

Second Sunday in Advent



St. Stephen's Lutheran Church
Worship Service with Holy Communion
Sunday, December 6, 2020 ■ 9:30 a.m.

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Welcome to the season of Advent ...

Advent is the first season of the new church year, and means "coming" in Latin. We mark this time of expectant waiting and preparation for both the celebration of the Nativity of Christ (Christmas) and the anticipation of the return of Christ at the Second Coming. Our worship focuses on four traditional themes in advent including God's people (hope), the Old Testament prophets (peace), John the Baptist (love) and Mary, the mother of Jesus (joy). You see the church is decorated and adorned in the color of Royal Blue, a symbol of looking forward to welcoming the coming of The King.



In this year of COVID-19, we reflect, lament and prepare for Christ's coming. We still our hearts and minds, and move from hope, to peace, love and finally joy, acknowledging and celebrating that Christ has come, Christ is here among us, and Christ will come again.

Within our worship here at St Stephen's during this season, we have selected music and text that focus on the four themes of Advent. Our consistent use of the hymns *My Lord What a Morning*, *Lost in the Night*, *Come Now O Prince of Peace*, and *O Come, O Come Emmanuel* calls out in a world of turmoil and harkens to the knowledge that Christ has come, Christ is here, Christ WILL come again wrapped in the traditional themes of hope, peace, love and joy of the Advent season. In our prayers and in our song we call out "Come Lord Jesus, Quickly Come."

- Bryon Dockter, Director of Worship

WE PREPARE TO WORSHIP

Prelude

Reflection on "Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn"

Bryon Dockter

Welcome

Singing Bowl

Silence is kept for reflection.

* Confession and Forgiveness

*All may make the sign of the cross,
the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
whose forgiveness is sure
and whose steadfast love endures forever.
Amen.

Together let us honestly and humbly confess
that we have not lived as God desires.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Loving and forgiving God,
**we confess that we are held captive by sin.
In spite of our best efforts, we go astray.
Restore us, O God.**

**Help us be Christ to one another.
Wake us up today in the light of Christ.
Amen.**

People of God, hear this glad news:
by God's endless grace
your sins are forgiven, and you are free—
free from all that holds you back
and free to live in the peaceable realm of God.
May you be strengthened in God's love,
‡ comforted by Christ's peace,
and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

WE GIVE OUR PRAISE

* Hymn

“Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn”

ELW #242 vs. 1, 3, 4

**Awake! Awake, and greet the new morn,
for angels herald its dawning.
Sing out your joy, for soon he is born,
behold! the Child of our longing.
Come as a baby weak and poor,
to bring all hearts together,
he opens wide the heav'nly door
and lives now inside us forever.**

**In darkest night his coming shall be,
when all the world is despairing,
as morning light so quiet and free,
so warm and gentle and caring.
Then shall the mute break forth in song,
the lame shall leap in wonder,
the weak be raised above the strong,
and weapons be broken asunder.**

**Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night,
though dark the winter and cheerless,
the rising sun shall crown you with light,
be strong and loving and fearless.
Love be our song and love our prayer
and love our endless story;
may God fill ev'ry day we share
and bring us at last into glory.**

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950
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* Greeting

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

* Advent Cantic

“My Lord, What a Morning”

ELW #438

Refrain (times two)

**My Lord, what a morning;
my Lord, what a morning;
oh, my Lord, what a morning,
when the stars begin to fall.**

**You will hear the trumpet sound,
to wake the nations underground,
looking to my God's right hand,
when the stars begin to fall. *Refrain (once)***

**You will hear the sinner cry,
to wake the nations underground,
looking to my God's right hand,
when the stars begin to fall. *Refrain (once)***

**You will hear the Christian shout,
to wake the nations underground,
looking to my God's right hand,
when the stars begin to fall. *Refrain (once)***

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*** Children's Sermon**

Tracy Westman

*** Lighting of the Advent Wreath**

We praise you, O God, for this circle of light
that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.
As we light the candles on this wreath,
kindle within us the fire of your Spirit,
that we may be light shining in the darkness.
Enlighten us with your grace,
that we may welcome others as you have welcomed us.
Grant this through Christ our Lord,
whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.
Amen.

Light the two candles.

*** 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.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

First Reading

Isaiah 40:1-11

- 1 Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.
- 2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.
- 3 A voice cries out:
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
- 4 Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.
- 5 Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."
- 6 A voice says, "Cry out!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"
All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.

7 The grass withers, the flower fades,
 when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
 surely the people are grass.
 8 The grass withers, the flower fades;
 but the word of our God will stand forever.
 9 Get you up to a high mountain,
 O Zion, herald of good tidings;
 lift up your voice with strength,
 O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
 lift it up, do not fear;
 say to the cities of Judah,
 "Here is your God!"
 10 See, the Lord God comes with might,
 and his arm rules for him;
 his reward is with him,
 and his recompense before him.
 11 He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
 he will gather the lambs in his arms,
 and carry them in his bosom,
 and gently lead the mother sheep.

