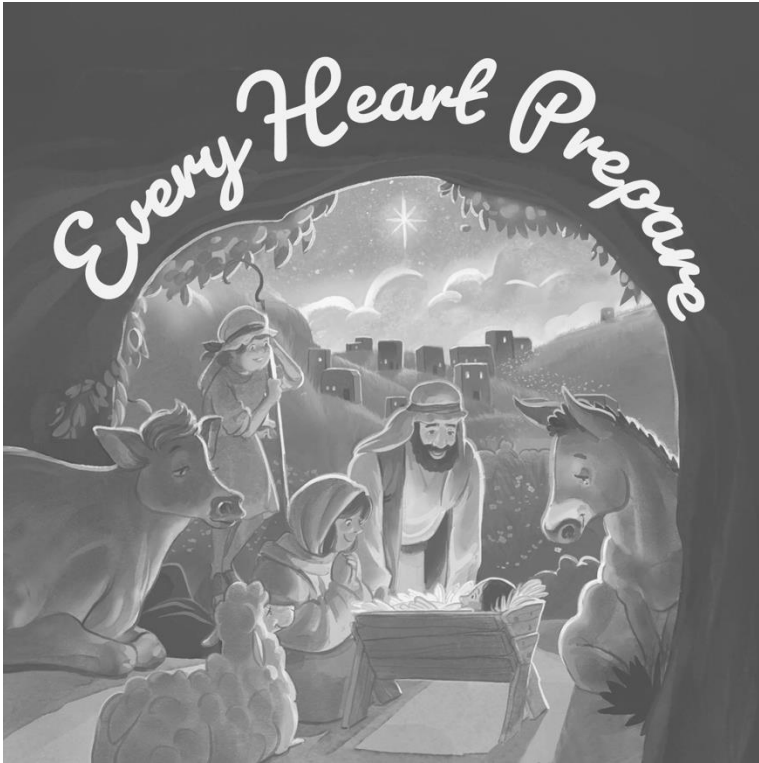


2ND MIDWEEK OF ADVENT



DECEMBER 10, 2025

ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH (LCMS)

**124 MAPLE STREET NORTH
LESTER PRAIRIE, MINNESOTA**

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AS WE GATHER—LIGHTS

“Prepare!” is often the watchword of the season as the world gets ready for another celebration of Christmas. An integral part of any preparation is decoration. We see decorations everywhere this time of year. The world may not comprehend the real meaning of Christmas, but even secular preparations use many of the same decorations beloved by Christians—an appropriation we shouldn’t mind at all, because these decorations point us to Christ. This year, as we look forward again to the coming of the Messiah, we take a fresh look at how the adornments of the season draw our eyes to Jesus, that we may more richly behold the love, peace, joy, and hope He comes to bring as this beauty is set before us.

Tonight, we focus on lights. You see them everywhere this time of year. Some neighborhoods even compete, and tourist destinations spend millions on attractive light displays. Like evergreens, this is something nonreligious people do this time of year without appreciating their true significance. Yet we know that Jesus is the light of the world (John 8:12). He came to restore righteousness to the world. This restoration continues to unfold through the ministry He has entrusted to His church. As Zechariah sang, “In the tender compassion of our God, the dawn from on high shall break upon us to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death and to guide our feet into the way of peace” (*LSB*, Benedictus, Morning Prayer). We gather this evening to bask in the light of Jesus that His Word would have its way with us and so reflect His saving light into the darkness that remains in our world.

✠ VERSICLES ✠

P O Lord, open my lips,

C and my mouth will declare Your praise.

P Make haste, O God, to deliver me;

C make haste to help me, O Lord.

C Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Praise to You, O Christ, King who comes to save us.

✠ PSALMODY ✠

PSALM 118, v. 15-29; ANTIPHON: v. 27A

The LORD is God,

and He has made His light to shine upon us.

Glad songs of salvation are in the tents of the righteous:

**“The right hand of the LORD does valiantly,
the right hand of the LORD exalts,
the right hand of the LORD does valiantly!”**

**I shall not die, but I shall live,
and recount the deeds of the LORD.**

The LORD has disciplined me severely,
but He has not given me over to death.

**Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter
through them and give thanks to the LORD.**

This is the gate of the LORD;
the righteous shall enter through it.

