



“²⁰...Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”

Matthew 1: 20

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

Fourth Sunday of Advent – December 18, 2016

420 Beaver Street

PO Box 411

Mars, PA 16046-0411

www.stjohnchurchmars.org

Phone: 724-625-1830

email: office@stjohnchurchmars.org

Pastor's cell: 412-585-1628

Pastor's email: pastor@stjohnchurchmars.org

Rev. Robert Zimmerman, Pastor

Jacob Gordon, Director of Music Ministries

*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. 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 18, 2016

Today Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. The gospel is Matthew's account of the annunciation and birth of the one named Emmanuel, God-with-us. During these final days of Advent we pray, "O come, O come, Emmanuel," a beloved hymn based on ancient prayers appointed for the seven days preceding Christmas. On this final Sunday in Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.

PRELUDE: *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came* – Paul Manz

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING

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

***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.

Amen.

***ADVENT SONG #240:** *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah*, stanzas 1-4

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,

who comes to wake us from sleep,

who leads us into the light of grace.

Amen.

Let us prepare the way of the Lord

by confessing our sin against God and neighbor.

God of all time,

**we confess that we have not prepared
for your merciful reign among us.**

**We ignore our neighbors in need
and fail in the labor of justice and peace.**

In your mercy forgive us.

**Grant us wisdom to welcome your light
and to seek the things that will endure
until Christ comes again in glory. Amen.**

Comfort, O comfort my people,
 says your God.
 In + Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven
 and all things are made new.
 Rejoice in this good news!
Amen.

GATHERING SONG: *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

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

***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 mercy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious 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 hinders our faith,
that eagerly we may receive your promises,
for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.
Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 7:10-16

An Israelite and Aramean military coalition presented a serious threat to King Ahaz of Judah. In response, Ahaz decided to secure his throne and kingdom by seeking refuge in Assyrian help. Isaiah reminds Ahaz that human attempts to establish security will fail. The prophet gives the sign of Immanuel that is the only source of true safety: God is with us!

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**

As we anticipate the fullness of the presence of Christ, we join with the church throughout the world, praying for all who are in need.

For the church universal and all servants of the gospel, for poets and artists, for musicians and preachers, and for theologians and teachers; that all proclaim that God is with us in Christ, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For all plants and animals, seas and skies, snow and rain, and all of God's marvels; that all of creation grow and thrive as we bless, protect, and use with care what God has made, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For the nations and those in authority, for peace and justice throughout the whole world, and for those who advocate on behalf of others; that all in positions of leadership choose what is good for the community, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For the thirsty and hungry, the weak and fearful, those in childbirth, those who mourn, and the sick, especially Karen, Sally, Bill, Reed, Erin, Raymond, Francis & Grace, Kathryn, Jane, David & Ellen, those on our prayer list, and all whom we remember aloud or in our hearts; that those who help others serve with patience and grace, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For those who travel near and far, for those who prepare our congregation for worship and celebration, and for those who gather around word and sacrament; that all experience welcome and refreshment, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

In thanksgiving for the saints who have died and are now at rest; that the witness of their faith point us to the promises of grace and resurrection in Christ, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, those spoken aloud and those known only to you, and grant us peace through Jesus Christ, our coming Savior.
Amen.

***PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

*OFFERING HYMN: *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

All stand for the final stanza as the gifts are brought forward.

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

*OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.
Savior of the nations, come.
Make your home here in us.
Feed us with your love,
that our faith shine ever new
and our lives reveal your light.
Amen.

*GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.

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:

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.

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.**

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

**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

Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you.
Share in the feast of salvation.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**
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*

The image shows the musical notation for the Communion Song 'Lamb of God'. It consists of four staves of music in a single system, each with a treble clef and a common time signature. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff begins with 'Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have'. The second staff continues with 'mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the'. The third staff continues with 'world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a -'. The fourth staff concludes with 'way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.'

COMMUNION HYMN #265: *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came*

***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.

God for whom we wait,
you come to us in the broken bread and the cup we share.
Make us ready always to welcome Christ into our hearts,
and send us forth to be your people in the world,
announcing your coming among us
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

***SENDING OF COMMUNION**

Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care:
As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread,
assist us in this ministry on which we are sent forth.
In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those
to whom we bring this sacrament,
that through the body and blood of your Son
we all may know the comfort of your abiding presence.

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. Prepare the way of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: *Savior of the Nations, Come* – Paul Manz



8:00 am

Assisting Minister: Christine Dishong
Communion Assistant:
Acolyte: Danielle Dishong
Lector:
Usher: Bob Dishong
Attendance Last Week: 41
Weekly Budgeted Expense: \$ 3,374.14

YTD Budgeted Expenses: \$165,332.68
YTD Actual Expense: \$156,457.86

10:30 am

Assisting Minister: Martha Ward
Communion Assistant: Denise Hager
Acolyte:
Lector:
Usher: Hager's
Attendance Last Year: 60
Last Week's General Giving: \$ 1,523.87
Last Week's Designated Giving: \$ 163.63
YTD Receipts: \$ 143,453.48

From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2016 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #39383.

New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.