



Joy

JOYFULLY TAKING GOD'S LOVE INTO THE WORLD

PRELUDE "Invocation for Advent" – Don & Nancy Besig Adult Combined Choir

WELCOME

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH:

Jim & Arleen Burkhardt

We praise you, O God, for this victory wreath that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, strengthen our hearts as we await the Lord's coming in glory. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may serve our neighbors in need. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. **Amen.**
Light three candles.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH CANDLES SONG

"Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah"

ELW # 240, verse 3

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure. **Amen.**
Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

Long-expected God,

we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide.
We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.
We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake.
Free us from self-reliance, and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.
Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us,
that we may abound in the hope you have promised. Amen.

God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness.

† You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior. **Amen.**

(stand) GATHERING HYMN

"Joy to the World"

ELW #267, v.1&2

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.

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Advent Meditation"- Douglas E. Wagner

Handbells

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. **Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

(sit) READING: Isaiah 35:1-10

The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and shouting. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty

of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. ³ Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." ⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be opened; ⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert; ⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp; the grass shall become reeds and rushes. ⁸ A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. ⁹ No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

(stand) GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *ELW page 151; setting four*

 **Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?**
You have the words of eternal life.
Alleluia.

GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2-11

The holy Gospel according to Matthew
Glory to you, O Lord

²When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." ⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' ¹"Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

The Gospel of our Lord. . . **Praise to you, O Christ.**

(sit) SERMON

(Stand) HYMN OF THE DAY

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

ELW #289, v.1&2

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.**

(sit) PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Response: **Hear our prayer.**

RECONCILING IN CHRIST (RIC) STATEMENT

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

People may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace and "peace be with you" or words of their choice.

OFFERING *Your gift continues our purpose of "Joyfully taking God's love into the world!" Thank you!*

OFFERING MUSIC "Christmas is All About Love" – Tom Long/Allen Pote Adult Combined Choir



WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORDS 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.

INVITATION

Here is life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised.

LAMB OF GOD *ELW Page 154; setting four*



Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION SONG

"It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"

ELW #282

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. **God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus. Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS *Check out the Happenings to learn about all that's going on!*

BENEDICTION

May God who comes among us, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always. **Amen.**

(Stand) SENDING/SPECIAL MUSIC

"Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

Peg Smith & Elle Smith
Sax Duet

BLESSING

Go in peace. Keep awake. **Thanks be to God.**

Preaching/Presiding: Pastor Brian Julin-McCleary

Cantor: Carolyn Jensen

Communion Servers: Sara, Sue & John O'Brien

Greeter: Linda Wood

Sound/Video: Jim Glaspie

Musician: Nicole Green

Reader: Sue O'Brien

Ushers: Jim Burkhardt, Pam Richter

Welcome Center Host: Tina Meyer

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