

# CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

**Celebrating 91 Years in Forest Hills**

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Vincent Mroz	Vicar
Douglas Skalka	Organist
Cal Eggers	Worship Assistant
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Hunter Donikowski	Acolyte

Missionaries: The Rev. Dr. Jonathan and Deaconess Cheryl Naumann

Sunday bulletins, news, puzzles, and sermons are available on our website listed above. Services are live-streamed on our Facebook page listed above.

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## The Fourth Sunday in Advent

December 22, 2024

### ORDER OF SERVICE

**Prayer on entering church:** Lord, I love the habitation of Your house and the place where Your glory dwells. In the multitude of Your tender mercies prepare my heart that I may enter Your house to worship and confess Your holy name; through Jesus Christ, my God and Lord. Amen.

#### PRELUDE

Of the Father's Love Begotten

Douglas E. Wagner

#### RINGING OF THE BELLS/ WELCOME

OPENING HYMN (*please rise and sing*)

Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord

Hymnal p. 352

Let the earth now praise the Lord, Who has truly kept His word  
And at last to us did send Christ's the sinner's help and friend  
What the fathers most desired, What the prophets' heart inspired,  
What they longed for many a year, Stands fulfilled in glory here.

Abram's promised great reward, Zion's helper, Jacob's Lord  
Him of two-fold race behold Truly came, as long foretold.

As Your coming was in peace, Quiet, full of gentleness,  
Let the same mind dwell in me Which is Yours eternally.

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

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

CONGREGATIONAL GREETINGS

INVOCATION

*The sign of the cross (†) may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism*

P: In the name of the Father and of the (†) Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

CONFESSION<sup>1</sup>

P: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C: **who made heaven and earth.**

P: If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

C: **But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.**

P: Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, and call upon Him in prayer and praise, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful

condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

*(We take a moment of silence before the Lord as we call to mind how we have not properly loved Him, ourselves, or other people.)*

**C: Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

P: 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.

**C: Amen.**

## **KYRIE**

Hymnal p.204

P: Heavenly Father, as we prepare for the arrival of Your Son, enlighten and empower us by Your Word and Spirit that we would remain steadfast in the hope of everlasting life, be strengthened in the peace we have with You through Christ Jesus, overflow with joy because of the abundance of Your mercies, and live in the way of love towards all people.

**C: *(sung)* Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.**

## **HYMN OF PRAISE**

Hymnal p. 204

**To God on high be glory And peace to all the earth;  
Goodwill from God in heaven Proclaimed at Jesus' birth!  
We praise and bless You, Father; Your holy name, we sing  
Our thanks for Your great glory, Lord God, our heav'nly King.**

**To You, O sole begotten, The Father's Son, we pray;  
O Lamb of God, our Savior, You take our sins away.  
Have mercy on us, Jesus; Receive our heartfelt cry,  
Where You in pow'r are seated At God's right hand on high —  
For You alone are holy; You only are the Lord.**

**Forever and forever, Be worshiped and adored;  
You with the Holy Spirit Alone are Lord Most High,  
In God the Father's glory. "Amen!" our glad reply.**

## **COLLECT**

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Let us pray.

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

## **FIRST READING**

Micah 5:2–5a

L: The first reading for the Fourth Sunday in Advent is from chapter five of Micah.

*The coming King will be born in Bethlehem*

*Following the reading...*

L: This is the Word of our Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## **PSALMODY**

### **Psalm 80**

L: Restore us, O God of hosts;  
let Your face shine, that we may be saved.

**C: Restore us, O God of hosts;  
let Your face shine, that we may be saved.**

L: Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock!  
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth.  
Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh,  
stir up Your might and come to save us!

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

**C: Restore us, O God of hosts;  
let Your face shine, that we may be saved.**

L: O Lord God of hosts,  
how long will You be angry with Your people's prayers?  
You have fed them with the bread of tears  
and given them tears to drink in full measure.  
You make us an object of contention for our neighbors,  
and our enemies laugh among themselves.

**C: Restore us, O God of hosts;  
let Your face shine, that we may be saved.**

**A: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it  
was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

## **SECOND READING**

Hebrews 10:5–10

L: The second reading is from chapter ten Hebrews.

*Jesus comes to do God's will.*

*Following the reading...*

L: This is the Word of our Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION***(please rise and sing)*

Hymnal p. 205

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

**These things are written that you may believe  
that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.**

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

## **HOLY GOSPEL**

Luke 1:39-45

P: The Holy Gospel is according to St. Matthew, chapter one.

