

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER, E.L.C.A.
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Fourth Sunday of Advent December 21, 2025

* Stand as you are able

GATHERING

INVOCATION

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure.
C: Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS *

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Long-expected God, **we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide. We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war. We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake. Free us from self-reliance and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors. Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope you have promised. Amen.**

God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness. ✝ You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN*

ELW # 242 "Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn"

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.**

KYRIE

P: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mercy.

P: For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mercy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen

Hymn of Praise*

ELW #149-150 (This is the feast ...)

Prayer of the Day *.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

FIRST READING ISAIAH 7:10-16

¹⁰ Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹ “Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹² But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.” ¹³ Then Isaiah^[a] said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel.^[b] ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

P: The Word of the Lord: C: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 80:1-7, 17-19

¹ Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock! You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth

² before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh. Stir up your might, and come to save us!

³ Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

⁴ O Lord God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people’s prayers?

⁵ You have fed them with the bread of tears and given them tears to drink in full measure.

⁶ You make us the scorn^[a] of our neighbors; our enemies laugh among themselves.

⁷ Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

¹⁷ But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one whom you made strong for yourself.

¹⁸ Then we will never turn back from you; give us life, and we will call on your name.

¹⁹ Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; Let your face shine, that we may be saved.

SECOND READING ROMANS 1:1-7

¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³ the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit^[a] of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, ⁶ including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, ⁷ To all

God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Prayer of Thanksgiving ⁸ First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed throughout the world. ⁹ For God, whom I serve with my spirit by announcing the gospel^[b] of his Son, is my witness that without ceasing I remember you always in my prayers, ¹⁰ asking that by God's will I may somehow at last succeed in coming to you. ¹¹ For I long to see you so that I may share with you some spiritual gift so that you may be strengthened— ¹² or rather so that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine. ¹³ I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you, as I have among the rest of the gentiles. ¹⁴ I am obligated both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish, ¹⁵ hence my eagerness to proclaim the gospel to you also who are in Rome. The Power of the Gospel ¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is God's saving power for everyone who believes,^[c] for the Jew first and also for the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith, as it is written, "The one who is righteous will live by faith."^[d]

P: The Word of the Lord: **C: Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation *

Alleluia. The virgin shall conceive and / bear a son, and they shall name / him Emmanuel. Alleluia. (Matt. 1:23)*

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 1:18-25

C: Glory to you O Lord

18 Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah^[a] took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. 19 Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. 20 But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." 22 All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 23 "Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." 24 When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife 25 but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son,^[b] and he named him Jesus. P: The Gospel of the Lord: **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Hymn of the Day *

ELW# 257 (V1-4,7) "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

The Apostle's Creed * (Printed inside the back cover of the hymnal.)

Prayers of the Church

Response: P: God of mercy, **C: Hear our prayer.**

Sharing the Peace

P: The Peace of Christ be with you always. **C: And also with you.**

(you are encouraged to turn to one another and share the peace of the Lord.)

Offering Hymn *

ELW # 186 "Create in Me a Clean Heart"

Offering Prayer *

Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert.

Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come. Amen.

MEAL

Thanksgiving *

P: The Lord be with you. **C: And also with you.**

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

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God. **C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

The Preface *

P: Lord, it is indeed right and our joy that at all times and in all places we give thanks and praise to you. And so with the angels and archangels and with the church on earth and in heaven, we give glory to you O God, through Jesus Christ, as we praise your name and join in the unending hymn:

C: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna, in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest (pg. 144 ELW)

The Words of Institution and The Lord's Prayer *

Invitation to Communion

P: Here is life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised.

Hymn

ELW # 146 "Lamb of God"

Distribution

Communion Hymn *

ELW # 631 "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

SENDING

Communion Blessing *

Prayer After Communion *

God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Blessing *

May God who comes among us, Father, ✚ Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn *

ELW #253 "He Came Down"

Dismissal *

P: Go in peace. Keep awake.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Today's Lector is Kurt Hintz, and our Usher is Don Horen.
- Next week's Lector is Scott Lopas and our ushers are Bruce & Laurie Horst.
- The next Women's Bible Study is **Monday, January 12th**, at noon. Bring a lunch and join us.
- A Church Council Meeting will be held on **Monday, January 12th** at 4:00PM.
- Al-Anon Meeting held Thursdays at 7:00PM.
- Casa Guadalupe English Language Learners "ELL" meets Monday & Wednesdays from 6-7:30PM.
- Special Giving for December is the Hartford Christmas Committee.
- Community Lunch will be served on **Saturday December 27th**, 11:30am, at First United Methodist Church. Fellowship prior to lunch.
- Conversations with God: Our next Conversations with God will be held on Thursday, **January 15th**, at 10am. We will take this time to gather for prayer, Scripture, and conversation on a different topic each month. Our December gathering will be on the topic of "Time". Come and join us for a cup of coffee and good conversation!!
- Pastor will be in the office on **Wednesday, January 7th** from 9:00am - 12:00pm. Appointments are appreciated, but not necessary. If you wish to meet with Pastor at other times, please contact him directly. Looking ahead, he will be in the office he will be in on **Thursdays, January 15th, 22nd, and 29th** from 9am-12pm.
- Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be at 4PM.
- We have begun partnering with Lincoln Elementary School. They have expressed a need for several items (lists will be posted near the trees in the coffee area AND on one of the trees).
 - Clothing needs include winter clothes for children in various sizes: snowpants, winter coats, socks, sweatpants for both elementary and middle school, gloves, and gloves for playing in the snow.
 - Snackack needs include: Goldfish, Individually wrapped food items, Animal Crackers, and Granola Bars...**NO** bags of nuts.
 - Food drive/pantry needs (most helpful in Feb – Spring – Summer) include: cereal, shelf stable microwave meals, canned goods and mac and cheese with cheese sauce (not add milk and butter).
- Looking ahead – The Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 1st following services. Please mark your calendars. Copies of the Annual Report will be available in January 2026.
- **A Blessed Christmas to all!**