**I thank You that You have answered me
and have become my salvation.**

The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.

**This is the LORD's doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.**

This is the day that the LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Save us, we pray, O LORD!

O LORD, we pray, give us success!

Blessèd is he who comes in the name of the LORD!
We bless you from the house of the LORD.

**The LORD is God,
and He has made His light to shine upon us.**

Bind the festal sacrifice with cords,
up to the horns of the altar!

**You are my God, and I will give thanks to You;
You are my God; I will extol You.**

Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good;
for His steadfast love endures forever!

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;**

**as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

The LORD is God,
and He has made His light to shine upon us.

HYMN

"ARISE, O CHRISTIAN PEOPLE"

354

✠ READINGS ✠

OLD TESTAMENT

ISAIAH 9:1-2, 6-7

¹But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time He brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and

the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time He has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations. ²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. ⁶For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE

2 CORINTHIANS 4:3-6

³And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. ⁴In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL

JOHN 1:1-9

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. ⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORY FOR ADVENT

P Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch.

C This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.

P In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely.

C This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.

P Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

C This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.

HYMN “THE NIGHT WILL SOON BE ENDING” 337 (T:644)

SERMON

✠ ADVENT MIDWEEK CATECHESIS ✠

THE CREED—3RD ARTICLE & MEANING

PG. 323

C I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

P What does this mean? I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him;

C But the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.

P In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

C In this Christian Church He daily and richly forgives my sins and the sins of all believers.

P On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.

C This is most certainly true.

- 1 My soul rejoices, My spirit voices—
Sing the greatness of the Lord!
For God my Savior Has shown me favor—
Sing the greatness of the Lord!
With praise and blessing, Join in confessing
God, who is solely Mighty and holy—
O sing the greatness of God the Lord!
His mercy surely Shall rest securely
On all who fear Him, Love and revere Him—
O sing the greatness of God the Lord!
- 2 His arm now baring, His strength declaring—
Sing the greatness of the Lord!
The proud He scatters, Their rule He shatters—
Sing the greatness of the Lord!
Oppression halted; The meek exalted.
Full are the hungry; Empty, the wealthy—
O sing the greatness of God the Lord!
Here is the token All that was spoken
To Abr’ham’s offspring God is fulfilling—
O sing the greatness of God the Lord!

OFFERING

OFFERING PRAYER

✠ PRAYER ✠

KYRIE

☩ Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

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.

COLLECTS

P O Lord, hear my prayer.

C **And let my cry come to You.**

P Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

P Lord of light and life, You came into our world to remove sin and restore us to righteousness. Shine Your light anew into our hearts and cleanse us from all the deceiving evils that lurk within them, that we may live without fear of this world but joyfully anticipate Your glorious return; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

P Father of lights, every good and perfect gift comes from You. Thank You for sending Your Son to bring the light of life into the world and shining it into our hearts through the Gospel. Give us Your Spirit to hold us fast as we walk through dark places that remain in our world. Grant that our faith not grow dim but, by Your grace, glow in us through our final journey—that we may radiate Your goodness and glory each day and many may join us in Your light and also walk with You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

P O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord,

who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God,
now and forever.

C Amen.

BENEDICAMUS & BENEDICTION

L Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

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

C Amen.

HYMN “O SAVIOR, REND THE HEAVENS WIDE” 355 (T:344)

2 O Father, light from heaven send;
As morning dew, O Son, descend.
Drop down, you clouds, the life of spring:
To Jacob's line rain down the King.

5 O Morning Star, O radiant Sun,
When will our hearts behold Your dawn?
O Sun, arise; without Your light
We grope in gloom and dark of night.

6 Sin's dreadful doom upon us lies;
Grim death looms fierce before our eyes.
O come, lead us with mighty hand
From exile to our promised land.

7 There shall we all our praises bring
And sing to You, our Savior King;
There shall we laud You and adore
Forever and forevermore.

Acknowledgments

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CHRISTMAS PROGRAM AND ADVENT SCHEDULE

12/14 | 10:30 A.M. SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

**12/17 | @ ST. PETER | 5:30 AND 7:00 P.M. WORSHIP —“CANDY CANES”
6:15-6:45 SUPPER**