

**Stewardship 2025  
United in Christ**



**Yesterday,  
Today and  
Tomorrow**

**Psalm 46:7 “The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold.”**

**WELCOME TO WORSHIP  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent  
December 8, 2024  
8:00 AM Traditional Worship**

**Pastor:** Paula Geister-Jones    **Guest Preacher:** Sandy Grant

**Organist/Pianist:** Linda Kunz

**Lector:** Marti Conant

**Acolytes:** Lila Yellow Bird & Greta Hanson

**Ushers:** Jim Lunde, Dan Matson, Myron Sime

**Technical Support:** Thomas Lehr, Roger Slack

Forerunners and messengers advance the advent of our God. While John the baptizer’s voice in the wilderness may be the principal focus of the day, Malachi’s prophecy could as easily herald the coming Christ as forerunner of the Lord of hosts. Finally all the baptized are called to participate in the sharing of the gospel. In so doing we prepare the way for the coming of Jesus and assist all people in capturing a vision of the “salvation of God.”

**CALL TO WORSHIP “We Are Waiting for Jesus” Helgen**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

**P:** Blessed be the Holy Trinity, ✚ one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.

**C:** Amen

**P:** Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Brief silence for reflection.*

**P:** God of mercy,

**C: we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.**

P: God of might,

**C: we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.**

P: God in our midst,

**C: we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.**

P: A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through ✝ Christ Jesus, whose day draws near.

**C: Amen.**

### **LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

*The first and second candles of the Advent Wreath are lit.*

P: Praise to you, O God, our salvation who is near.

**C: You hold us in our waiting and keep us awake to the world.**

P: You show up in our lives at unexpected times.

**C: Bless us as we light this candle to keep vigil for your arrival.**

P: We trust that even though we do not know the day or the hour, you hurry to gather all people to your peace.

**C: Amen.**

*Stand*

**HYMN: "Hark, the Glad Sound!" ELW #239**

**vs. 1: Hark, the glad sound! The Savior comes,  
the Savior promised long;  
let ev'ry heart prepare a throne  
and ev'ry voice a song.**

**vs. 2: He comes the pris'ners to release,  
in Satan's bondage held.  
The gates of brass before him burst,  
the iron fetters yield.**

**vs. 3: He comes the broken heart to bind,  
the bleeding soul to cure,  
and with the treasures of his grace**

to enrich the humble poor.

**vs. 4: Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace,  
your welcome shall proclaim,  
and heav'n's eternal arches ring  
with your beloved name.**

#### **GREETING**

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

**C: And also with you.**

#### **LITANY**

**P:** In the beginning was the Word,

**C: and the Word was with God and the Word was God.**

**P:** In the Word was life,

**C: and the life was the light of all people.**

**P:** The word became flesh and lived among us,

**C: and we have seen his glory, full of grace and truth.**

#### **HYMN OF PRAISE: "My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness" ELW #251 vs. 1**

**vs. 1: My soul proclaims your greatness, Lord;**

**I sing my Savior's praise!**

**You looked upon my lowliness,  
and I am full of grace.**

**Now ev'ry land and ev'ry age  
this blessing shall proclaim—  
great wonders you have done for me,  
and holy is your name.**

#### **SALUTATION**

**P:** The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

#### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P:** Let us pray.

**C: Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of your salvation;**

**through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

*Sit*

**FIRST READING: Malachi 3: 1-4**

“Look! I’m sending my messenger on ahead to clear the way for me. Suddenly, out of the blue, the Leader you’ve been looking for will enter his Temple—yes, the Messenger of the Covenant, the one you’ve been waiting for. Look! He’s on his way!” A Message from the mouth of God-of-the-Angel-Armies.

