



December 24, 2023
Fourth Sunday of Advent

Preparation
Pre-service Music

Words of Welcome

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Fourth Sunday – Hope for Those Who Are Wounded

Responsive Litany:

L: Advent is a time to bind up the broken hearted.

C: Come, Lord, and make all things new.

L: For past wrongs that prevent us from moving forward:

C: Come, Lord, and make all things new.

L: For any bitterness that scratches our soul:

C: Come, Lord, and make all things new.

L: For relationships left in decay and neglect:

C: Come, Lord, and make all things new.

L: For any action that has wounded us or by which we have wounded others:

C: Grant that we might have the peace of Christ as we wait, the love of Christ as we act, and the grace of Christ as we speak.

Candle Lighting (*The family reads about the theme for the day as the first candle is lit.*)

This morning we light four candles. The **first candle** is the light of hope for those in times of waiting. The **second candle** is the light of hope for those who are wearied by the circumstance of life. The **third candle** is the light of hope for those eagerly watching for God's promised glory. The **fourth candle** is the light of hope for those who carry the wounds of life. Today we acknowledge our pain and the pain we have caused others. As the light shines, we turn to the Savior who came to rescue the lost, to help the hurting, and to bind up the broken.

Congregation Response:

Christ, Be Our Light!

A Candle Lighting Ceremony for Advent

Words and Music by
BERNADETTE FARRELL

Congregation:

Christ, be our light! Shine in our
hearts. Shine through the dark - ness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in your
Church gath - ered to - day.

The musical score consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp). The first two staves correspond to the first line of lyrics, and the last two staves correspond to the second line of lyrics. The melody is simple and suitable for congregational singing.

Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you / **C: And also with you**

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.**

Hearing the Word

The Lessons

First Lesson: 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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Silence for Meditation

Psalm: Luke 1:46b-55

(Read responsively by whole verses)

^{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 forebears,
to Abraham and his children forever.

Second Lesson: 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.

The word of the Lord.
Silence for Meditation

Thanks be to God.

*Gospel Acclamation

(WOV p. 31)



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

The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 1st Chapter

Glory to you, O Lord.

Luke 1: 26-38

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.

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Rev. Rick Neu

Response to the Word

Hymn of the Day – The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

WOV#632

ADVENT

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came 632

1 The an - gel Ga - bri - el from heav - en came,
 2 "For know a bless - ed moth - er thou shalt be,
 3 Then gen - tle Mar - y meek - ly bowed her head;
 4 Of her, Em - man - u - el, the Christ, was born

with wings as drift - ed snow, with eyes as flame:
 all gen - er - a - tions laud and hon - or thee;
 "To me be as it pleas - eth God," she said.
 in Beth - le - hem all on a Christ - mas morn,

"All hail to thee, O low - ly maid - en Mar - y,
 thy son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told,
 "My soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy God's ho - ly name."
 and Chris - tian folk through-out the world will ev - er say:

most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."
 most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."
 Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy, Glo - ri - a!
 "Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy,"

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary,
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Let us come before the throne of grace with our prayers and petitions.

A brief silence

O come, O come, Emmanuel, that the Church, your people Israel, and the whole world may rejoice in the splendor of your appearing.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Wisdom, proceeding from the mouth of the Most High, fill the Church with your Spirit. Sustain and order its proclamation and its works of charity,

especially in the presence of its enemies, according to your most holy will. Come, and teach us prudence. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Emmanuel, the ransom of your people Israel: deliver also your persecuted Church from torment. Keep it patient, faithful, and steadfast. Help us to honor their witness and provide for their needs. Turn their tormentors from their evil ways. Come; and teach them courage. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Adonai, ruler of the House of Israel, rule also in the hearts and lives of your people in this congregation. Give us your Word and show us your glory. Come; and make our hearts glad. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Bright and Morning Star, you gladden the hearts of those who sit in darkness. Shine upon all who are overwhelmed by grief, despair, doubt, anger, confusion, hatred, or unbelief. Come; and lead them into the brightness of your holy love. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O King of the nations, the ruler they long for, unite all people under your glorious and gentle reign. Teach us those things that make for peace. Come and save us all, whom you formed out of clay. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Root of Jesse, you stand as an ensign before the peoples. Guard and guide all who stand in harm's way in defense of justice and freedom. Come quickly, and deliver them. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Key of David, you open what no one can close; you close what no one can open. Free those imprisoned by the powers of sin, evil, and death. Come, and close the path to misery. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Dayspring, splendor of life everlasting, keep safe in your mighty arms all those who died trusting in your promises. Come and enlighten us, who still sit in the shadow of death; and open wide our heavenly home. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Graciously answer our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Peace and Offering

The Peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

(If you choose to exchange the peace, please use hand sanitizer before you start and again when finished.)

