



Advent 2024

What is Advent? *Advent is the church season when we focus on God's coming to us in every way possible. It is the beginning of the Church Year. It is a four-week long time of anticipation of the arrival of God in flesh, Emmanuel, or Jesus Christ. But we do not only wait for a baby. The season of Advent is, in some ways, the reality of our life as Christians as we continue to wait for Jesus to return to this world. We anticipate Jesus' second coming. We also look for God's coming in other ways: "in a meal, by a word, as a light, in the assembly gathered, as a complete surprise, following a long wait, suddenly, or as a child." Advent runs counter-cultural to the commercialism that has become pervasive during December (and even November). Advent is about waiting, and in that way runs counter-cultural to our rush to celebrate Christmas before Christmas and to our desire for instant gratification. Advent can be a season whose practices "form us to live in a world where patient waiting, intense prayer, and hopeful trust are Christian practices we are invited to hone."*

Welcome to Lord of Life!

All are welcome here. We extend a special welcome to visitors. We're glad you joined us today!
The following information may help you in your worship experience and getting to know Lord of Life.

Communal words spoken and sung will be on the screen and/or in this bulletin. The bold text is spoken together. Songs/hymns can also be found (with music) in either Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW) cranberry hymnal or All Creation Sings (ACS) purple hymnal. Both can be found under a chair near you.

Holy Communion is the Lord's Table and all are welcome, regardless of age. We celebrate the Eucharist (literally "thanksgiving") during worship every Sunday. Our bread is dairy, nut, and gluten-free; wine and juice are both available.

Children are welcome in this place! At baptism, we welcome people into God's family and the community of Lord of Life. Children of all ages are integral members of the Body of Christ, and have a place in our community that includes worship. Children learn by seeing, hearing, and experiencing worship with adults (not just their parents) who care about them. We embrace the sounds and activity that accompany them.

We have a few resources for parents:

- *PrayGround*: Table up front with coloring supplies. Go with your child, sit near the table, or send them independently.
- *Activity Bags*: great things to occupy busy hands during worship, located on the shelves just outside the sanctuary; ask an usher if you need help finding them.
- *Nursery* (for children 0-5, 5-7 by exception): You can leave young children in the nursery. Our nursery attendant has been background checked. There is a sign-in sheet for security.

• Narthex (Gathering/Entrance space): Benches, rocking chairs, or space to move around.

Offering is an act of worship and a privilege to return to God a portion of what God has given us. If you are a guest, do not feel obligated to give, but for those comfortable participating, please join us in this act of worship. Offerings given today are joyfully used for outreach to the greater church/community and for the work and ministry of Lord of Life. You may donate by using the QR code that leads you to the website (www.lordoflife.org), by mail, using direct deposit with your bank, or RMD / QCD / or stock gift (in consultation with your financial advisor).

If at anytime you are uncomfortable standing, you are free to remain seated.

If you are worshipping from home, you are invited to participate, not just observe. Please prepare your own sacred space for worship. You might include some candles, a cross, and water for remembering your baptism. Please join worship in-person to celebrate Communion with the congregation! If that is not possible, please reach out and we can have a member of our Care Team arrange a visit with Communion.

*Lord of Life is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).
You can learn more at www.elca.org.*

Gathering

Lord of Life Lutheran Church is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Cayuse, Umatilla, Walla Walla, Palouse, and Wanapum peoples. We give thanks for their commitment and care for this land since time immemorial. We commit ourselves to acts of stewardship, care, and repair of the land and all who inhabit it.

PRELUDE

The people gather for Worship. Consider where you worship today and how it will facilitate a meaningful experience of what God has for you today. Take a few moments to take a breath and center yourself to be present. Please put your device on silent, and set it aside so you can be present during this time.

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who alone does wonders,
who lifts up the lowly,
who fills the hungry with good things.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God, beginning with a moment of silence.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God for whom we wait,

in the presence of one another, we confess our sin before you. We fail in believing that your good news is for us. We falter in our call to tend your creation. We find our sense of self in material wealth. We fear those different from ourselves. We forget that we are your children and turn away from your love. Forgive us, Blessed One, and assure us again of your saving grace.

Amen.

