

WELCOME HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH ADVENT MIDWEEK 2 DECEMBER 10, 2025



AS WE GATHER

“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.

OPENING HYMN “People, Look East”

People, Look East

BESANÇON
French

Eleanor Farjeon, 1881–1965

Setting by Phillip Magness

1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near Of the crown - ing
2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, One more seed is
3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, One more light the
4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth Him who brings new

of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,
plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,
bowl shall brim, Shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,
life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming

Trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look
That in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look
Bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look
With the Word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look

east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

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VERSICLES AND GLORIA PATRI *Isaiah 40:3b,c, 5; Psalm 118:26*

P Prepare the way of the LORD;

C **make straight in the desert a highway for our God.**

P Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!

C **We bless you from the house of the LORD.**

P And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,

C **and all flesh shall see it together.**

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.**

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

PRAYER

P Let us pray.

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.**

FIRST READING

Isaiah 9:1–2, 6–7

P A reading from Isaiah, the ninth chapter.

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.**

RESPONSIVE READING

2 Corinthians 4:3–6

P And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing.

C **In 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.**

P For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.

C **For 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.**

SECOND READING

John 1:1–9

P A reading from John, the first chapter.

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 *1 Peter 2:9; Psalm 118:27a; 89:15; Isaiah 60:19b*

P You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

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

P Blessed are the people who know the festal shout, who walk, O LORD, in the light of your face.

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

P The LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory.

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

HYMN "The Night Will Soon Be Ending"

LSB 337

SERMON

Rev. Dr. Timothy Oswald

OFFERING

LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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.**

ADVENT LITANY

Hebrews 10:25

P In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For eyes to behold the Father's hand in all creation, let us pray to
the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For awareness of beauty and the living traditions of the church that
bring Christ to our eyes through arts and crafts, let us pray to the
Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P That we may see the signs of Christ's return even as we celebrate
His birth and encourage one another all the more as we see the Day
drawing near, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P That we may be living testimonies of new life in Christ through our loving service to our neighbor—both in word and in deed, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P That we may be thankful for the bountiful harvest we enjoy amid the many festivities of this season, and be generous to the poor, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P That we may love one another as God so loved us, forgive one another, and work together in the unity we have in Christ Jesus, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P That we may not be lured into temptation or despair or be distracted by the false Christmases around us, but always hold the true meaning of Christmas in our hearts, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

CLOSING PRAYER

P Father of lights,

C every good and perfect gift comes from You.

P Thank You for sending Your Son to bring the light of life into the world and shining it into our hearts through the Gospel.

C 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;

P through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever

Amen.

BENEDICTION

Ephesians 1:17–21, adapt.; Revelation 1:5–6

P May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which He has called you, what are the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints,

C and what is the immeasurable greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His great might that He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

P To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood and made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever.

C Amen.

HYMN “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

LSB 357:1, 6

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Pastor: Rev. Dr. Timothy Oswald

Organist: George Kelm

PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR FINAL ADVENT SUPPER AND WORSHIP NEXT WEDNESDAY BEGINNING AT 6PM. ALSO PLEASE JOIN US FOR CHRISTMAS:

Wednesday Dec. 24 6:00pm Christmas Eve Worship

Thursday Dec. 25 10:00am Christmas Day Worship

HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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