Offertory

Offertory Hymn: "Praise to You, O Christ, Our Savior" WOV#614

(Verses 1,2,3 & 4 - Refrain / Stanza / Refrain) – next page

Praise to You, O Christ, Our Savior

Refrain
Em Bm Em Am D Em C G Am D Em C Bm



Praise to you, O Christ, our Sav-ior, Word of the Fa-ther, call-ing us to life:

Em Am Em Bm Am D G Em C Em⁷ Am Bm Em



Son of God who leads us to free-dom; glo-ry to you, Lord Je-sus Christ!

1 You are the Word who calls us out of dark-ness;
2 You are the one whom proph-ets hoped and longed for;
3 You are the Word who calls us to be ser-vants;
4 You are the Word who binds us and u-nites us;

C G Am Bm C D



you are the Word who leads us in-to light; you are the Word who
you are the one who speaks to us to-day; you are the one who
you are the Word whose on-ly law is love; you are the Word made
you are the Word who calls us to be one; you are the Word who

Em Em⁷ C Am Dsus⁴ D G Em



Refrain

brings us through the des-ert: glo-ry to you, Lord Je-sus Christ!
leads us to our fu-ture: glo-ry to you, Lord Je-sus Christ!
flesh who lives a-mong us: glo-ry to you, Lord Je-sus Christ!
teach-es us for-give-ness: glo-ry to you, Lord Je-sus Christ!

C Am Dsus⁴ D C Am D Bm *Refrain*



Offertory Prayer:

P: God of Abundance,

C: we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience, hope and love, as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

The Penitential Rite

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation. **Amen.**

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Everlasting God,

you love justice and you hate wrongdoing.

We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that make us reluctant to work against oppression.

We are complicit in systems of exploitation.

We choose comfort over courage.

We are careless with creation's bounty.

Look upon us with mercy.

Turn our hearts again to you.

Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world. Amen.

Hear these words of assurance:

God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness.

In the tender compassion of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

God's covenant is eternal,

and God's blessing rests upon us all. **Amen.**

The Meal

(Please use hand sanitizer before coming to the Altar. Both intinction and common cup are available.)

*The Great Thanksgiving

(WOV p. 36)

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

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

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

PREFACE

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everliving God. 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 again to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and
might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.
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. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE: ADVENT

Holy God, the Beginning and the End,
our Salvation and our Hope,
we praise you for creating a world of order and beauty.
When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair,
you sent the prophets to proclaim your justice and mercy.
At this end of the ages
your Son Jesus came to bring us your love
and to heal all the suffering world.
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.
Remembering, therefore,
his life, death, and resurrection,
we await his coming again

in righteousness and peace.
 Send your Spirit on us
 and on this bread and wine we share:
 strengthen our faith,
 increase our hope,
 and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son.
 Through him all glory and honor is yours,
 Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
 in your holy Church,
 both now and forever. **Amen**

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

**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.**

FRACTION

*Agnus Dei ("Lamb of God...")

(WOV p. 39)

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

There is a place for you at the banquet. Come and feast at Jesus' table.

COMMUNION

The Body of Christ given for you.

The Blood of Christ shed for you.

(Please use hand sanitizer before coming to the Altar. Both intinction and common cup are available.)

TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ ✝ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace. **Amen**

COMMUNION PRAYER

Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

Closing Hymn: "Canticle of the Turning"

ELW #723

Canticle of the Turning

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 power to the for - tress tower, 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. You
depths of the past to the end of the age to be. Your
jus - tice tears ev - 'ry ty - rant from his throne. The
liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp. This

fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my weak - ness you did not
ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to those who would for you
hun - gry poor shall weep no more, for the food they can nev - er
sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the prom - ise which holds us

spurn, so from east to west shall my name be blest. Could the
yearn, you will show your might, put the strong to flight, for the
earn; there are ta - bles spread, ev - 'ry mouth be fed, for the
bound, 'til the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is

world be a - bout to turn?
world is a - bout to turn. My heart shall sing of the
world is a - bout to turn. My heart shall sing of the
turn - ing the world a - round.

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.

Benediction

P: May God, who gathers us in love, lead you in pathways of righteousness and justice. May God, who knows us more deeply than we know ourselves, lead you in pathways of forgiveness and freedom. May God, who fills us with good things, lead you in pathways of equity and abundance. The blessing of the holy Trinity, one God, be upon you and remain with you forever. **C: Amen.**

The Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Christ is with you.

C: Thanks be to God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

***December 24 (Christmas Eve) 5:30pm.** Led by Rev. Rick Neu, we join in singing our favorite carols, celebrating the birth of our Savior, as recorded in Luke 2, and rejoicing with Holy Communion.