



Love

*The mighty one
...shows mercy
to everyone,
from one
generation
to the next.*

LUKE 1:49a, 50a (CEB)

Faith Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod

Our Mission: *Faith Grows*

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Fourth Sunday in Advent

December 21 & 22, 2024

5:00 p.m., 8:00, & 11:00 a.m.

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AS WE GATHER

We often hear it said, and even say it ourselves, that “things aren’t like they used to be.” We can see it around us in our world, our culture, and even among our own families and homes, whether for better but often for worse. People sometimes have the same impression of the Lord. But our Lord remains unchanged (see Malachi 3:6), and Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (see Hebrews 13:8). Since the beginning, our holy Lord has always desired and even demanded holiness. Holiness comes only by the one perfect bodily sacrifice. Our Lord Jesus Christ has made us holy through Himself alone. Because of and through Him, we do not have to be like we used to be; rather, we live in that grace and love as He first loved us.

· PRELUDE

“Improvisations on a Hymn”

· ANNOUNCEMENTS

| CHIMING OF THE TRINITY (The congregation stands at the ringing of the bell.)



1 The King of love my shep - herd is, Whose good - ness
 3 Per - verse and fool - ish oft I strayed, But yet in
 6 And so through all the length of days Thy good - ness



fail - eth nev - er; I noth - ing lack if
 love He sought me And on His shoul - der
 fail - eth nev - er; Good Shep - herd, may I



I am His And He is mine for - ev - er.
 gent - ly laid And home re - joic - ing brought me.
 sing Thy praise With - in Thy house for - ev - er!

LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE ☆☆☆☆ LOVE

One Advent tradition is to mark the four Sundays in Advent with four words that encompass what Jesus brings as He comes into the world to be our Immanuel – God with us. These four words are hope, peace, joy, and love. Today we focus on love.

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. Amen.



1. Can - dle glow - ing my heart know - ing, I should fol - low him;
 2. Can - dle burn - ing, my heart yearn - ing for a Friend di - vine
 3. Can - dle gleam - ing, my face beam - ing, let me rise and go
 4. Can - dle flam - ing, my heart nam - ing Christ the Lord of all;



Je - sus lead - ing, guid - ing, plead - ing, "Let no light be dim."
 to be near me, bless and cheer me, be for - ev - er mine.
 while He leads me, where He needs me, in his world be - low.
 Je - sus, Sav - ior, mine for - ev - er, I have heard your call.

| INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

People: But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

| CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

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Pastor: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

People: Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

The Service of the Word

CHANTING THE PSALM

Psalm 80:1-7



Pastor: Give ear, O Shepherd of | Israel*
You who lead Joseph | like a flock!

People: **You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, | shine forth.***
Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Ma- | nasseh,

Pastor: stir up | Your might*
and come to | save us!

People: **Restore us, | O God;***
let Your face shine, that we | may be saved!

Pastor: O Lord | God of hosts,*
how long will you be angry with Your | people's prayers?

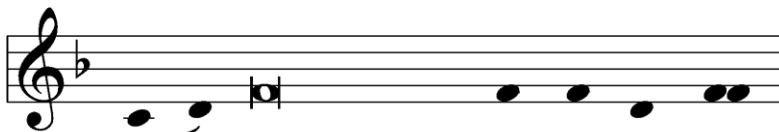
People: **You have fed them with the | bread of tears***
and given them tears to drink in full | measure.

Pastor: You make us an object of contention for our | neighbors,*
and our enemies laugh a- | mong themselves.

People: **Restore us, O | God of hosts;***
let Your face shine, that we | may be saved!

KYRIE

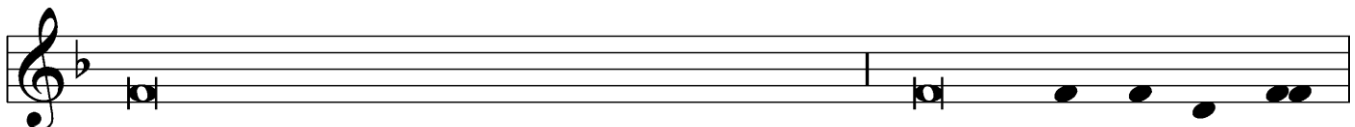
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A In peace let us pray to the Lord.



G Lord, have mer - cy.



A For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



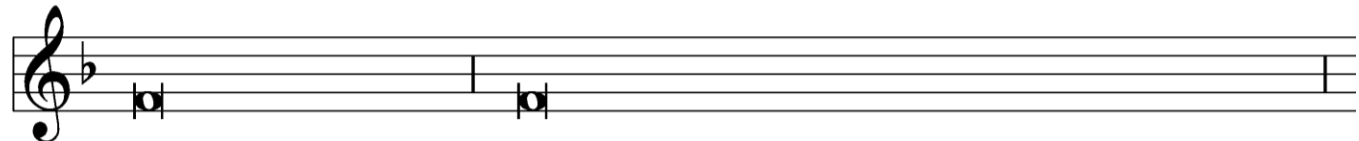
A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



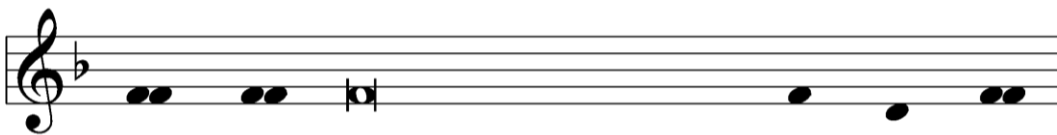
A For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise



let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



A Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord.