<sup>2-4</sup> But who will be able to stand up to that coming? Who can survive his appearance? He’ll be like white-hot fire from the smelter’s furnace. He’ll be like the strongest lye soap at the laundry. He’ll take his place as a refiner of silver, as a cleanser of dirty clothes. He’ll scrub the Levite priests clean, refine them like gold and silver, until they’re fit for God, fit to present offerings of righteousness. Then, and only then, will Judah and Jerusalem be fit and pleasing to God, as they used to be in the years long ago.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

**GOSPEL CANTICLE: “Wait for the Lord” ELW #262**

**Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.**

**Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!**

*The Gospel is announced...*

**P:** The Holy Gospel according to the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter of Luke.

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

**GOSPEL: Luke 3: 1-6**

<sup>1-6</sup> In the fifteenth year of the rule of Caesar Tiberius—it was while Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea; Herod, ruler of Galilee; his brother Philip, ruler of Iturea and Trachonitis; Lysanias, ruler of Abilene; during the Chief-Priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas—John, Zachariah’s son, out in the desert at the time, received a message from God. He went all through the country around the Jordan River preaching a baptism of life-change leading to forgiveness of sins, as described in the words of Isaiah the prophet:

Thunder in the desert!

“Prepare God’s arrival!

Make the road smooth and straight!

Every ditch will be filled in,

Every bump smoothed out,  
The detours straightened out,  
All the ruts paved over.  
Everyone will be there to see  
The parade of God's salvation."

**P:** The gospel of the Lord.

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

*Sit*

## **SERMON**

*Stand*

**HYMN: "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry" ELW #249 vss. 1, 2 & 5**

**vs. 1: On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry  
announces that the Lord is nigh;  
awake and hearken, for he brings  
glad tidings of the King of kings!**

**vs. 2: Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin;  
make straight the way for God within,  
and let us all our hearts prepare  
for Christ to come and enter there.**

**vs. 5: All praise to you, eternal Son,  
whose advent has our freedom won,  
whom with the Father we adore,  
and Holy Spirit, evermore.**

## **APOSTLE'S 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**

**P:** As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

*A Brief Silence*

**P:** Refining God, move through your church. Root out practices that harm your people, and kindle a fire for sharing the gospel among bishops, pastors, deacons, and all the baptized. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** Renewing God, transform your creation. Steer us from habits that harm what you have made, and guide us in practices that preserve and restore creatures and habitats. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** Ruling God, teach the nations your ways. Strengthen organizations and communities that broker peace and care for refugees, immigrants, and all caught in the center of conflict. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** Rescuing God, restore your people who are in any need. Heal all who are suffering. Provide comfort and strength, and nurture sustained wholeness for the future. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** Reforming God, fill this congregation with your presence. Enrich our seasonal preparations, and bless the efforts by worship committees, music ensembles, staff, clergy, and lay leaders as they work in the weeks ahead. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** Reassuring God, we remember those who have died and rest in you. Guide us in deep gratitude for their life, and allow us to learn from their faithful witness. Lord, in your mercy,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ.

**C:** Amen.

### **THE SHARING OF THE PEACE**

**P:** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C:** And also with you.

*Sit*

### **OFFERTORY "Come Now, O God"**

#### **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

**P:** Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C:** Amen.

#### **THE 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.**

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Stand*

#### **BLESSING**

**P:** God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the Journey, ✚ bless and keep you now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

**DISMISSAL**

**P: Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.**

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**SENDING HYMN: "There's a Voice in the Wilderness" ELW #255 vss. 1 & 3**

**vs. 1: There's a voice in the wilderness crying,  
a call from the ways untrod:  
Prepare in the desert a highway,  
a highway for our God!  
The valleys shall be exalted,  
the lofty hills brought low;  
make straight all the crooked places  
where God, our God, may go!**

**vs. 3: But the word of our Savior is faithful,  
the arm of our God is strong,  
who stands in the midst of the nations  
and soon will right the wrong.  
Lord, feed your flock like a shepherd,  
the lambs so gently hold;  
in pastures of peace now lead them,  
and bring them to your fold.**

**POSTLUDE: "Christ, Be Our Light" Farrell/Organ**