

November 26, 2023
First Sunday of Advent
Lord of Life Lutheran Church



How does a
weary world
rejoice? We acknowledge
our weariness

WELCOME

MUSICAL OFFERING

Suzanne Bowen

CALL TO WORSHIP

In God's house, we can be joyful.

We can be grateful.

We can be hopeful.

In God's house, we can be weary.

We can be anxious.

We can be grieving.

In God's house, we can be honest—

inspired or tired,

delighted or doubtful,

connected or curious,

and everything in between.

This is God's house. You are welcome exactly as you are.

Let us worship our loving God.

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

How does a weary world hope?

By telling stories of hope,

by lighting candles in the night,

and planting seeds in the winter that

will bloom in the spring.

By praying for children as they grow, and
picking up trash on the sidewalk.

**By insisting that small acts can make a
difference.**

There are a million ways to practice hope.

So today we light the candle of hope as a
reminder and a charge.

**With God's help, may we bring hope
into a weary world. Amen.**

HYMN

Come to Me, O Weary Traveler

ACS #1017

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God, we are weary.

For weary bodies that ache and cry out, we pray:

Forgive us for pushing ourselves too hard.

Reminds us that we deserve Sabbath rest.

For weary minds that feel overwhelmed and saturated with news, we pray:

Forgive us for creating so many distractions.

Remind us that in the quiet, we can hear you.

For weary hearts that long to feel the joy of this season, we pray:

Forgive us for being impatient with ourselves.

Remind us that healing takes time, and that joy and grief can coexist.

For the weary edges of our faith that struggle to hold onto hope,

Forgive us. Remind us of Zechariah and Elizabeth.

Remind us that your good news knows no bounds. Amen.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

Family of faith,

no matter how many times we wear ourselves thin,

no matter how many times we lose ourselves to distractions,

no matter how many times we ask ourselves, "How can this be?"

God's love keeps showing up for us.

So say this with me:

We are loved. We are claimed. We are forgiven.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Loving God, the source of our joy, as we turn our hearts toward your Word, we ask that you would soften us.

Soften the callouses on our hearts. Weave yourself in between the cracks in our spirits. And plant hope where there is room. And as you do this, like flowers toward the sun, we will turn ourselves toward you, eager to hear a Word so good that we cannot help but ask ourselves, "How can this be?" With openness and gratitude we pray, amen.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SCRIPTURE READING: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

¹ Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,

you who lead Joseph like a flock!

You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth

² **before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.**

Stir up your might,

and come to save us!

³ **Restore us, O God;**

let your face shine, that we may be saved.

⁴ O Lord God of hosts,

how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?

⁵ **You have fed them with the bread of tears,**

and given them tears to drink in full measure.

⁶ You make us the scorn of our neighbours;

our enemies laugh among themselves.

⁷ **Restore us, O God of hosts;**

let your face shine, that we may be saved.

¹⁷ But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,

the one whom you made strong for yourself.

¹⁸ **Then we will never turn back from you;**

give us life, and we will call on your name.

¹⁹ Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;

let your face shine, that we may be saved.



THE HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 1:1-23

¹ Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, ² just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, ³ I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first,^[a] to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴ so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed.

⁵ In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶ Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. ⁷ But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

⁸ Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, ⁹ he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. ¹⁰ Now at the time of the incense-offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside.

¹¹ Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹² When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. ¹³ But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. ¹⁴ You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, ¹⁵ for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶ He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷ With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.'

¹⁸ Zechariah said to the angel, 'How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years.'

¹⁹ The angel replied, 'I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. ²⁰ But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur.'

²¹ Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary. ²² When he did come out, he could not speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. ²³ When his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

MESSAGE

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in God who hears our prayers,
who knows all about our weariness.
We believe in God who wants joy and delight for us,
not just survival and existence.
We believe in God who looks ahead,
who is not done dreaming for the world and for us,
God who sends hope in the form of people and change,
movements and Spirit.

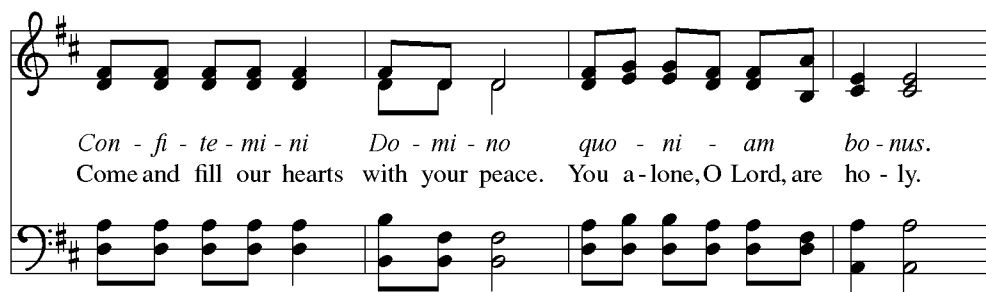
And so in this space,
We bring our joy and our weariness
and we trust that God is already at work.
Yes, we believe in God who hears our prayers.
Thanks be to God for loving us like that. Amen

THE PRAYERS

SHARING OF THE PEACE

SONG DURING OFFERING *Come and Fill Our Hearts*

#528



Con - fi - te - mi - ni Do - mi - no quo - ni - am bo - nus.
Come and fill our hearts with your peace. You a-lone, O Lord, are ho - ly.



Con - fi - te - mi - ni Do - mi - no. Al - le - lu - ia!
Come and fill our hearts with your peace. Al - le - lu - ia!

OFFERTORY

Thankful Hearts and Voices Raise

#207



Thank-ful hearts and voic-es raise; tell ev-'ry-one what God has done. Let



ev - 'ry-one who seeks the Lord re - joice and bear the name of Christ.



Send us with your prom - is - es and lead your peo - ple forth in joy with



shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le-lu - ia, al - le-lu - ia.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER AND WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread;

forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil;

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

COMMUNION BLESSING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

SENDING HYMN

Light Dawns on a Weary World

#726

SENDING

Gospel Acclamation (Taizé)

Music: “Alleluia 7,” Jacques Berthier, and the Taizé Community

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Come and Fill Our Hearts

Text: Psalm 136:1 (Latin); Taizé Community

Music: CONFITEMINO DOMINO, Jacques Berthier

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Thankful Hearts and Voices Raise

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Light Dawns on a Weary World

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