelle Majercsik, Barbara Ritrovato, Burma Cavanagh, Carmel Micalizzi, Mary Keefes, Season Huble, Judy Paine, Bunny Otterbeck, Catherine, Cindy D., Jackie Bachman, Pat Brundage, Claus Marzahl, Arlene Zahn, Al Zahn, Margot Petersen, Vickie Achenbach, Sheri Patterson, Bill S., Kyle Stickles, Bonnie Walsh, Ivan Morales, Jacob Race, Linda Taliaferro, Grace Balint, Karen Mc Neff, Sara Scott-Fluentes, Debbie Hammond, Christi Wright, Frank Ball, Doris Hatfield, Angela & Jake; Doris Smith, Barbara Slater, Lynn LaFave, Joy H., Ed Schomaker, Pat Kingsbury, Kayte Ware, Karen Schubert, Jim Trimmer, Bill Duke, Matt White, Dorothy Teeter, Richard Springstead, Tom Sanford, Adeline Carr, Mary-Ann Hipwell, Xavier Schmidt, Nancy Lansing, Bob Bedell, Kirt, Tonya, the Pfrommer family, Jack Lyons, Millie Sparks, Robert Millius, Lisa Freeman, Billy Freeman, Patty Westover, Pastor Paul Rees-Rohrbacher, strengthen caregivers, doctors, medical care workers, and all who see to the needs of the weary or ill, and those we name before you..... Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Eternal God, you are faithful to the promises you made to our forebears. We give thanks for the ministry of Katharina von Bora Luther and other ancestors who organized, planned, dreamed, encouraged, and reached out as they served you. We give thanks for the bold leadership of female leaders in our own time. We pray for the family and friends of Linda Mack, Rosemary Bruce, Pastor Charles Boomhower, Alice Schubert, Edward Lyons, Shirley Gresens. We pray for comfort and peace for their families and all who mourn them. Inspire others with their steadfast witness. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for all those who are affected by COVID-19. We pray for those serving in the COVID-19 front lines...Allison White, Ted Fiebke, Amy Fiebke, Justine LaValley, Jason Vernon, and Jared Frick. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Hear our prayers, O Lord, whether we speak them aloud on our lips, or in the silence of our hearts. [Pause for prayers.] Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Peace

L: I will give you all a moment to unmute yourselves... The peace of Christ be with you always. **C: And also with you.**

Offering

We offer prayers of thanksgiving and ask blessings on the offerings sent electronically or by mail for the mission of the church including the care of those in need.

Offertory

L: Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord,

C: and fill to the brim our cup of blessing.

L: Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown,

C: that we may be fed with the bread of life.

L: Gather the hopes and the dreams of all;

C: unite them with the prayers we offer.

L: Grace our table with your presence,

C: and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.

Dialogue

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

L: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Preface

L: 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

C: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

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

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

C: 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.

*** Distribution of Communion**

L: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen

Post Communion Blessing

*** Prayer After Communion**

L: Let us pray.

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **C: Amen.**

*** Blessing**

L: 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.**

Hymn My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness ELW 251



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.

Dismissal

L: Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage;
hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil;
strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted;
honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the
Holy Spirit.

L: Please unmute yourselves... And all God's people say:

C: **Thanks be to God. Amen and ALLELUIA!**

PEOPLE IN OUR PRAYERS

For the Bishops, Synod Staff, our Conference Dean Jo Page, Pastor Dan, Pastor Samantha, Pastor Beth, Vicar Carolyn Lawrence, Seminarians, and Lay Leaders.

For the families and friends of... Linda Mack, Rosemary Bruce, Pastor Charles Boomhower, Alice Schubert, Edward Lyons, Shirley Gresens.

We pray for all those who are affected by COVID-19 and especially for those serving in the COVID-19 front lines...Allison White, Ted Fiebke, Amy Fiebke, Justine Shultis LaValley, Jason Vernon, and Jared Frick.

For those serving in the military: John Schatzle, Matt White, Aldan Race, Daniel Main, and Angela Silliman.

For those in need of physical, mental, or spiritual healing: Katie M., Josefine Payne, Joy, Nadine Davis, Emma Burnett, Michelle Majercsik, Barbara Ritrovato, Burma Cavanagh, Carmel Micalizzi, Mary Keefes, Season Hubley, Judy Paine, Bunny Otterbeck, Catherine, Lucinda & Sharon DeFlumer, Roberta Wormuth, Lincoln Page, Cindy D., Jackie Bachman, Sheri Patterson, Pat Brundage, Claus Marzahl, Arlene Zahn, Al Zahn, Margot Petersen, Vickie Achenbach, Kyle Stickles, Bonnie Walsh, Ivan Morales, Arlene Taylor, Joan Crow, Billy Crow, Robin Crow, Jacob Race, Linda Taliaferro, Sasha Shultis, Robert Millius, Shirley Bryan, the Pfrommer family, Jack Lyons, Millie Sparks, Tom Sanford, Grace Balint, Karen Mc Neff, Sara Scott-Fluentes, Christi Wright, Frank Ball, Doris Hatfield, Angela & Jake, Robert and family, Etta Shultis, Doris Smith, Barbara Slater, Vivian Becker, Lynn LaFave, Joy H., Kirk Dixon, Jean Bruce, Ed Schomaker, Dave, Pat Kingsbury, Kayte Ware, Karen Schubert, Jim Trimmer, Joyce, Frank Johnson, Bill Duke, Patty Bervy, Carol Voeks, Matt White, Dorothy Teeter, Richard Springstead, Adeline Carr, Mary-Ann Hipwell, Xavier Schmidt, Nancy Lansing, Bob Bedell, Kirt, Debbie Hammond, Tonya, Lisa Freeman, Billy Freeman, Patty Westover, Pastor Paul Rees-Rohrbacher, Richard Fitzgerald, their caregivers, and our parish members who due to COVID19 are unable to attend In-Person worship.