God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you! Through the power of the Holy Spirit, † your sins are forgiven. You are children of the Most High, inheritors of the eternal promise, and recipients of divine mercy. God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace.

Amen.

GLORY TO GOD, ACS #904 Come to Be Our Hope, O Jesus

You are welcome to sing in whatever language is more comfortable for you.

Español: 1 Tú, Je - sús, nues - tra es - pe - ran - za, ven y
 2 Ven, y te - je un mun - do nue - vo ca - mi -

English: 1 Come to be our hope, O Je - sus, come to
 2 Come to build your new cre - a - tion through the

li - bra nues - tro ser. Ni - ño,
 nan do en la ver - dad, pa - ra
 set your peo - ple free. From op -
 road of ser - vant - hood; give new

na - ce en tre no - so - tros, ven y da - nos tu po -
 que, por fin, el pue - blo vi - va en ple - na li - ber -
 pres - sion, come, re - lease us, grant us your true lib - er -
 life to ev - 'ry na - tion, chang - ing e - vil in - to

der. Ven li - ber - ta pri - sio - ne - ros de in - jus -
 tad. Ven, Je - sús, a - bre el fu - tu - ro de tu
 ty. Come, re - lease from ev - 'ry pris - on those who
 good. Come and o - pen our to - mor - row for your

ti - cia y a - flic - ción; ven, re - ú - ne nues - tros
 rei - no de a - le - gría. Ven, de - rrum - ba es - te gran
 suf - fer in our land. In your love we find the
 joy - ful reign so near. Take a - way all hu - man

pue - blos en a - mor y en com - pren - sión.
 mu - ro que hoy se - pa - ra no - che y dí - a.
 rea - son still to live and un - der - stand.
 sor - row; give us hope a - gainst our fear.

Português: 1 Vem, Jesus, nossa esperança, nossas vidas libertar.
 Vem, nascer em nós, criança, vem o teu poder nos dar.
 Vem, liberta os prisioneiros da injustiça e da aflição;
 vem, reúne os forasteiros em amor e em compreensão.

2 Vem tecer um mundo novo nos caminhos da verdade;
 para que, afinal, o povo viva em plena liberdade.
 Vem, Jesus, abre o futuro do teu reino de alegria.
 Vem, derruba o imenso muro que separa a noite e o dia.

Text: Jaci Maraschin, 1929–2009, Portuguese and English; Spanish tr. Jorge Rodríguez
 Music: JESUS NOSSA ESPERANÇA, Marcílio de Oliveira Filho, 1947–2005
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GREETING

Inspired by the greeting from the angel to Mary in Luke 1, and the joy of Psalm 126.

Greetings, beloved community! The Lord is with you!

The Lord is with us! And we are glad indeed.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

One of the best-known customs for the season is the Advent wreath. The wreath and winter candle-lighting in the midst of growing darkness strengthen some of the Advent images found in the Bible. The unbroken circle of greens is an image of everlasting life, a victory wreath, the crown of Christ, or the wheel of time itself. Christians use the wreath as a sign that Christ reaches into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting life. The four candles mark the progress of the four weeks of Advent and the growth of light. The evergreen branches lead the household and the congregation to the evergreen Christmas tree. In many homes, the family gathers for prayers around the wreath, just as we do today as a family of faith.

First Week of Advent (December 1)

Let us pray.

Blessed are you, God of Jacob, for you promise to transform weapons of war into implements of planting and harvest and to teach us your way of peace; you promise that our night of sin is far gone and that your day of salvation is dawning. As we light the first candle on this wreath, wake us from our sleep, wrap us in your light, empower us to live honorably, and guide us along your path of peace.

O house of Jacob, come, **let us walk in the light of the Lord. Amen.**

Second Week of Advent (December 8)

Blessed are you, God of hope, for you promise to bring forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse who will bring justice to the poor, who will deliver the needy and crush the oppressor, who will stand as a signal of hope for all people. As we light these candles, turn our wills to bear the fruit of repentance, transform our hearts to live in justice and harmony with one another, and fix our eyes on the root of Jesse, Jesus Christ, the hope of all nations.

