

# FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Christ Our Shepherd Lutheran Church

Peachtree City, Georgia

December 24, 2023

10:30 A.M.

Fritz Wiese, Senior Pastor    Miriam Beecher, Pastor

Larry Peterson, Director of Worship and Music

☐ = Pastor    ☒ = Lector [reader]    ☑ = Congregation    *ELW*=Evangelical Lutheran Worship (red hymnal)  
↑ Please stand as you are able.

## PRELUDE

*Welcome to worship! Today's worship includes the sacrament of communion. Communion is offered by intinction: you may receive a wafer and dip it in the chalice with wine or white grape juice. Or you may pick up a prefilled communion "kit" on the altar rail as you approach the altar. Please tell an usher if you need a communion kit brought to you where you sit.*

## WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Miriam

### ↑ LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: *A Flickering Candle*

**A flick'ring candle sheds its light In hope of dawn's victorious might,  
And backward scurries cow'rdly night Reminded of the morning.  
Watch, watch, for Christ is near, The promised Son of God most dear.  
Hope, hope, His light will clear The shades of death and sin.**

**From Jesse's barren stump will spring A noble branch, a righteous King;  
To earth's despairing lands He'll bring Both justice and salvation.  
Watch, watch, for Christ is near, The promised Son of God most dear.  
Hope, hope, His light will clear The shades of death and sin.**

Text.: Mark Oldenburg, © 2008, 2014 Birmamwood Publications. Used by permission. OneLicense #A-701929.

- ☒ Let us pray: Praise to you, O God, who lives with us, sharing our flesh and bones.  
As Mary waited and Joseph dreamed, so we dream and wait for you.  
Bless us and let your face shine upon us, more radiant than these candles,  
and more dear than all else we seek.  
Restore us when we fail to refuse the evil and choose the good, and banish all our fears.  
We pray in the name of Emmanuel, your promised child and our Savior.

☑ **Amen.**

*The fourth candle is lit.*

### ↑ GATHERING HYMN: *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

*ELW Hymn 257*

- 1 O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.**

#### *Refrain*

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

- 2 O come, O Wisdom from on high, embracing all things far and nigh:  
in strength and beauty come and stay; teach us your will and guide our way. *Refrain***

- 3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times you gave the law in cloud, and majesty, and awe. *Refrain***

- 4 O come, O Branch of Jesse, free your own from Satan's tyranny;  
from depths of hell your people save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave. *Refrain***

*Hymn continues on the next page.*

- 5 O come, O Key of David, come, and open wide our heav'nly home;  
make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

Text: *Psalteriolum Cantionum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. composite  
Text st. 2 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

### ↑ GREETING

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

### ↑ PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P** 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.  
**C** **Amen.**

**FIRST READING: Romans 16:25-27**

*see insert*

### ↑ GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: *We Are Waiting for Jesus*

*ACS Hymn 905*

- 1 We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace. We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.  
Sun of justice, shine upon us; we are trusting in your promise.  
We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.**
- 2 We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace. We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.  
Loving Shepherd, walk beside us; stir our hearts, and gently guide us.  
We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.**

Text: John Helgen, b. 1957  
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### ↑ GOSPEL: Luke 1:26-38

*see insert*

### SERMON

Pastor Miriam

### ↑ HYMN OF THE DAY: *Canticle of the Turning*

*ELW Hymn 723*

- 1 My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great,  
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait.  
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight, and my weakness you did not spurn,  
so from east to west shall my name be blest. Could the world be about to turn?**

### *Refrain*

- My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.**
- 2 Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great things in me,  
and your mercy will last from the depths of the past to the end of the age to be.  
Your very name puts the proud to shame, and to those who would for you yearn,  
you will show your might, put the strong to flight, for the world is about to turn. *Refrain***
- 3 From the halls of pow'r to the fortress tow'r, not a stone will be left on stone.  
Let the king beware for your justice tears ev'ry tyrant from his throne.  
The hungry poor shall weep no more, for the food they can never earn;  
there are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed, for the world is about to turn. *Refrain***
- 4 Though the nations rage from age to age, we remember who holds us fast:  
God's mercy must deliver us from the conqueror's crushing grasp.  
This saving word that our forebears heard is the promise which holds us bound,  
till the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turning the world around.**

Text: Rory Cooney, b. 1952, based on the Magnificat  
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## ↑ OUR PROFESSION OF FAITH: THE APOSTLES' CREED

- P** Let us confess our baptismal faith together.
- C** **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 THE CHURCH

*When the petition concludes "Merciful God," please respond, "Receive our prayer."  
 The prayers are ended with these words, "Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy." Please respond, "Amen."*

## ↑ THE EXCHANGE OF PEACE

- P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.
- C** **And also with you.**

## INVITATION TO OFFERING

*Link to give:* <https://coslutheran.org/give/>

We acknowledge that you may have already offered your gifts electronically or by mail. Thank you.

