

Welcome to Christ Lutheran Church & Preschool

December 10, 2023

Second Sunday of Advent

Rev. Paul Pfeffer

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Member of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
(ELCA – www.elca.org)



All Are Welcome – All the Time!

You do not need to be a member of this church or Lutheran to participate in any part of worship. If you wish to take communion, we ask that you desire a relationship with Jesus. His body and blood were given and shed for you.



Christ Lutheran Church & PreSchool is a community committed to the work of equity and inclusion, bringing justice and support for all of God's beloveds. We welcome those who are seeking God's love and grace for the first time or as a life-long believer. We welcome because Jesus shows us how to welcome, regardless of race, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, economic resources, relationship status, health challenges or anything else that too often divides us. It is in our welcome which we commit ourselves to being an anti-racist space, a space where we seek daily to deepen our work of inclusion in the life of our church. Our unity is in Christ. All are welcome here.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & SHARING OF PRAYER CONCERNS

By Kathy Davis, who will provide updated Prayers of Intercession

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, who comes to wake us from sleep, who leads us into the light of grace. **Amen.**

Let us prepare the way of the Lord by confessing our sin against God and neighbor.

– Silence for reflection and self-examination –

God of all time,

**we confess that we have not prepared for your merciful reign among us.
We ignore our neighbors in need and fail in the labor of justice and peace.
In your mercy forgive us. Grant us wisdom to welcome your light
and to seek the things that will endure until Christ comes again in glory.
Amen.**

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.

In + Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven

and all things are made new. Rejoice in this good news!

Amen.

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you. **And also with you!**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

SONG: Light One Candle, ELW #240 (vs 2)

Light two candles to watch for Messiah; Let the light banish darkness.

He shall feed the flock like a shepherd; Gently lead them homeward.

LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE

From *Prepare: An Advent Devotional*, Bethany Fellows/Chalice Press, (c)2019

Matthew 3:3 says: *Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.*

The season of Advent brings the chaos of *planning* and *doing*.

As we prepare to receive the Christ child, give us eyes to see the brokenness and chaos of the world – and the courage not to turn away from its pain. Give us the desire to see in the brokenness the holy potential for the kingdom of God. Let this time slow so that we might be able to cultivate a sense of gratitude, a practice of peace, and a response to the call to be peacemakers in a broken world.

On this Second Sunday of Advent, we light the second candle of Advent, as people who long for peace. May we prepare the path for the Prince of Peace to enter into our midst.

– *Silence for reflection as we light the first candle; then read together* –

**We light this candle, the second candle of Advent,
as people who long for peace.
May we prepare the path for the
Prince of Peace to enter into our midst.**

Let us pray: God of hope and peace, we pray that in this season we transform to become not just receivers of your peace, but also peacemakers in the footsteps of Jesus. **Amen.**

READING – Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

A voice of one calling: "In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain.

And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?"

"All people are like grass, and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field. The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the Lord blows on them. Surely the people are grass. The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever."

You who bring good news to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good news to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, "Here is your God!"

See, the Sovereign Lord comes with power, and he rules with a mighty arm. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him.

He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

RESPONSIVE READING – Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

You, Lord, showed favor to your land;
you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

You forgave the iniquity of your people
and covered all their sins.

I will listen to what God the Lord says;
**he promises peace to his people, his faithful servants –
but let them not turn to folly.**

Surely his salvation is near those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.

Love and faithfulness meet together;
righteousness and peace kiss each other.

Faithfulness springs forth from the earth,
and righteousness looks down from heaven.

The Lord will indeed give what is good,
and our land will yield its harvest.

Righteousness goes before him
and prepares the way for his steps.

READING – 2 Peter 3:8-15a

(Simon Peter writes:) Do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.

Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation,

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

– *Please stand as you are able* –

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (SUNG) – ELW 172

Halle, halle, halle – lujah. Halle, halle, halle – lujah.
Halle, halle, halle – lujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah!

THE GOSPEL – Mark 1:1-8

The Holy Gospel according to Mark. Glory to You, O Lord.

The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

“I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way” –
“a voice of one calling in the wilderness,
‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”

And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. John wore clothing made of camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And this was his message: “After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

The Gospel of our Lord. Praise to You, O Christ.

SERMON – Rev. Paul Pfeffer

SONG: On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry, ELW #249

(Printed on bulletin insert or in hymnal)

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake and hearken, for he brings glad tidings of the King of kings!

Then cleansed be every life from sin; Make straight the way for God within,
and let us all our hearts prepare for Christ to come and enter there.

