

DECEMBER 24, 2023 FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Welcome to 9:00 am Worship

**St. Luke Lutheran Church
35 Wilson Ave, PO Box 338; Gilbertsville, PA 19525**

PRELUDE

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

Two settings, Kevin Sadowski and Jacob B Weber; ©2001 and 2015 Concordia Publishing House

GATHERING HYMN:

ELW 251 My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness

Text: With One Voice, 1995, based on the Magnificat; ©1995 Augsburg Fortress; Music: English folk tune; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872-1958, Arr. ©Oxford University Press

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

ELW 253 He Came Down vs 1-4

Text: Cameroon traditional; Music: Cameroon traditional; arr. John L. Bell, b. 1949, Arr.©1986 Iona Community, GIA Publications, Inc.

HYMN OF THE DAY:

ELW 265 The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

Text: Basque carol; para. Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834-1924; Music: Basque carol, Arr. Richard Lloyd, ©1996 Kevin Mayhew Ltd.

HOLY COMMUNION

Lo, How a Rose is Growing

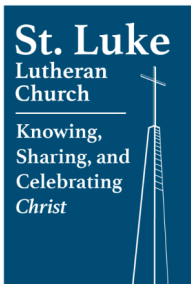
setting, Robert Benson; ©2003 Augsburg Fortress

SENDING HYMN:

ELW 239 Hark, the Glad Sound

Text: Phillip Doddridge, 1702-1751; Music: Thomas Haweis, 1734-1820

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Director of Music

Valerie Schlegel
Dir. Handbell & Youth Choir

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Office Administrator

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stlukegilbertsville.org
610-367-9738

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit Calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE

During the prelude, please use this time to quietly allow God to open your heart to his blessed presence.

WELCOME

Please rise in body or spirit.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
who opens the heavens
and draws near to us with salvation.

Amen.

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance.
Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Everlasting God,
you love justice and you hate wrongdoing.
We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness
that make us reluctant to work against oppression.
We are complicit in systems of exploitation.
We choose comfort over courage.
We are careless with creation's bounty.
Look upon us with mercy.
Turn our hearts again to you.
Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways
for the sake of our waiting world.
Amen.

Hear these words of assurance:
God clothes you with garments of salvation
and covers you with robes of righteousness.

In the tender compassion of ☩ Jesus Christ,
your sins are forgiven.

God's covenant is eternal,
and God's blessing rests upon us all.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness

ELW 251

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come.

**With your abundant grace and might,
free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy,
that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world,
for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.**

Amen.



1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;
 2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;
 3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;
 4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;

he came down that we may have love;
 he came down that we may have light;
 he came down that we may have peace;
 he came down that we may have joy;

hal-le - lu - jah for-ev - er - more.

The assembly is seated.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING:

A reading from 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

¹Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." ³Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you."

⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. ⁷Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" ⁸Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; ⁹and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. ¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Luke 1:46b-55

^{46b}My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,

⁴⁷my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸**for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant.**

From this day all generations will call me blessed:

⁴⁹you, the Almighty, have done great things for me
and holy is your name.

⁵⁰**You have mercy on those who fear you,
from generation to generation.**

⁵¹You have shown strength with your arm
and scattered the proud in their conceit,

⁵²**casting down the mighty from their thrones
and lifting up the lowly.**

⁵³You have filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴**You have come to the aid of your servant Israel,
to remember the promise of mercy,**

⁵⁵the promise made to our forebears,
to Abraham and his children forever.

SECOND READING:

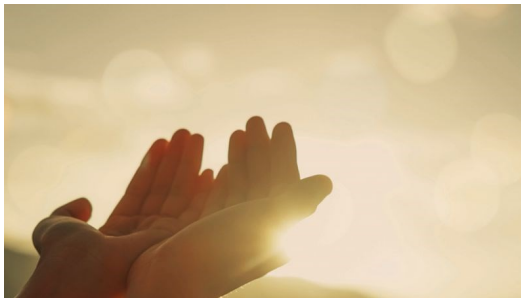
A reading from Romans 16:25-27

²⁵Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel
and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the
mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but is now disclosed, and
through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles,
according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the
obedience of faith—²⁷to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to
whom be the glory forever! Amen.

Word of God, Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Please rise in body or spirit



GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Repeat alleluia

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

GOSPEL:

The holy gospel according to Luke 1:26-38

Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was

said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

MESSAGE:

The Rev. David Luther

Please rise in body or spirit.