## MUSICAL OFFERING

*Charlotte Pointek, soloist*

## ↑ THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>P</b> The Lord be with you.                   | <b>C</b> <b>And also with you.</b>                 |
| <b>P</b> Lift up your hearts.                    | <b>C</b> <b>We lift them to the Lord.</b>          |
| <b>P</b> Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. | <b>C</b> <b>It is right to give our thanks and</b> |
- praise.**
- P** It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, ... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:
- C** **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**



—ELW page 153

## ↑ WORDS OF INSTITUTION

### ↑ THE LORD'S PRAYER

- 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.**

## COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

*Please approach the altar using the diagonal aisles and return by the side or middle aisles.  
 You will be offered a wafer, which you may dip in either the chalice of wine or the white grape juice.  
 You may also choose a packaged cup with wine or grape juice, or a gluten-free wafer with wine.*

- C** **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.**

—ELW page 154

**COMMUNION HYMN: *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus****ELW Hymn 254*

- 1** Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art,  
dear desire of ev'ry nation, joy of ev'ry longing heart.
- 2** Born thy people to deliver, born a child, and yet a king;  
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;  
by thine all-sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788  
Text in Public Domain.

**↑ PASTORAL BLESSING and BENEDICTION**

- ℙ** 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: *Joy to the World****ELW Hymn 267*

- 1** Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king;  
let ev'ry heart prepare him room and heav'n and nature sing,  
and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.
- 2** Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
- 3** No more let sin and sorrow grow nor thorns infest the ground;  
he comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found,  
far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.
- 4** He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love,  
and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748  
Text in the Public Domain.

**↑ SENDING**

- ℙ** Go in peace. Keep awake. Invite all to join in connecting to Jesus' pathway of joy and life.
- ☩** Thanks be to God.

**↑ POSTLUDE**

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*Altar Guild: Carol Talbot**Advent Wreath Lighting:**Lector:**Tech crew: Linda Volckmann, Brad Milburn**Usher: Tor Brunso**Altar flowers given Connie Earle.*

# THE LESSONS

Sunday, December 24

## INTRODUCTION

*God keeps the promise made to David to give him an everlasting throne. The angel tells Mary that God will give David's throne to her son Jesus. She is perplexed by Gabriel's greeting and by the news of her coming pregnancy, but she is able still to say, "Count me in." We who know that Jesus is called king only as he is executed still find it a mystery hard to fathom, but with Mary today we hear the news of what God is up to and say, "Count us in."*

## FIRST READING: Romans 16:25-27

The New Testament reading is from Romans, the 16th chapter.

<sup>25-27</sup> Now to him who is able to set you on your feet as his own sons—according to my Gospel, according to the preaching of Jesus Christ himself, and in accordance with the disclosing of that secret purpose which, after long ages of silence, has now been made known (in full agreement with the writings of the prophets long ago), by the command of the everlasting God to all the Gentiles, that they might turn to him in the obedience of faith—to him, I say, the only God who is wise, be glory for ever through Jesus Christ!

*The New Testament in Modern English by J.B Phillips copyright © 1960, 1972 J. B. Phillips. Administered by The Archbishops' Council of the Church of England. Used by Permission.*

℣ The Word of the Lord.

☩ Thanks be to God

## GOSPEL: Luke 1:26-38

℣ The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 1st chapter. ☩ Glory to you, O Lord.

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup>But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He 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. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>The 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. <sup>36</sup>And 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. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible with God." <sup>38</sup>Then 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.

**MAGNIFICAT ON BACK**

***MAGNIFICAT***  
**Luke 1:46-55**

<sup>46</sup> And Mary said,  
<sup>47</sup> “My soul magnifies the Lord,  
<sup>48</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.  
Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,  
<sup>49</sup> for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name;  
<sup>50</sup> indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.  
<sup>51</sup> He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
<sup>52</sup> He has brought down the powerful from their thrones  
and lifted up the lowly;  
<sup>53</sup> he has filled the hungry with good things  
and sent the rich away empty.  
<sup>54</sup> He has come to the aid of his child Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,  
<sup>55</sup> according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”