



“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.

~Luke 1:35

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

Fourth Sunday of Advent – December 24, 2017

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The Rev. Robert Zimmerman, Pastor
Maizy Fisher, 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? 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 24, 2017

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: *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* – Lani Smith

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Dishong Family will light the wreath this week for the service.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH: ADVENT 4

We praise you, O God, for this wheel of time
that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.
As we light the candles on this wreath,
open our eyes to see your presence
in the lowly ones of this earth.
Enlighten us with your grace,
that we may sing of your advent among us
in the Word made flesh.
Grant this through Christ our Lord,
whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.
Amen.

Light all four candles during the singing of the hymn.

ADVENT SONG #240: *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah, stanzas 1,2, 3& 4*

GATHERING

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

***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 HYMN #242: *Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn

***GREETING**

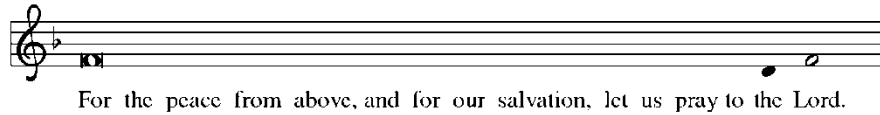
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

***KYRIE**



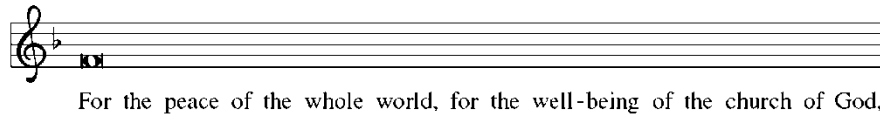
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



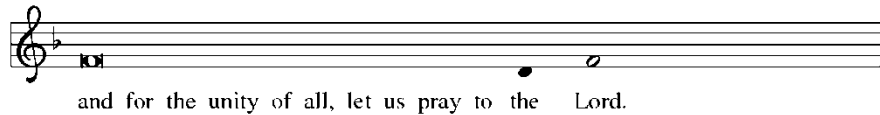
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



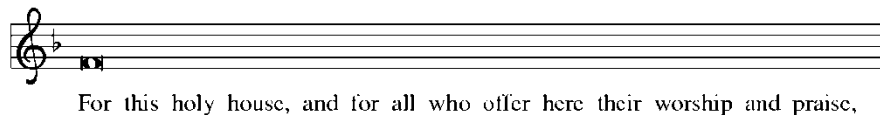
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



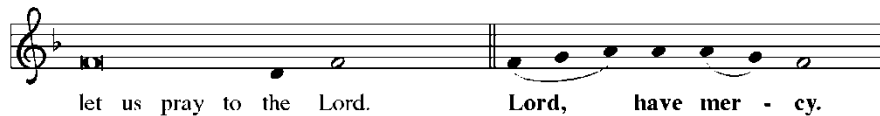
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



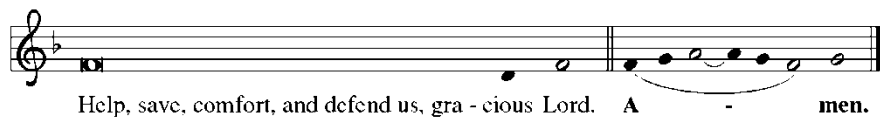
Lord, have mer - cy.



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 defend us, gra - cious Lord. 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.

WORD

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

FIRST READING: 2 Samuel 7: 1-11, 16

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.

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.

