

**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  
Sunday, December 8, 2024  
9:15 AM Worship Express**

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

**Organist/Pianist:** Linda Kunz

**Lector:** Michael Warwick

**Acolytes:** Charlie Brabender and Addy Borchert

**Ushers:** Darla and Jason Estervig

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

Advent is all about waiting – waiting for Jesus to be born. Part of waiting is preparing. Today we find John the Baptist out in the desert crying, "Prepare for the coming of the Lord." How do we prepare for Jesus' coming? By making room for him in our busy lives.

**CALL TO WORSHIP: "Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord" from Godspell**

**Prepare ye, the way of the Lord**

**Prepare ye, the way of the Lord**

**Prepare ye, the way of the Lord**

**WELCOMING GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE**

**P:** God's people gather to wait. We wait for the coming of our Lord.

**C:** We wait for the "Light of the World."

**All:** Amen!

## **CONFESSION**

**P:** O God, as we approach the end of the year, life seems so dreary, and we feel so weary.

**All:** **We see the world around us and there is darkness: hunger, poverty, loneliness, disease, emptiness and despair. But despite our best efforts, nothing seems to change. We are ready to give up, forgive us.**

**P:** In this time of Advent, help us to watch for signs of where you are breaking through the tinsel and glitter we use to hide our pain.

**C:** **Help us to face reality with patience and hope instead of becoming indifferent to the world's evil.**

**All:** **Help us to prepare for Christ's coming by cleaning up the clutter in our lives and creating a welcoming space for you in our lives.**

## **WORDS OF FORGIVENESS**

**All:** **Hear the Good News! God has forgiven each one of us and calls us to take our part in the story of God's love and care for this world. Thanks be to God.**

## **LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

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

**P:** Praise to you, O God, who gives us the courage to start again.

**C:** **You fasten righteousness around your waist and baptize with the Holy Spirit's fire. Bless us as we mirror your mighty fire in these simple flames...**

**P:** and teach us to mirror your justice in the paths we prepare.

**All:** **We ask that peace abound, until none hurt or destroy over all the earth. Amen.**

*Stand*

**GATHERING SONG: "Messiah"**

**Someone's shouting from the desert.**

**Someone's shouting from the sea.**

**Someone's shouting from the mountain.**

**Someone's shouting from the valley.**

**Messiah, come and be our King.**

**Messiah, come and be our King.**

**Someone's shouting from the city.**

**I am young, I am cold.**

**Someone's shouting from the country.  
I am lonely, I am cold.  
Messiah, come and be our King.  
Messiah, come and be our King.**

**Someone's shouting I am broken.  
Someone's shouting make me whole.  
Someone's shouting come and change me.  
Someone's shouting save my soul.  
Messiah, come and be our King.  
Messiah, come and be our King.**

**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.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P:** Let us pray.

**All:** **Come, Jesus, come. Help us during this busy season to focus our attention and energy on preparing for your coming. May all people know the One who comes and rescues this world from despair and hopelessness. Amen.**

**GOOD NEWS VERSE: "Soon and Very Soon"**

**Soon and very soon  
we are goin' to see the King.  
Soon and very soon  
we are goin' to see the King.  
Soon and very soon  
we are goin' to see the King.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
we're goin' to see the King.**

**Lector:** The Good News according to the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter of Luke, verse 1-6.

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

**GOOD NEWS:** Luke 3:1-6

**Lector:** 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.

**Lector:** He went all through the country around the Jordan River preaching a baptism of life-change to forgiveness of sins, as described in the words of Isaiah the prophet...

**All: Thunder in the desert! "Prepare God's arrival!"**

**Lector:** Make the road smooth and straight!

**All: Every ditch will be filled in, every bump smoothed out, the detours straightened out, all the ruts paved over.**

**Lector:** Everyone will be there to see the parade of God's salvation.

**Lector:** The Good News of the Lord.

**All: Praise to you, O Christ!**

*Sit*

**CHILDREN'S WORD/ THE WORD**

*Stand*

**SONG OF THE WORD: : "He Came Down"**

**vs. 1: He came down that we may have love; (3 times)  
Hallelujah forever more.**

**vs. 2: He came down that we may have light; (3 times)  
Hallelujah forever more.**

**vs. 3: He came down that we may have joy; (3 times)  
Hallelujah forever more.**

**APOSTLES CREED**

**P:** Do you believe in God the Father?

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

**P:** Do you believe in Jesus, God's Son?

**All: 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.

**P:** Do you believe in God's Holy Spirit?

**All:** 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 THE PEOPLE: "Oh Come, Oh Come, Emmanuel"**

*This refrain will be sung before, in between and following the last petition...*

***Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel***

***Shall come to you, O Israel.***

**P:** Emmanuel, teach the nations your ways. Help our leaders and our people to see the need to care for the refugees and immigrants. You are Emmanuel, God-with – us, with us and with the most vulnerable in our midst. God be with us.

***Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel***

***Shall come to you, O Israel.***

**P:** Emmanuel, help any person who is in need. Heal those who are sick. Comfort those who are mourning or struggling. Strengthen those who have given up. Use our hands and feet and voices to make your presence real to them. God be with us.

***Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel***

***Shall come to you, O Israel.***

**P:** Emmanuel, come and be with us. Listen to these prayers and the pleas of our hearts. *(Brief silence to give you time to privately share your prayers with Jesus)* God be with us.

***Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel***

***Shall come to you, O Israel.***

## **GOD'S PEOPLE SHARE THE PEACE**

**P:** The peace of the Lord be with you all!

**All:** And also with you.

*Sit*

### **OFFERING SONG: "Away in the Manger"**

Away in a manger,  
no crib for his bed,  
the little Lord Jesus  
laid down his sweet head;  
the stars in the bright sky  
looked down where he lay,  
The little Lord Jesus  
asleep in the hay.

Be near me, Lord Jesus;  
I ask you to stay  
close by me forever  
and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children  
in your tender care  
and fit us for heaven  
to live with you there.

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**All:** 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

### BENEDICTION

**P:** Go out into the world, and with the help of God's Spirit, see Jesus breaking into our world, into your world, with good news.

**All: We go, with eyes wide open, expecting to see Jesus at every turn – in any place.**

**P:** The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face to shine upon you and give you peace.

**All: In the name of the Father, + the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**P:** Go in peace! Emmanuel is coming!

**All: Thanks be to God!**

## POSTLUDE