



³⁰ “The 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.”

~Luke 1:30

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

Fourth Sunday of Advent – December 21, 2014

PO Box 411

Mars, PA 16046-0411

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Rev. Ralph Storm, Guest Pastor

Jacob Gordon, Director of Music

*We welcome you to St. John Lutheran Church. We are delighted to have you worship with us this morning. Should you have no permanent church-home in this community, why not consider making this one your own? Please sign the guest book as you leave worship today or the attendance pad in the pew. You are most welcome here at St. John! Most elements of our service can be found in the bulletin, everything else is in the hymnal. Page refers to the numbered pages towards the front of the hymnal, hymns are bold and towards the back. Please rise when there is an *, congregational responses are in **bold**, and underlined elements of the service are found in the hymnal.*

HOLY COMMUNION
Fourth Sunday of Advent – December 21, 2014

God keeps the promise made to David, to give him an everlasting throne. The angel tells Mary that God will give David's throne to her son Jesus. She is perplexed by Gabriel's greeting and by the news of her coming pregnancy, but she is able still to say, "Count me in." We who know that Jesus is called king only as he is executed still find it a mystery hard to fathom, but with Mary today we hear the news of what God is up to and say, "Count us in."

PRELUDE: *People, Look East* – Robert Hobby

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING THE CANDLES OF ADVENT

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe.
In your Son, Emmanuel,
you have shown us your light
and saved us from the power of sin.

Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath.

**Increase our longing for your presence,
that at the celebration of your Son's birth
his Spirit might dwell anew in our midst,
for he is our light and our salvation.**

Blessed be God forever.

ADVENT SONG #240: *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah (stanzas 1 through 4)

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,
who shapes the whole creation,
who comes with might and mercy,
who fills the hungry with good things.

Amen.

Let us approach the throne of grace with repentant hearts.

Faithful God,

we confess that we have been unfaithful to you.

**Like dry leaves and withered grass,
our lives are blown about by our sins
and the powers of evil around us.**

Restore us, O God;

**let the light of your face shine on us,
and we shall be saved. Amen.**

God is patient, not wanting any to perish,
but all to come to repentance.

In the name of + Jesus Christ,

I bring you this good news:

You are free from all that imprisons you;

your sins are forgiven;
God heals your broken hearts.
Live in peace and harmony
as you wait for the day of God.
Amen.

GATHERING SONG #248: *People, Look East

***GREETING**

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

***KYRIE**



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



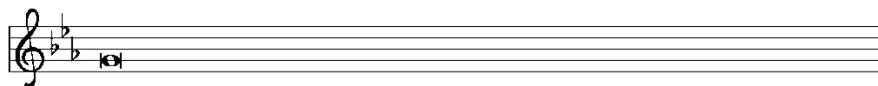
Lord, have mer - cy.



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



Lord, have mer - cy.



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.



Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,
 let us pray to the Lord.
 Lord, have mer - cy.
 Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.
 A - men, a - men.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

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 (page281 in Old Testament)

Instead of David building a house (temple) for the Lord, the Lord promises to establish David's house (dynasty) forever. Centuries later, after the Babylonian exile, no king sat on the throne. Even then, however, the people of Israel remembered this promise and continued to hope for a king, the messiah, the Lord's anointed.

Now 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.

SONG OF MARY – #251: My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness

SECOND READING Romans 16: 25-27 (page 165 in New Testament)

Paul closes his letter to the Romans by praising God because in the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ God has revealed the promised, divine plan of salvation for all humanity. Paul proclaims this gospel of Christ in order to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations.

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.

Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.
Repeat alleluia
Here I am, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.

***GOSPEL READING: Luke 1: 26 – 38** (page 56 in New Testament)

In this annunciation, Luke makes clear that God comes with good news for ordinary people (Mary) from little known places (Nazareth). This king will not be born to royalty in a palace, but to common folk in a stall. Here Luke highlights the role of the Spirit, a special emphasis in his gospel.

The holy gospel, according to Luke.