O people of hope, come, **let us rejoice in the faithfulness of the Lord. Amen.**

Third Week of Advent (December 15)

Blessed are you, God of might and majesty, for you promise to make the desert rejoice and blossom, to watch over the strangers, and to set the prisoners free. As we light these candles, satisfy our hunger with your good gifts, open our eyes to the great things you have done for us, and fill us with patience until the coming of the Lord Jesus.

O ransomed people of the Lord, come,

let us travel on God's holy way and enter into Zion with singing. Amen.

Fourth Week of Advent (December 22)

Blessed are you, God of hosts, for you promised to send a son, Emmanuel, who brought your presence among us; and you promise through your Son Jesus to save us from our sin. As we light these candles, turn again to us in mercy; strengthen our faith in the word spoken by your prophets; restore us and give us life that we may be saved.

O house of David, come,

let us rejoice, for the Son of God, Emmanuel, comes to be with us. Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

December 1 - ELW #245 *Creator of the Stars of Night*

December 8 - ELW #257 O Come, O Come Emmanuel
December 15 - ELW #239 Hark, the Glad Sound!
December 22 - ACS #901 Now the Heavens Start to Whisper

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

December 1

God of deliverance, You rescued Daniel from the mouths of the lions when he was punished for worshiping you. Liberate all who are endangered for the sake of their faith, and rescue us from anything that separates us from worshiping only you, for the sake of the one who made your name known to all people, across land and seas, Jesus Christ, our redeemer. **Amen.**

December 8

Loving Lord, When we have strayed, you have called us to come home to you. "Return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing." With all our hearts we return to you, and gratefully accept your gentle love, for the sake of the one whose spirit lives in us, Jesus Christ, our loving savior. **Amen.**

December 15

Spirit of the Lord God, You bring good news to the oppressed, bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, and release the prisoners. You comfort all who mourn, and shower your people with the oil of gladness instead of mourning; a mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. We will greatly rejoice in the Lord, our whole being shall exult in God, for the sake of the one who brought righteousness to life, Jesus Christ, our salvation. **Amen.**

December 22

God our Parent, There is no miracle as grand as birth. As we prepare for the coming of your son, Jesus, create in us new life. Transform us so that we may reflect the light of your son, and become beacons of goodness, kindness, compassion, generosity, honesty, patience, and peace, for the sake of the one whose name brings deliverance and life to all the world, Jesus Christ, infant king. **Amen.**

Word

All Christian worship is biblical. We currently follow the Narrative Lectionary (NL), a relatively new approach to reading scripture, created by professors at Luther Seminary in 2010. The NL seeks to provide a narrative arc through scripture. Instead of a 3-year cycle like the RCL (Revised Common Lectionary, where Matthew, Mark, and Luke each get their own year, and John interspersed throughout), the NL is a 4-year cycle where every gospel gets its own year. The most dramatic difference is that there is only one reading (with a second optional), and it's not always from the gospels. The NL starts in Genesis and works through the early stories of God's people, hears from the prophets and reaches the gospel by Christmas, where we stay through Easter. After Easter we'll hear some post-resurrection accounts and then get into the stories of the early church through the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles.

Hearing the proclamation of the Word is central to our worship experience. The Word is proclaimed throughout our worship, in our liturgy, prayers, sermon, hymns, and yes, scripture. You are invited to let go of the need to read along and simply listen, and let the Spirit lead your imagination and inspire your hearing.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

We're going to end with this refrain:

All: You are a dearly loved child of God!

Children: And so are you!

**We wait for God, and for the fulfillment of God's promises;
for the time when the darkness will hold no fear and the light will show the way,
and creation will be made whole once more and God's peace will reign forever.
Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

We begin by singing the refrain together. As the music continues, the topics (bids) will be introduced for your silent prayer, followed by another sung refrain.

For the prayers, we'll begin with the refrain, then after each bid you are invited into silent prayer, followed by the refrain.

Keeping awake as we watch for Christ, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

ELW #178



Hear our prayer, hear our prayer, Lord, make us whole:
peace to all peo - ple, hope for each soul.
God of grace, in this place, hear now our prayer.