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

*Mary visits Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist.*

*Following the reading...*

**P:** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C:** Praise to You, O Christ.

## **THE APOSTLES' CREED<sup>2</sup>**

**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.**

## **HYMN OF THE DAY**

**O Come, O Come Emmanuel**

Hymnal 357

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appear.**

***Refrain:* Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

**O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,  
Who ord'rest all things mightily;  
To us the path of knowledge show,  
And teach us in her ways to go. *Refrain:***

**O come, O come, Thou Lord of might,  
Who to Thy tribes on Sinai's height  
In ancient times didst give the Law**

**In cloud and majesty and awe. *Refrain:***

**O come, Thou Branch of Jesse's tree,  
Free them from Satan's tyranny  
That trust Thy mighty pow'r to save,  
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave. *Refrain:***

**O come, Thou Key of David, come,  
And open wide our heav'nly home;  
Make safe the way that leads on high,  
And close the path to misery. *Refrain:***

**O come, Thou Dayspring from on high,  
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
And death's dark shadows put to flight. *Refrain:***

**O come, Desire of nations, bind  
In one the hearts of all mankind;  
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease,  
And be Thyself our King of Peace. *Refrain:***

### **SERMON<sup>3</sup>**

### **OFFERING OF OUR TITHES AND GIFTS**

### **VOLUNTARY**

Twass in the Moon of Wintertime

Robert Lau

### **OFFERING SONG**

### **What Child Is This**

Hymnal p. 370 sts. 1,3

**What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet  
While shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the king, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The babe, the son of Mary!  
So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh;**

**Come, peasant, king, to own Him.  
The King of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone Him.  
Raise, raise the song on high, The virgin sings her lullaby;  
Joy, joy. for Christ is born. The babe, the son of Mary!**

## **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

**P:** Let us pray for ourselves, the church, and the world.

*Following each petition:*

**P:** Lord, in Your mercy,

**C:** hear our prayer.

## **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 GENERAL THANKSGIVING**

**P:** Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we your unworthy servants give You humble thanks for all Your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom You have made. We bless You for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for Your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we pray, give us such an awareness of Your mercies, that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth Your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to Your service, and by walking before You in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with You and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory throughout all ages.

**C:** Amen.



## **BENEDICTION**

**P:** Let us bless the Lord.

**C:** **Thanks be to God.**

**P:** The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

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

**C:** **Amen.**

## **CLOSING HYMN**

**Jesus Came, the Heavens Adoring**

Hymnal p. 353

**Jesus came, the heav'ns adoring, Came with peace from realms on high;  
Jesus came to win redemption, Lowly came on earth to die; Alleluia!  
Alleluia! Came in deep humility.**

**Jesus comes again in mercy When our hearts are worn with care; Jesus  
comes again in answer To an earnest, heartfelt prayer;  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Comes to save us from despair.**

**Jesus comes to hearts rejoicing, Bringing news of sins forgiv'n; Jesus  
comes with words of gladness,  
Leading souls redeemed to heav'n. Alleluia! Alleluia! Hope to all the  
world is giv'n.**

**Jesus comes in joy and sorrow, Shares alike our hopes and fears; Jesus  
comes, whate'er befalls us,  
Cheers our hearts and dries our tears; Alleluia! Alleluia! Comforts us in  
failing years.**

**Prayer after worship:** Almighty and merciful God, I have again worshiped in Your presence and received both forgiveness for my many sins and the assurance of Your love in Jesus Christ. I thank You for this undeserved grace and ask You to keep me in faith until, with all Your saints, I inherit eternal salvation; through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.

# POSTLUDE

## Postlude on "Gabriel's Message"

David Lasky

<sup>1</sup>*The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."* John 20:22-23. We take heart that the absolution proclaimed by the pastor is as from the Lord Himself.

<sup>2</sup>*It is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.* Romans 10:10. Our response to the Word of God that has just been read is our confession of faith in the one, true, triune God.

<sup>3</sup>Martin Luther teaches us about hearing the Word: "Know, therefore, that you must be concerned not only about hearing, but also about learning and retaining it in memory, and do not think that it is optional with you or of no great importance, but that it is God's commandment, who will require of you how you have heard, learned, and honored His Word." (Large Catechism) *Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!* Luke 11:28

*Christ Lutheran Church is a member of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.*