PSALM 89



^{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. R**

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 prom- | ise of mercy,**

⁵⁵the promise made | to our forbears,
to Abraham and his chil- | dren forever. **R**

SECOND READING: Romans: 16:25-27

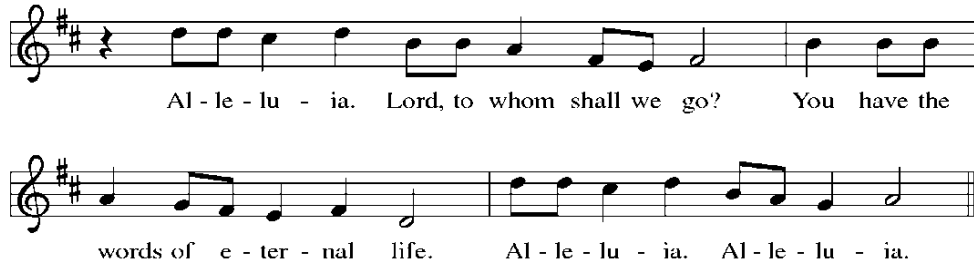
Paul closes his letter to the Romans by praising God because in the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ God has revealed the promised, divine plan of salvation for all humanity. Paul proclaims this gospel of Christ in order to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations.

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**



***GOSPEL READING: Luke 1: 26-38**

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

In this annunciation, Luke makes clear that God comes with good news for ordinary people (Mary) from littleknown 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.

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

APOSTLES CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Guided by the light of Christ, let us pray for the coming dawn of joy, healing, and comfort for all God's people.

Your eternal reign has come into the world. Give us ears to hear your call to serve your kingdom, and send us out to those who are hurting and in need of good news. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You created the mystery and beauty of the earth. Replenish rivers, lakes, seas, and all bodies of water, so that plants, animals, and humans can have life and be refreshed. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You bring down the powerful and raise up the lowly. Where war rages, shatter hatred with forgiveness and peace. Where fear rules, make your all-powerful and eternal presence known. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You remember us with mercy, Lord, as you have done for all generations. Fill us, comfort us, strengthen us, and enlighten us. Make your will known to all in need. Today we pray especially for Carol, Amy, Carol, Jim, Bill, Francis & Grace, David & Ellen, those on our prayer list, and all whom we remember aloud or in our hearts. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You called Mary to bear your Son. We pray for pregnant women, for mothers and fathers of infants and small children, and especially for couples who bear the pain of infertility, miscarriage, or stillbirth. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Your kingdom has no end. With your servants throughout time, women and men, old and young, unite us forever in your reign of peace and joy. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We raise our prayers to you, O God, in the name of the one who is, who was, and who is to come, Jesus Christ our Lord. **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 #257: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, verses 1-4

Please stand for the final verse as the gifts are brought forward.

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'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.

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
the Word made flesh.
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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup
we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.
We look with hope for his coming.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Holy God, we long for your Spirit.
Come among us.
Bless this meal.
May your Word take flesh in us.
Awaken your people.
Fill us with your light.
Bring the gift of peace on earth.
Come, Holy Spirit.
All praise and glory are yours,
Holy One of Israel,
Word of God incarnate,
Power of the Most High,
one God, now and forever.
Amen.

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**

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

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

COMMUNION

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

COMMUNION SONG: *Lamb of God*

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.

COMMUNION HYMN #257: *O Come, O Come Emmanuel, verses 5-8*

***POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

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

***POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

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 in mission to the world.

***BLESSING**

May Christ, the Sun of righteousness, shine upon you
and scatter the darkness from before your path.
Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.

Amen.

***SENDING SONG #267: Joy to the World**

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace

Prepare the way of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: *Come Thou Almighty King* – Lani Smith

The altar flowers are given by Bob & Sherry Davidson in celebration of their family, grandchildren, and the birth of Christ.

10:00 am

Assisting Minister: Christine Dishong

Communion Assistant:

Acolyte: Danielle Dishong

Lector:

Usher: Robert Dishong

Attendance Last Week: 60

Attendance Last Year: 54

Weekly Budgeted Expense: \$ 3,185.02

Last Week's General Giving: \$ 3,974.84

YTD Budgeted Expenses: \$ 159,250.90

Last Week's Designated Giving: \$ 269.17

YTD Actual Expense: \$ 154,995.18

YTD Receipts: \$ 153,303.25

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