Text and music: Paul Andress, b. 1956
Text and music © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

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For the church universal, its ministry, and mission; and for all of creation... *Refrain*

For peace and justice in the world, the nations and those in authority, the community... *Refrain*

For the poor, oppressed, sick, grieving, lonely, and all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit... *Refrain*

For our congregation, our ministry leaders and partners, and special concerns... *Refrain*

You hear the cries of our hearts, O Lord. Fill us with hopeful expectation, that in each day and hour we may love and serve our neighbors, in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

PEACE

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

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, and may say, "Peace be with you," or similar words.

Please be aware that we all have different comfort levels for this. The peace we share is a sign of God's mission of reconciliation among us and the reconciliation we have with one another in Christ Jesus. In this cold and flu season, you might choose to use hand signals, a wave, a bow, a smile, or a fist bump.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Meal

OFFERING

A collection of material goods for the church's mission, including the care of those in need, is a sign of the giving of our whole selves in grateful response for all God's gifts. We offer to God what God has first given us: ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Your financial gifts for LoL can be placed in the plate, made electronically through our website (www.thelordoflife.org), sent in the mail, using direct deposit with your bank, or RMD / QCD / or stock gift (in consultation with your financial advisor). Please contact the Financial Secretary with questions.

SPECIAL MUSIC

December 8—*Advent Hymn*, sung by Festival Choir

Arr. by Joseph M. Martin. Lyrics adapted from "Morning Hymn" by Charles Wesley. New words and music by Christy Nockels. © 2016 Sweater Weather Music. All rights reserved. Directed by David Baldwin.

Accompanied by Brian Swearingen and Grace Notes Chime Choir. Chime part written by Pam Baldwin.

December 15—*Light of the Star with Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*, sung by Men of Life

Arr. By Camp Kirkland and Tom Fettke. © 1968 Bud John Songs, Inc. All rights reserved. Directed by David Baldwin. Accompanied by Brian Swearingen.

OFFERING PRAYER

As we give from the gifts God has given us, and as we prepare to receive signs of grace and mercy at this table, let us pray.

Come Lord Jesus, be our guest, and let your gifts to us be blessed.

Blessed be God who is our bread, may all the world be clothed and fed. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And al - so 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.

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:

ACS #108g *Holy, Holy, Holy*



San - to, san - to, san - to, oh Dios del u - ni - ver - so:
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, Lord God of might and mer - cy,

... lle - nos es - tán el cie - lo y la tie - rra de tu glo - ria.
your glo - ry fills all heav - en and earth. ... You are ho - ly, God.

Ben - di - to el que vie - ne en nom - bre del Se - ñor. ...
... Bless - ed be the Sav - ior, the one who comes in your name.

Ho - san - na en el cie - lo. San - to_e - res, oh Dios.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. You are ho - ly, God.

Text: Traditional; English text, hymnal version
Music: ARGENTINE SANTO, Argentine traditional
English text © 2020 Augsburg Fortress

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Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed...

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth.
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.
Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Please use the version or language of your choice.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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, and the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

COMMUNION

All are welcome at the Lord's table, as we receive the presence of Christ for us in bread and wine. This meal is for all regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, criminal record, or list of offenses.

make your way to the front using the side aisle. There will be bread, wine, and grape juice. A basket to collect used cups is in the center. After receiving the elements, return to your seat by the center aisle. If you have questions when you get up front, it is okay to ask. The bread is gluten-free, nut-free, dairy-free, and full of grace! There is hand sanitizer on the chair at the front if you would like to use it.

The elements can be brought to your seat if making your way to the front is difficult. Simply let the ushers know.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE: ACS #968 Feed Us With Hunger For Justice

Optional descant

Feed us jus - tice. Feed us your peace.

Feed us with hun-ger for jus-tice. Feed us with thirst for peace.

