

4th Sunday of Advent
December 22, 2024



Lord of Love Lutheran Church (ELCA)
10405 Fort St., Omaha, NE 68134

“Celebrating and sharing God’s Love in a welcoming community of faith, while serving others”

Worship 9:00 a.m.

Bold type indicates Congregational responses.

Introduction

Cradle and cross are inextricably connected on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Between a lovely tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and Mary’s magnificent song of praise, the letter to the Hebrews reminds us in no uncertain terms that Christ’s advent is for “the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” It is the kind of tension in which the church always lives as when in holy communion—with high delight—“we proclaim the Lord’s death.”

Prelude “Of the Father’s Love Begotten” Marchand
“Sing Hosannas”/Bob Boruoughs

Announcements

Ringling of the Bell

***Greeting**

P: 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.

***Confession and Forgiveness**

P: In this season of looking for light, let us go before God and confess how our words and actions contribute to the darkness instead of adding to the light.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of Love and Light,

We confess that we are not always the light-bearers you desire us to be.

We shine a spotlight on the transgressions of others

while trying to keep our own sins hidden in the dark.

We burn bridges by being impatient, opinionated and judgmental.

We inflame others by lashing out in anger.

We go through our days enveloped in the gloom of fear and doubt.

We let our witness become a smoldering ember

until it dies out completely.

Forgive us Jesus, the Everlasting Light.

Come to us, abide with us, our Lord, Emmanuel.

Teach us to walk as children of light,

surrounded by your love, forgiveness and healing.

We ask this in the name of Christ.

Amen.

God is light, and in God there is no darkness as all. If we walk in the light as God is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin.

Amen.

*Kyrie



Lord, have mer - cy__ on your peo - ple. Christ have mer - cy__ on__ us.
Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.__ Chri - ste e - le - i - son.



Shine your light in__ to our dark - ness. Fill__ us__ with your ho - ly love.
Heal all__ con - flicts be - tween na - tions. Teach us__ how to__ live as one.



Be our strength in times of__ trou - ble. Set us free from chains that__ bind.
Show us how to love our__ neigh - bor. Run to those who__ cry for__ help.



Breathe new_ life in - to our__ spir - its. Pu - ri - fy our__ hearts and minds.
Word made flesh who lives a - mong us; Christ our__ Lord, Em - man - u - el.

*Advent Wreath Litany

L: We gather this day to light the fourth candle of our Advent journey.

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

As the light shines and the darkness cannot overcome it, we trust in the hope of the One to come through whom we cultivate love for one another, our neighbors, and for God.

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

*Prayer of the Day

L: Let us pray.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated.

First Reading: Micah 5:2-5a

L: But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
 who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
 one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
 from ancient days.

Therefore he shall give them up until the time
 when she who is in labor has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return
 to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,
 in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great
 to the ends of the earth;
a and he shall be the one of peace.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading: Hebrews 10:5-10

L: Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,
 “Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,
 but a body you have prepared for me;
in burnt offerings and sin offerings
 you have taken no pleasure.

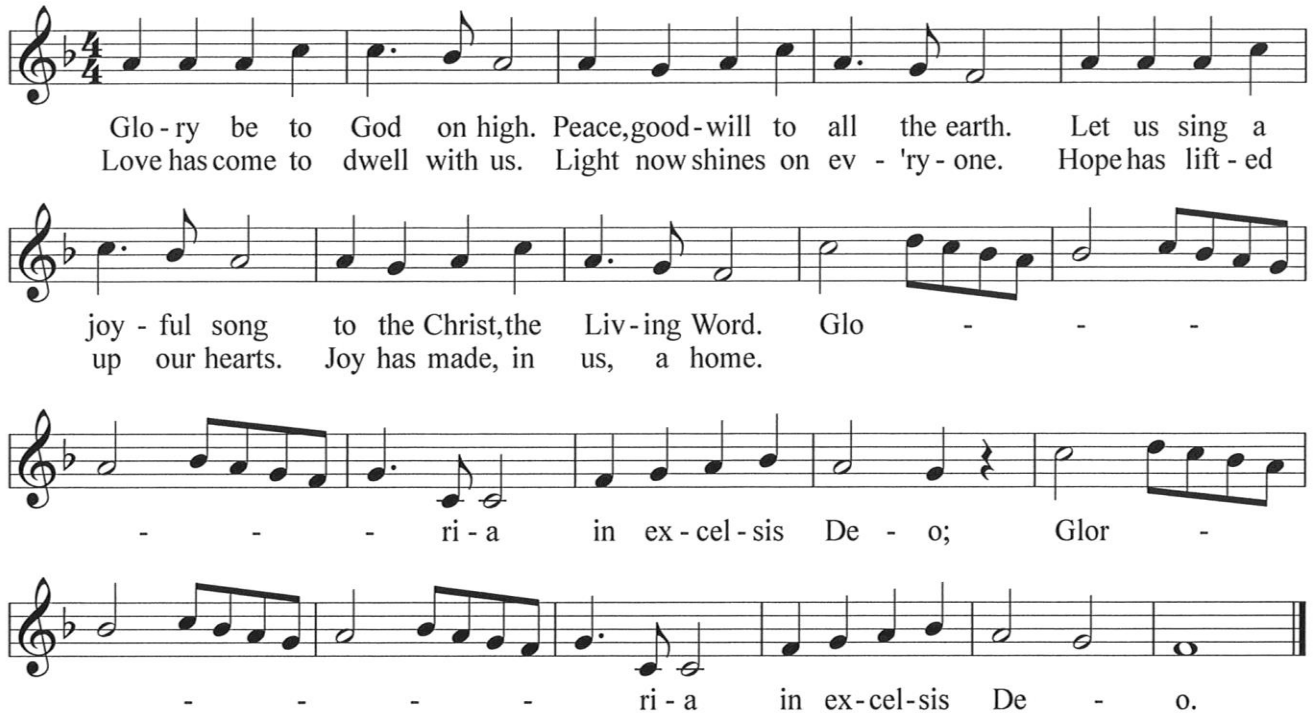
Then I said, ‘See, God, I have come to do your will, O God’
 (in the scroll of the book it is written of me).”