HYMN OF THE DAY *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came* ELW 265

CREED

Together, let us confess our faith using the words of the 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.**

The assembly is seated.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

A brief silence.

You promise mercy to Abraham and Sarah and their descendants forever. Bring your church into thoughtful, caring, and collaborative relationship with those of other faiths. Strengthen our shared values, that we work together in caring for our world. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

As fields and crops lie dormant, bless them with holy rest. Prepare them to thrive, that they provide abundant food in due season. Protect animals who hibernate and provide for all who scavenge for food in the lean season. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

You raise up the lowly and cast down the arrogant. Teach humility to all in positions of authority. Break down systems of oppression, especially systems that perpetuate inequity and exclusion. Do not allow wealth, power, or pride to become idols that obscure your call to justice. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Look with favor upon all who cry out to you. Accompany with tenderness all who are afraid or ill. Rescue all who experience abuse or who live under threat of violence, especially refugees, immigrants, and asylum-seekers in search of a safe and stable home. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

You are pleased to make your home among us. Make our homecomings joyful as we gather with friends, families, and chosen families in celebration. Grant safety to all who travel. Sustain the work of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services and other ministries that assist in setting up new homes. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Blessed are you for Mary and all your servants in every generation who lived according to your promise of mercy. Strengthen us by their example until the revelation of your glory is made known. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.
Amen.

PEACE

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

SPECIAL MUSIC

Azlyn Ramus, soloist; Carter Ramus, percussion

Come to Be Our Hope, O Jesus

Text: Jaci Maraschin, 1929–2009, tr. Jorge Rodríguez; Music: Marcílio de Oliveira Filho; Text ©1987, 1989, Music © 1989 World Council of Churches

MEAL

OFFERING PRAYER

God our provider,
by your merciful hand
abundance springs up from the earth.
Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty.
Let them be a sign of your steadfast love
and faithfulness for all people,
through Jesus Christ our Savior.
Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE

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.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.
And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the
hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of

pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -

san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the

name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

All are welcome to commune. Please follow the instructions of the presiding minister.

LORD'S PRAYER

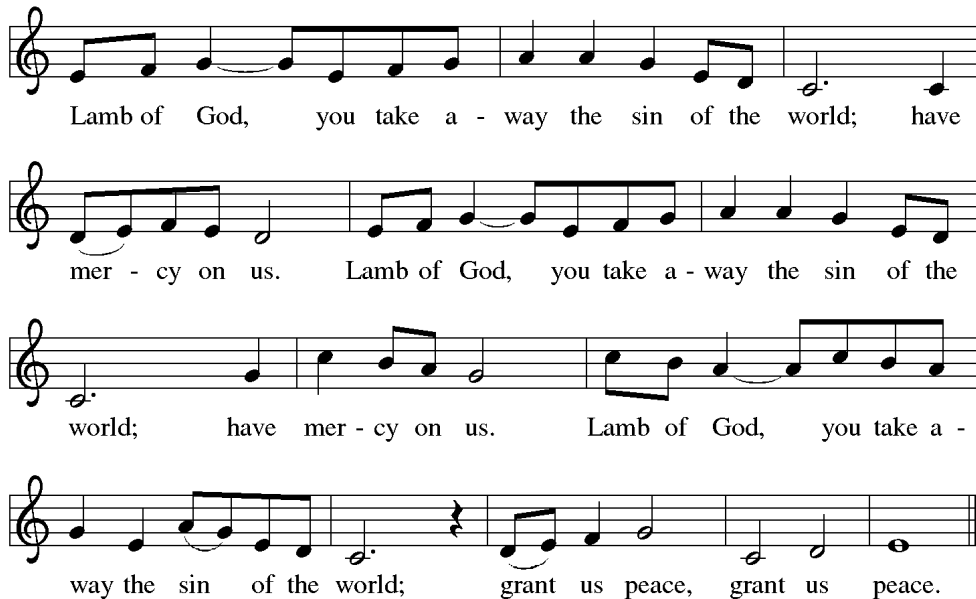
Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

COMMUNION SONG



INVITATION TO COMMUNION

In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together.
Come, take your place at the table.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you. **Amen**

The blood of Christ, shed for you. **Amen**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep
you in God's grace.

Amen.



PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Generous God,
**in bread and cup you have revealed your glory
for all people to see together.**
**Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim
your good news of liberation and release,
brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior.**
Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

Please rise in body and spirit.

BLESSING

Church, receive this blessing.

The God of peace bless you,
the love of Christ sustain you in hope,
and the anointing of the Spirit ✠ remain upon you
now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

Hark, the Glad Sound

ELW 239

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE

From Sundayandseasons.com

TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERS:

Worship Leader & Message: The Rev. David Lutchter

Director of Music: Lincoln Noecker

Lector: Connie Hukari

Audio Video: Mike Ferraro

Ushers: Ron Hukari, David Janzow

Sacristan: Donna Biehl/Sandi Quicksell

LECTIONARY FOR DECEMBER 25-30

Monday – Luke 1:66b-55; 1 Samuel 1:1-18; Hebrews 9:1-14

Tuesday – Psalm 148; Jeremiah 26:1-9; 12-15; Acts 6:8-15; 7:51-60

Wednesday – Psalm 148; Exodus 33:18-23; 1 John 1:1-9

Thursday – Psalm 148; Jeremiah 31:15-17; Matthew 2:13-18

Friday – Psalm 148; Isaiah 49:5-15; Matthew 12:46-50

Saturday - Psalm 148; Proverbs 9:1-12; 2 Peter 3:8-13

IN OUR PRAYERS: This morning in our prayers we remember the saints whose commemorations fall during this week:

December 26 STEPHEN, DEACON AND MARTYR

December 27 JOHN, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST

December 28 THE HOLY INNOCENTS, MARTYRS

PRAYERS FOR Health and Healing:

- ◇ Ruth Ann Shaner, heart catheterization
- ◇ Ron Seasholtz, cardiac surgery

PRAYERS FOR those in grief:

- ◇ Family & friends of Vivian Cotellesse Specca (friend of Kathy Billger)

PRAYERS FOR those Needing Continued Prayers:

Bob Arobone

Tom Bucks

Kristopher Yoder

Jalen Gray

Larry Kuser

Sharon Smith

Bonnie Ritter

PRAYERS FOR those at home:

Gloria Christman

Marie Geiger

Ruth Nice

Ann Rhoads

Jean & Bill Christy

Paul McFarland

Helen Penketh

Cookie Stasik

December 24 Worship Times

Christmas eve worship will be at 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm Today.

Church Office

The church office will be closed on Monday, December 25 and Tuesday December 26.



Worship and Stewardship			
<u>Our November Commitment</u>		<u>Our Generosity</u>	<u>Overage/Shortfall</u>
Budget	\$13,064	\$ 10,398	-\$2,666
Mission Support	\$544	\$ 499	-\$ 45

Date	Week of December 17	Location
Sunday, December 24 4th Sunday of Advent	9:00 am Worship	Nave
Wednesday, December 27	CCR Closed	CCR
Friday, December 29	8:30 pm AA Meeting	Class Room Downstairs
Worship Leaders	Sun., December 31	Sun., January 7, 2024
Presiding	St. Luke Members	Dennis Faust
Lector	Pat Hallman	Kathy Billger
Ushers	Larry Billger, Terry Conrad	Ron Hukari, Dave Janzow
Audio Video	Ron Ball	Ron Ball
Office Volunteer	Pat Hallman (Dec. 28)	Cindy Bealer (Jan. 4)
Sacristan	Donna Biehl/Sandi Quicksell	Merri Gephart

Christmas Eve Worship

Worship Leaders	Christmas Eve 2:00 pm	Christmas Eve 7:00 pm
Presiding	Deacon Kathie Afflerbach	Dennis Faust
Lector	Joe Vendetti	Kathy Billger
Ushers	Gary Fronheiser, Ron Hukari	Dave Girton, Ron Hukari
Audio Video	Mike Ferraro	Ron Hukari
Office Volunteer	Pat Hallman (Dec. 21)	Donna Biehl (Dec. 21)
Sacristan	Donna Biehl/Sandi Quicksell	



READER

Advent 4

- Today is the **4th Sunday** in **Advent**.
- During Advent, we share the **good news**—Jesus is coming!
- **Angels** make an appearance during Advent.

The Angel's Message

Color in the spaces with dots to discover the angel Gabriel's message to Mary.

Do not be
afraid.
You will
have
God's son
Jesus.