Text: Anne Krentz Organ, b. 1960
Music: HUNGER FOR JUSTICE, Anne Krentz Organ
Text and music © 2020 Augsburg Fortress

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HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

December 1 - ELW #532 Gather Us In

December 8 - ELW #256 Comfort, Comfort Now My People

December 15 - ELW #843 Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness

December 22 - ACS #962 In This Feast of Love

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Faithful God, **in this meal you have remembered your mercy, bringing heaven to earth in the body and blood of Christ. As we wait for the day when all your promises will be fulfilled, sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery. Guide us toward your promised future, coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

Sending

BLESSING

God the eternal Word,
who dwells with us in Jesus,
and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit,
✠ bless you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

December 1 - ACS #907 *Filled with Hope and Gratitude*
December 8 - ACS #902 *Come Now, O God*
December 15 - ELW #242 *Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn*
December 22 - ELW #266 *All Earth Is Hopeful*

DISMISSAL

You are the body of Christ raised up for the world.
Go in peace. Christ is near. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Readings for Advent 2024

December 1, 2024 —First Sunday of Advent

Daniel 6:6-27

Daniel in the lions' den; deliverance; God's kingdom shall never be destroyed.

⁶So the presidents and satraps conspired and came to the king and said to him, "O King Darius, live forever! ⁷All the presidents of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an interdict, that whoever prays to anyone, divine or human, for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be thrown into a den of lions. ⁸Now, O king, establish the interdict and sign the document, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked." ⁹Therefore King Darius signed the document and interdict.

¹⁰Although Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he continued to go to his house, which had windows in its upper room open toward Jerusalem, and to get down on his knees three times a day to pray to his God and praise him, just as he had done previously. ¹¹The conspirators came and found Daniel praying and seeking mercy before his God. ¹²Then they approached the king and said concerning the interdict, "O king! Did you not sign an interdict, that anyone who prays to anyone, divine or human, within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be thrown into a den of lions?" The king answered, "The thing stands fast, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked." ¹³Then they responded to the king, "Daniel, one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the interdict you have signed, but he is saying his prayers three times a day."

¹⁴When the king heard the charge, he was very much distressed. He was determined to save Daniel, and until the sun went down he made every effort to rescue him. ¹⁵Then the conspirators came to the king and said to him, "Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no interdict or ordinance that the king establishes can be changed."

¹⁶Then the king gave the command, and Daniel was brought and thrown into the den of lions. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you faithfully serve, deliver you!" ¹⁷A stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, so that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel. ¹⁸Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no food was brought to him, and sleep fled from him.

¹⁹Then, at break of day, the king got up and hurried to the den of lions. ²⁰When he came near the den where Daniel

was, he cried out anxiously to Daniel, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God whom you faithfully serve been able to deliver you from the lions?" ²¹Daniel then said to the king, "O king, live forever! ²²My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths so that they would not hurt me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no wrong." ²³Then the king was exceedingly glad and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. ²⁴The king gave a command, and those who had accused Daniel were brought and thrown into the den of lions — they, their children, and their wives. Before they reached the bottom of the den the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces.

²⁵Then King Darius wrote to all peoples and nations of every language throughout the whole world: "May you have abundant prosperity! ²⁶I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people should tremble and fear before the God of Daniel:

For he is the living God,
enduring forever.

His kingdom shall never be destroyed, and his dominion has no end.

²⁷He delivers and rescues, he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth;
for he has saved Daniel from the power of the lions."

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

December 8, 2024—Second Sunday of Advent

Joel 2:12-13, 28-29

Turn to a merciful God, promise of the Spirit.

¹²Yet even now, says the LORD,
return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;

¹³rend your hearts and not your clothing.

Return to the LORD, your God,
for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love,
and relents from punishing.

²⁸ Then afterward

I will pour out my spirit on all flesh;
your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
your old men shall dream dreams,
and your young men shall see visions.

²⁹Even on the male and female slaves,
in those days, I will pour out my spirit.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

December 15, 2024—Third Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 61:1-11

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me to bring good news, liberty, and to make an everlasting covenant.

¹The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;

²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
³to provide for those who mourn in Zion —
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.
⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.
⁵Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks,
foreigners shall till your land and dress your vines;
⁶but you shall be called priests of the LORD,
you shall be named ministers of our God;
you shall enjoy the wealth of the nations,
and in their riches you shall glory.
⁷Because their shame was double,
and dishonor was proclaimed as their lot,
therefore they shall possess a double portion;
everlasting joy shall be theirs.
⁸For I the LORD love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
⁹Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.
¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

December 22, 2024—Fourth Sunday of Advent

Luke 1:26-45

Announcement of Jesus' birth to Mary; he will receive the throne of David.

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.

³⁹In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴²and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

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