C A - men.

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Let us pray. Into the darkness, You bring light, and into our lives, You make known Your perfect and everlasting love. Make us ready for the celebration of our Savior's birth, that we receive Him as He comes to us as a humble infant, bringing to fruition the new covenant of Your love; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Micah 5:2-5a

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for Me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore He shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of His brothers shall return to the people of Israel. And He shall stand and shepherd His flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord His God. And they shall dwell secure, for now He shall be great to the ends of the earth. And He shall be their peace.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE READING

Hebrews 10:5-10

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, He said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for Me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God, as it is written of Me in the scroll of the book.'" When He said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), then He added, "Behold, I have come to do Your will." He does away with the first in order to establish the second. And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

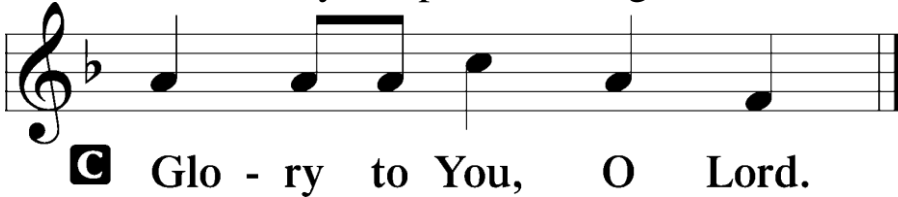
ALLELUIA



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

HOLY GOSPEL

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



Glo - ry to You, O Lord.

Luke 1:39-45

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.”

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.



Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Sing of Mary, Pure, and Lowly”



1 Sing of Mar - y, pure and low - ly, vir - gin moth - er wise and mild.
2 Sing of Je - sus, son of Mar - y, in the home at Naz - a - reth.
3 Glo - ry be to God the Fa - ther; glo - ry be to God the Son;



Sing of God's own Son most ho - ly, who be - came her lit - tle child.
Toil and la - bor can - not wea - ry love en - dur - ing un - to death.
glo - ry be to God the Spir - it; glo - ry to the Three in One.



Fair - est child of fair - est moth - er, God the Lord who came to earth,
Con - stant was the love He gave her, though He went forth from her side,
From the heart of bless - ed Mar - y, from all saints the song as - cends,



Word made flesh, our ver - y broth - er, takes our na - ture by His birth.
forth to preach, and heal, and suf - fer, till on Cal - va - ry He died.
and the Church the strain re - ech - oes un - to earth's re - mot - est ends.

SERMON

“Let Ev’ry Heart Prepare a Throne”

Pastor Owen Duncan

Text: Micah 5:2-5a

APOSTLES’ CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His 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. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life † everlasting. Amen.

OUR GIFTS AND OFFERINGS

*We give Thee but Thine own, whate'er the gift may be;
All that we have is Thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from Thee.*

Prayer Requests: Please print prayer requests on the blue “Prayer” card and hand it to an usher during this time.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM *“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”* Matthew Machemer

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Service of the Sacrament

PREFACE (5:00)

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

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

People: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:
 Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho - san-na. Ho -
 san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He who
 comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est.

WORDS OF OUR LORD (5:00)

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me." In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.

AGNUS DEI (5:00)

C 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.

DISTRIBUTION (5:00)

(Please review our statement of faith inserted into the front of the hymnal.)

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The LORD bless You and keep you; the LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD look on you in favor and ✠ give you peace.

People: Amen.

SENDING HYMN

“Savior of the Nations, Come”

Page 332, vs. 1-4



1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come, Vir - gin's Son, make
2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, By the Spir - it
3 Here a maid was found with child, Yet re - mained a
4 Then stepped forth the Lord of all From His pure and



here Your home! Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth,
of our God, Was the Word of God made flesh—
vir - gin mild. In her womb this truth was shown:
king - ly hall; God of God, yet ful - ly man,



That the Lord chose such a birth.
Wom - an's off - spring, pure and fresh.
God was there up - on His throne.
His he - ro - ic course be - gan.

POSTLUDE

OFFERTORY INFORMATION

In the early fourth century, one of the greatest controversies in the church came to a breaking point, and the Emperor Constantine called together the First Council of Nicaea to establish once and for all the Church's official stance on the nature of the Trinity. The council condemned the teaching of Arius, who believed that Jesus was not of the same nature as God the Father. The Nicene Creed was thus written as a statement of faith that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit are all the same nature, three and yet one. Prudentius' hymn, *“Of the Father's Love Begotten,”* addresses this belief in the Trinity in the very first line. It is very clear from his text that Christ is both human and divine, and rather than simply being made by God, He was “begotten” of the very same substance. As this anthem is performed, we affirm and align our faith with the broader faith of the Church, and we deny any belief that says that Christ is not fully divine. This song, so often associated with Christmas, is thus a hymn of proclamation, calling us to sing out our faith – “every voice in concert ring, evermore, and evermore!”