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.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

**CHILDREN'S SERMON
SERMON**

HYMN OF THE DAY #265: *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

***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,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
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,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who 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**

With longing and hopeful expectation, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

Fill the church with your Spirit, that it may be a messenger of peace and goodwill. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Anoint the leaders of nations to protect and care for those who are vulnerable, weak, poor, and oppressed. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Fill us with gratitude for sun, moon, and stars as we today mark the shortest day of the year and welcome the light. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Shelter all who are hungry and homeless, strengthen all who are perplexed or afraid, and comfort all who are grieving or ill, especially Jim, John, Robert, Frieda, Joe, Bill & Kathy, Jim, Raymond, George, Wanda Jean, Helen, Francis & Grace, Kathryn, Ed, Fred & Jane, and David & Ellen. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Draw near to all in this assembly who will travel or welcome others this week, who are expecting a child or struggling with infertility, and who face the holidays with eagerness or anxiety. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Fill the bishop and call committee with your Spirit in seeking a new pastor for this congregation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

With Mary we ponder the mystery of your grace, and give thanks for those who have gone before us in the faith. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers, faithful God, as we watch and wait for your coming among us in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

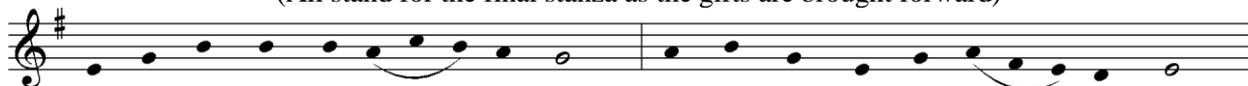
***PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also with you.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY HYMN: O Come, O Come Emmanuel

(All stand for the final stanza as the gifts are brought forward)



O come, O come, Em-man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive Is - ra - el,
O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things far and nigh:
O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on Si - nai's height
O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's tyr - an - ny;



that mourns in low - ly ex - ile here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
in strength and beau - ty come and stay; teach us your will and guide our way.
in an - cient times you gave the law in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.
from depths of hell your peo - ple save, and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



Re-joyce! Re-joyce! Em-man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra-el.

***OFFERING PRAYER**

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

***DIALOGUE**

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

***PREFACE**

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**

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. Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

***EUCHARISTIC PRAYER**

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**

**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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to Christ,
who comes to us in this holy supper.

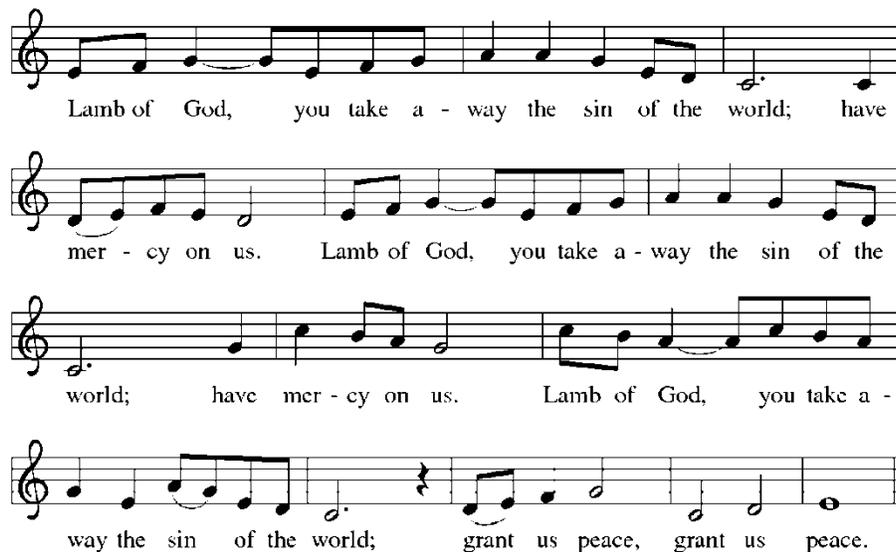
COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