We hail you as our Savior, Lord, our refuge and our great reward;
Without your grace we waste away like flow'rs that wither and decay.

Stretch forth your hand, our health restore, and make us rise to fall no more;
Oh, let your face upon us shine and fill the world with love divine.

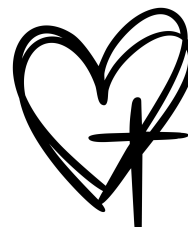
All praise to you, eternal Son, whose advent has our freedom won,
whom with the Father we adore, and Holy Spirit, evermore.

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.



PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION *(on separate sheet)*

Merciful God... Receive our prayer.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. And also with you.

– Please share a socially distanced sign of peace or greeting –

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks & praise.**



WORDS OF INSTITUTION *(not printed/Presider's book on altar)*

LORD'S 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.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION AT THE FRONT

All are welcome to receive the Real Presence of Christ in the bread and wine of Holy Communion. You do not need to be a member of this church or Lutheran

to receive the sacrament. We ask that you desire a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Those who are interested will be invited by an usher to come up the center aisle to

the front to select a single-serving Communion kit from the tray, or to receive a

blessing. Then return to your seat via the side aisle to open the kit and partake in

Communion. An usher will offer a basket to collect the container. *For those*

worshipping at home, please consider joining in Holy Communion by taking a bit of

bread or cracker and a sip of wine or juice. **All are welcome.**

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

BENEDICTION

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

May the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

May the Lord look upon you with favor and give you His peace.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

SONG: People, Look East, ELW #248 (vs. 1, 3, 4)

(Printed on bulletin insert or in hymnal)

People, look east. The time is near of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east, and sing today – **Love, the Guest, is on the way!**

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the bowl shall brim,
shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east, and sing today – **Love, the Star, is on the way!**

Angels announce with shouts of mirth, him who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east, and sing today – **Love, the Lord, is on the way!**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way. Serve the Lord. Thanks be to God!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Christmas Worship – Sunday, December 24 at 9:30 a.m. (one worship, only)**
- **Poinsettias for Christmas**

Please help decorate the church for Advent/Christmas by bringing a Poinsettia plant or two. Any color or size. A stack of saucers will be on the organ bench for you to place under the plant. Put your plant anywhere and we will adjust as we add to the display. You can take your plant home after worship on December 24. Thank you.
- **Joy Bags for Sue's Pantry Kids – By December 13.**

This year's list includes more children (more than 50). Can we do it? Yes we can! PreSchool families are planning to handle the youngest 25 children, so we are hoping to give to the teenagers. Gift bags are simple with values of approximately \$30 with a few things for each child. For younger teens, suggestions include hats, mittens/gloves, sweater/sweatshirt, toy/game, candy and/or a small gift card to Walmart or Target. For older teens, ideas include gloves, fun socks, small gift card, candy, lotion, chapstick, ear buds/charging cord, card game, journal or pens. But do what you feel and what you find! Please pray on how we might make this happen. Holly will have specifics so you can shop for a specific child (age/gender/personality), or donate cash and Holly will put things together. Email HollySJ@earthlink.net for details. Please prayerfully consider so we can brighten the holidays just a bit. Please provide money or Joy Bags prior to December 13. Thank you!
- **Encampment Collection** – Thank you to all who contributed to our first delivery to Chicago. We continue to collect blankets/sleeping bags (new or gently used/clean), socks, hand warmers, feminine products, Mariano's gift cards (store closest to camp).
- **Sanctuary Support** – Our first batch of sleeping mats, small suitcases and OTC medicines were delivered to asylum seekers living in Police Stations and community centers in Chicago, a Sanctuary City. This collection continues as need does not end.
- **Sue's Pantry** – Looking for small sizes of flour, cooking oil, sugar. Also anything needed to keep a home and family clean – dish soap, laundry detergent, body wash, shampoo.
- **Love INC** – Always looking for housewares, nonperishables and volunteers. Want to learn more about this amazing organization? Have a child or family in need of a bundle of clothes or housewares? Give the details to Natalie and on behalf of the church, we will request support – and Natalie will get us covered! (Thanks, Natalie.)
- **COOL Ministries** – We support the COOL pantry in Waukegan as well as Vernon Township Pantry with non-perishables. Collection bins in hallway or give online.
- **BSA Troop 273** – Thank you to all who support our partner Scouts as they have supported us.
- **Looking to restart Cub Scout Pack 273!** Children/families ages Kindergarten through 4th grade are encouraged to reach out to Theresa (tcalabrese98@gmail.com).