When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), then he added, “See, I have come to do your will.” He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God’s will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

***Gospel Acclamation**



Glo - ry be to God on high. Peace, good-will to all the earth. Let us sing a
Love has come to dwell with us. Light now shines on ev - 'ry - one. Hope has lift - ed
joy - ful song to the Christ, the Liv - ing Word. Glo - - -
up our hearts. Joy has made, in us, a home.
- - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o; Glor -
- - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

***Gospel: Luke 1:39-55**

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 1st chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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

And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.

His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Children’s Sermon Rev. Becky Sells

Sermon Rev. Becky Sells

Hymn of the Day: “Unexpected and Mysterious” ELW 258

****The Apostles’ Creed***

L: Let us declare our faith using the words of the Apostles’ Creed.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

He will come again 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***

L: As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

A brief silence.

God our uniter, increase communication and cooperation in our relationships with those of other traditions and religions. Root your church in the radical message of your incarnation, and enable us to pursue your justice in the world. Lord, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

God our creator, we praise you for the beauty that surrounds us. Awaken in us a renewed sense of care for the wildlife in our communities. Form us into faithful stewards of what you have made. Lord, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

God our sovereign, Mary proclaims a new way of life that lifts up the lowly and fills the hungry with good things. Nurture in local governments and municipalities a desire to care for all who are overlooked and ignored. Lord, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

God our beacon, as the northern hemisphere begins its slow turn toward more daylight, remind us that even in the deepest nights, you are there. Comfort the lonely and bereaved. Hold closely the frightened, anxious, depressed, and ill. We especially pray for those on our prayer list and the names of those we lift up to you in our hearts now... Lord, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

God our guide, shepherd the leadership of this congregation. Bless the council and staff in discerning future ministry and open their hearts to the voices of the community. Lord, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

God our life, you remember the promises you have made to your people. In gratitude for those who have died, we praise you for your faithfulness throughout history. Lord, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

***Peace**

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

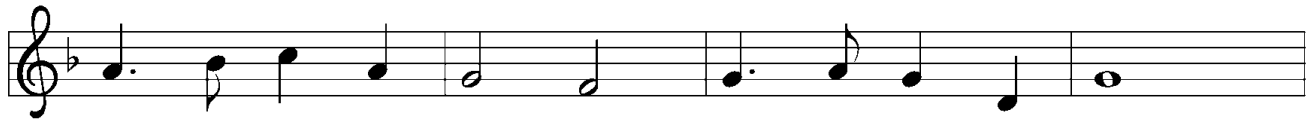
Please share signs of peace with one another.

Please be seated.

Offering

Gifts may be placed in the offering plate located in the back of the sanctuary or given electronically at www.lord-of-love.org. Children may come forward to put their offering in the noise jar during this song.

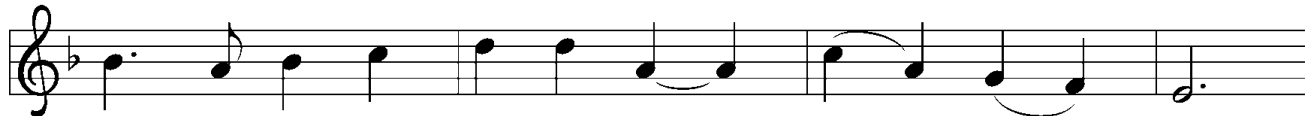
Communion servers, please come forward during the offertory song.



What . . . can I give him, poor as I am?



If I were a shep - herd I would bring a lamb;



if I were a wise . . . man I would do my part;



yet what I can I give him— give my heart.

