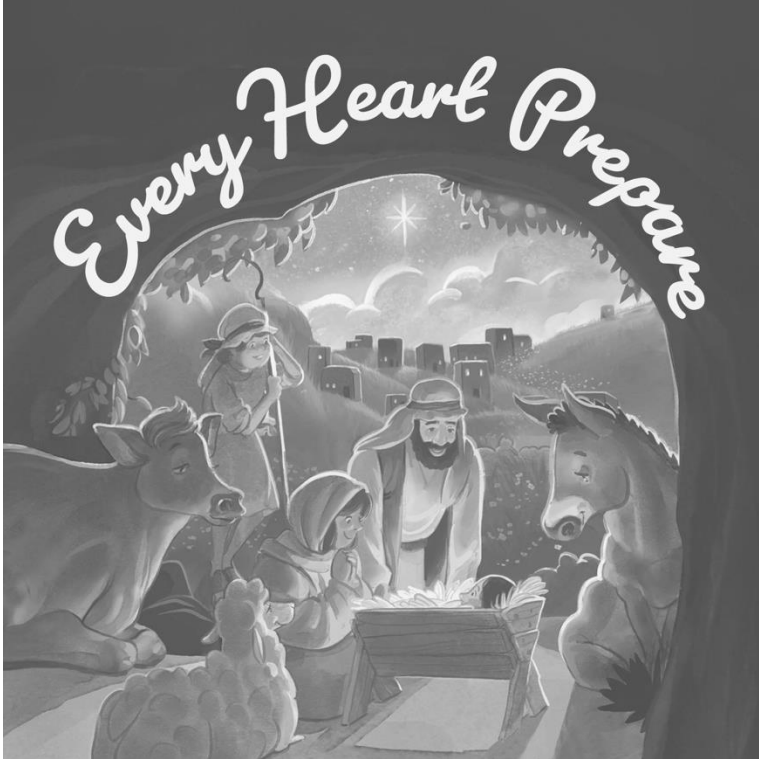


1ST MIDWEEK OF ADVENT



DECEMBER 3, 2025

ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH (LCMS)

**124 MAPLE STREET NORTH
LESTER PRAIRIE, MINNESOTA
(320)-395-2573
www.stpaulp.org**

AS WE GATHER—EVERGREENS

“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 evergreens. Perhaps the most innocuous decorations in the eyes of the world, their prickles remind us of the crown of thorns, and the berries of the holly evoke the blood-stained brow of our crucified Lord. Above all, the steadfastness of their green in the midst of death symbolizes life amid death—and the life eternal Jesus won for us on the cross.

✠ 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 92, v. 1-5, 12-15; ANTIPHON: V. 12

The righteous flourish like the palm tree
and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

**It is good to give thanks to the Lord,
to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;
to declare Your steadfast love in the morning,
and Your faithfulness by night,
to the music of the lute and the harp,
to the melody of the lyre.**

For You, O Lord, have made me glad by Your work;
at the works of Your hands I sing for joy.

How great are Your works, O Lord!

Your thoughts are very deep!

The righteous flourish like the palm tree
and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

**They are planted in the house of the Lord;
they flourish in the courts of our God.**

They still bear fruit in old age;

they are ever full of sap and green,

to declare that the Lord is upright;

He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

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 righteous flourish like the palm tree
and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

HYMN

“COME, THOU PRECIOUS RANSOM, COME”

350

✠ READINGS ✠

OLD TESTAMENT

HOSEA 14:4-8

⁴I will heal their apostasy; I will love them freely, for My anger has turned from them. ⁵I will be like the dew to Israel; he shall blossom like the lily; he shall take root like the trees of Lebanon; ⁶his shoots shall spread out; his beauty shall be like the olive, and his fragrance like Lebanon. ⁷They shall return and dwell beneath my shadow; they shall flourish like the grain; they shall blossom like the vine; their fame shall be like the wine of Lebanon. ⁸O Ephraim, what have I to do with idols? It is I who answer and look after you. I am like an evergreen cypress; from Me comes your fruit.

[P] O Lord, have mercy on us.

[C] Thanks be to God.

NEW TESTAMENT

REVELATION 22:1-5

¹Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ²through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. ³No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His servants will worship Him. ⁴They will see His face, and

His name will be on their foreheads. ⁵And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL

JOHN 11:17-27

¹⁷Now when Jesus came, He found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. ¹⁸Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, ¹⁹and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. ²⁰So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met Him, but Mary remained seated in the house. ²¹Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But even now I know that whatever You ask from God, God will give You." ²³Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." ²⁴Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." ²⁵Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" ²⁷She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is 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.

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?

C I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him;

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

C 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.

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

C On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ. This is most certainly true.

✠ CANTICLE ✠

MAGNIFICAT

"MY SOUL REJOICES"

933



1 My soul re - joic - es, My spir - it voic - es— Sing the
2 His arm now bar - ing, His strength de - clar - ing— Sing the



great - ness of the Lord! For God my Sav - ior Has shown me
great - ness of the Lord! The proud He scat - ters, Their rule He



fa - vor— Sing the great - ness of the Lord! With praise and
shat - ters— Sing the great - ness of the Lord! Op - pres - sion



bles - sing, Join in con - fess - ing God, who is sole - ly Might - y and
halt - ed; The meek ex - alt - ed. Full are the hun - gry; Emp - ty, the



ho - ly— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord! His mer - cy
wealth - y— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord! Here is the



sure - ly Shall rest se - cure - ly On all who fear Him,
to - ken All that was spo - ken To A - br'ham's off - spring



Love and re - vere Him— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord!
God is ful - fill - ing— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord!

OFFERING

OFFERING PRAYER

✠ PRAYER ✠

KYRIE

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

LORD'S PRAYER

C 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 Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

P Lord of all beauty, You made the heavens and the earth; the world and all its fullness are Yours. Thank You for giving us life and filling creation with signs that declare Your glory. As we behold beautiful evergreens this season, fix our eyes on their thorny leaves and red berries that we may give thanks for the crown Your Son wore and the cross He bore for us. Abide in us always, as we abide in Your Word and take heart in the promise of eternal life with Jesus, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end.

C Amen.

P Lord of life, You sent Your Son to bring back to life all the children of Adam. Grant that we may view the evergreens of this season through the eyes of faith so that in a world still filled with death, we may be of good courage, knowing that, just as the evergreen prevails over death in winter, we prevail over the winter of our sin and will rise to

life eternal on the Last Day; 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

“ARISE, O CHRISTIAN PEOPLE”

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Acknowledgments

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ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE

12/10 | @ ST. PAUL | 5:30 AND 7:00 P.M. WORSHIP—“LIGHTS”

6:15-6:45 SUPPER

12/14 | ST. PAUL | 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

12/24 | ST. PAUL | 3:00 P.M. & 7:00 P.M. CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP—
“CRÈCHE”

12/25 | 9:00 A.M. CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP—“WRAPPED PRESENTS”