Word of God, Word of Life.
Thanks be to God

Psalm

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

1 LORD, you were favorable to your land;
 you restored the fortunes of Jacob.
 2 You forgave the iniquity of your people;
 you pardoned all their sin.
 8 Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,
 for he will speak peace to his people,
 to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.
 9 Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,
 that his glory may dwell in our land.
 10 Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
 righteousness and peace will kiss each other.
 11 Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,
 and righteousness will look down from the sky.
 12 The LORD will give what is good,
 and our land will yield its increase.
 13 Righteousness will go before him,
 and will make a path for his steps.

The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark,
Glory to you, O Lord

*** Gospel**

Mark 1:1-8

1 The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2 As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; 3 the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'" 4 John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5 And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 6 Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7 He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. 8 I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

The Gospel of the Lord,
Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pastor John

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn

"Lost in the Night"

ELW #243 vs. 3, 4

Sorrowing wand'rers, in darkness yet dwelling,
dawned has the day of a radiance excelling,
death's deepest shadows forever dispelling.
Christ is coming soon! Christ is coming soon!

Light o'er the land of the needy is beaming;
rivers of life through its deserts are streaming,
bringing all peoples a Savior redeeming.
Come and save us soon! Come and save us soon!

Text: Nordic hymn; tr. Olav Lee, 1859-1943, alt.
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* Prayers of Intercession

Petition response Leader: ... Lord, in your mercy,

"Come Now, O Prince of Peace"

ELW #247 vs 2

Come now, O God of love, make us one body.
Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.

Text: Geon-yong Lee, b. 1947; tr. Marion Pope
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* Sharing the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
*We invite you to share the peace with those with you
and with us with "thumbs up" or comments on our Facebook page.
Text someone you care about.*

Offering [Invitation to support ongoing ministries of St. Stephen's]

* Words of Institution

* 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.

* Invitation to Communion

Even as we watch and wait, Christ is here.
Come, eat and drink.

Communion is Received

ELW Page 112

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

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

ELW #257 vs. 3, 4

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

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

**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***

Text: *Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. composite
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The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
Strengthens you and keeps you in his grace
Today, tomorrow and forever. Amen.

*** Prayer after Communion**

Gracious and abundant God,
You have done great things for us, and we rejoice.
In this bread and cup you give us life forever.
In your boundless mercy, strengthen us
and open our hearts to the world's needs,
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

WE GO INTO THE WORLD

*** Blessing**

The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting,
the long-expected Savior fill you with love,
the unexpected Spirit guide your journey,
✠ now and forever. **Amen.**

Hymn

"Comfort, Comfort Now My People"

ELW #256 vs. 1, 3

**"Comfort, comfort now my people;
tell of peace!" So says our God.
Comfort those who sit in darkness
mourning under sorrow's load.
To God's people now proclaim
that God's pardon waits for them!
Tell them that their war is over;
God will reign in peace forever.**

**Straight shall be what long was crooked,
and the rougher places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble,
as befits God's holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord
now on earth is shed abroad,
and all flesh shall see the token
that God's word is never broken.**

Text: Johann G. Olearius, 1635-1711; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, alt.
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*** Dismissal**

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

*** Postlude**

Celebration on "Comfort, Comfort Now My People"

Bryon Dockter



Jesus said ...

"My Father's House shall be a house of prayer."

Please include the following people in your prayers this week: **Dorrie, Helen, Steve, Delores, Marge, Merwin, Jerry, Hedy, Diane, Sarah, Ed, Laura.**

Each week different families will be included in special prayers. Please hold in your prayers: **Craig and Nan, Dorothy, Chris and Jolene, Thelma, David.**

Each week different missions that St. Stephen's support through our Sunday offerings are included in our prayers. This week we offer prayers for **Lutheran Mideast Development.** LMD strives to bring peace and wholeness to the Kurdish communities of the Middle East by mobilizing a network of people through education, vocational training, personal empowerment and advocacy.

We also offer prayers for our **brothers and sisters in Christ in the villages of Iwonde and Ihimbo, Tanzania.**

We pray for **residents and staff of group homes and care facilities, and all healthcare workers.**

We pray also for those away from home serving in the military: **Ben, Nick, Jeremy, Matthew, Zachary, Sam, Troy, Tricia, Adam, Nick, Peter D. J., Christopher, Gene, Sam, Andrew.** (Please help us keep our military member listing up to date. Thank you.)

St. Stephen's invites you to add your prayer requests to our daily prayers. We hope that this list is placed inside everyone's Bible or devotional material. All prayer requests will be listed for three weeks. Please contact the church office if additional time is needed.



Today's Altar Flowers

In Observation of Saint Nicholas Day

Given by: Dane McKenzie on his birthday

Leaders in Today's Service

Pastor..... The Rev. Dr. John Snider
Lay Liturgist Debbie Pirkl
Director of Worship Bryon Dockter
Song Leader Kim Richter
Lectors Jessica Gregory, Max Gregory
Audio Visual Ministry Norm Goetzke, Keith Gregory, Jan Perkins
Prayer Chain Rachel Circle, Mary Circle, Kathy Ericson, Abby Vavra
Altar Guild Lori Ritt



ST STEPHEN'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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