***Offertory Prayer**

P: Let us pray.

God of Light, our world is a very dark place. Therefore, we offer the gifts of ourselves, our time and our resources, trusting you will use them to set the world aglow with your loving presence. May our offerings continue to shine brightly before others so they may see our good works and give glory to you. We ask this in the name of Christ. Amen.

****The Great Thanksgiving***

P: 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 and praise.

At the beginning of creation God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. In ancient times God also led the Israelites through the desert with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. The priests of old also kept a perpetual fire burning in the Temple to remind us that God is a light who cannot be extinguished.

Finally Jesus, the Word, who was with God since the beginning of creation, became flesh and lived among us. We have seen his glory shining in our world, full of grace and truth. Christ's light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. This same light has commanded us not to hide our light under a bushel basket, but to put it on a lamp stand so that everyone can see it. With our lights burning brightly, we now join the saints and angels in a hymn of praise to God, the Everlasting Light:

****Holy, Holy, Holy***



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly One... God of pow - er, God of might. Heav'n and



earth are full of your glor - y. Ho - sa - na in the high - est. Blessed! Blessed



is the one who comes... Blessed! Blessed! in... the name of God._____

****Words of Institution***

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

****The Lord's Prayer***

P: Let us pray as Jesus taught us.

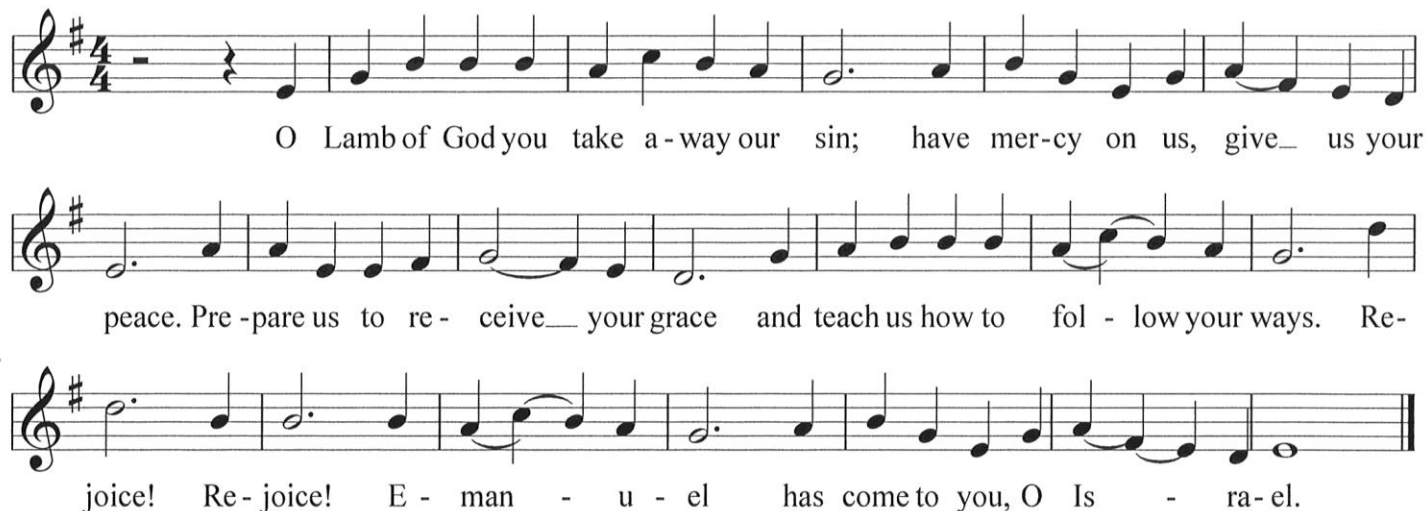
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated.

Communion Invitation

P: God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to the table.

Lamb of God



O Lamb of God you take a-way our sin; have mer-cy on us, give_ us your
peace. Pre -pare us to re - ceive_ your grace and teach us how to fol - low your ways. Re-
joice! Re-joice! E - man - u - el has come to you, O Is - ra-el.

Communion

Distribution Hymn “In the Bleak Midwinter” Holst/Walker

***Post-Communion Prayer**

P: Jesus, our bright Morning Star, we give you thanks that you have fed us well through the bread and wine of your Supper. May it enable us to shine brightly in all the dark places of our world with your love, justice and peace. We ask this in your holy name.

Amen.

***Benediction**

P: God of endings and beginnings,
God in the darkness and the light,
God, our love for the journey,
✠ bless and keep you now and forever.

Amen.

***Sending Song:** “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” vs. 1, 5-8 ELW 257

***Dismissal**

L: Go in love. Christ is near.

Thanks be to God!

Ringing of the Bell

Postlude “We Three Kings Take Five” /Marchand

Everlasting Light Liturgy

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