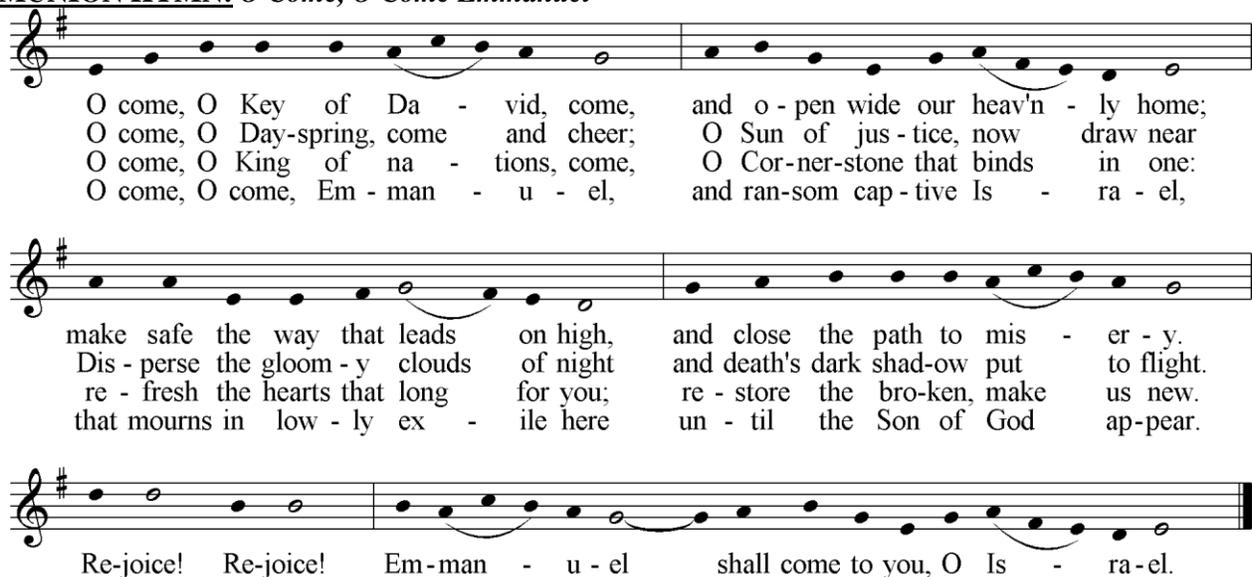
In response to Jesus' invitation, all are welcome to come forward and experience the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine of communion. Through this meal, we know forgiveness, life and salvation as the blessings of God's sacramental grace. All are invited forward for communion or a blessing. The area of cups bordered by green tape has grape juice.

***COMMUNION SONG**



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.

COMMUNION HYMN: *O Come, O Come Emmanuel



O come, O Key of Da - vid, come, and o - pen wide our heav'n - ly home;
O come, O Day-spring, come and cheer; O Sun of jus - tice, now draw near
O come, O King of na - tions, come, O Cor-ner-stone that binds in one:
O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran-som cap - tive Is - ra - el,
make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to mis - er - y.
Dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of night and death's dark shad-ow put to flight.
re - fresh the hearts that long for you; re - store the bro-ken, make us new.
that mourns in low - ly ex - ile here un - til the Son of God ap-pear.
Re-joice! Re-joice! Em-man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

***POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in grace. **Amen.**

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray.

Lord God, we give you thanks that you have fed us even now with the banquet that is yet to come.

Keep us alert for signs of your presence in the world around us.

Send us as healing oil and sheltering comfort to those in need,

and make us bold in testifying to the light of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

***BLESSING**

May Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior Christ came among us in great humility, sanctify you with the light of his blessing and set you free from all sin. **Amen.**

May he whose second Coming in power and great glory we await, make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love. **Amen.**

May you, who rejoice in the first Advent of our Redeemer,
at his second Advent be rewarded with unending life. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son +, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you forever. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG #267: *Joy to the World

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: *O Come, O Come Emmanuel* – Robert J. Powell

8:00 am

Assisting Minister: Christine Dishong
Communion Assistant: Ruth Ann Tully
Acolyte: Danielle Dishong
Lector:
Usher: Bob Dishong
Attendance Last Week: 52
Weekly Budgeted Need: \$ 2,640.27
YTD Budgeted Expenses: \$ 132,013.47
YTD Actual Expense: \$ 119,201.79

10:30 am

Assisting Minister: Sally Foster
Communion Assistant:
Acolyte: Cardinal
Lector: Sally Foster
Usher:
Attendance last year: 77
Last Week's Giving: \$ 2,290.55
Year to Date Receipts: \$135,650.05

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